

Coffee Bluff Pictures Wins Jury Award at the 2023 Essence Film Festival

Coffee Bluff Pictures wins the prestigious Jury Award: Social Impact Stories at the 2023 Essence Film Festival for the documentary "OnBoard"

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Coffee Bluff Pictures](https://www.coffeebluffpictures.com/) won the prestigious Jury Award: Social Impact Stories at the 2023 Essence Film Festival for the documentary "[OnBoard](https://www.coffeebluffpictures.com/)." The groundbreaking film, written and directed by award-winning filmmaker Deborah Riley Draper, chronicles the rise of Black women on America's boards and the evolution of corporate board diversity from Patricia Roberts Harris in 1971 to Black Women on Boards (BWOB), a global group of fearless women organized during the Summer of 2020 to create change.

The 2023 Essence Film Festival occurred during the ESSENCE Festival of Culture™ weekend, presented by ESSENCE Studios™ and showcases storytellers from across the African diaspora. "OnBoard" offers a compelling glimpse into the movement started by Board veterans Merline Saintil and Robin Washington to expand the opportunity and exposure of Black women who can impact America's corporate boardrooms. The film, with its timely and impactful narrative of access and inclusion, including the historic ringing of the opening bell at Nasdaq by members of BWOB, ironically screened 48 hours after the Supreme Court overturned Affirmative Action. Festival director Lamonia Brown and Hakeem Holmes, VP, ESSENCE Festival of Culture, presented the awards in a live ceremony on Sunday, July 2, 2023. "OnBoard" is Coffee Bluff Pictures' second official selection at the Essence Film Festival. In 2022, Coffee Bluff Pictures opened the festival with a sold-out screening of "Twenty Pearls: The Story of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated."



L-R Director Deborah Riley Draper, Executive Producer Merline Saintil and Executive Producer Shannon Nash (photo courtesy of Coffee Bluff Pictures)

"I love that I can direct a film about an extraordinary movement started by Black women in a film produced by Black women and screened at the epicenter of celebrating Black women. This win is for the film and all of the women of color who paved the way in Corporate America," says Deborah Riley Draper. "OnBoard," produced by Lacy Barnes, Shannon Nash, and Merline Saintil, enjoyed a special screening world premiere on June 13, 2023, at the Tribeca Festival in New York, with an encore screening on June 16, 2023. For more information about "OnBoard" and its journey, please visit www.onboardthefilm.com.



Tribeca Festival Panelists L-R: Executive Producer Merline Saintil, Executive Producer Shannon Nash, Writer/Director Deborah Riley Draper and Moderator Mikki Taylor

About Coffee Bluff Pictures: Coffee Bluff Pictures is an Atlanta-based creative company founded in 2010 by veteran advertising agency executive Deborah Riley Draper to produce artful, meaningful film, TV, and brand content that inspires engagement with the audiences and the greater community. The company's work explores interesting, under-represented characters and the rich, complicated journeys they embark upon in the U.S. and worldwide. Coffee Bluff Pictures is committed to expanding the aperture of the African American narrative on the screen to increase universal awareness and understanding.

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Deborah Riley Draper

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