

The Sweetest Gift: HERSHEY Inspires a National Movement for One Million Underprivileged Children

Inspired by Milton and Catherine Hershey's compassion, donors, filmmakers, and business leaders are helping one million children experience hope and belonging.

SUNDANCE, UT, UNITED STATES, July 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- By Karen Hall, Publicist, Publisher, and Founder of Momentum Media

Inspired by the compassion of Milton and Catherine Hershey, donors, filmmakers, and business leaders are coming together to help one million underprivileged children across America experience a story of hope, belonging, and purpose.

Some movies simply entertain, while others leave audiences inspired. The upcoming feature film HERSHEY does both and aims to do something even greater.

At an intimate private viewing recently hosted by Harbor Fund at Sundance Mountain Resort in Utah, donors, business leaders and filmmakers gathered around a shared mission that reaches beyond the theater in an evening dedicated to storytelling that inspires generosity and lasting impact.

The ambitious goal: to provide one million disadvantaged children across America the opportunity to experience HERSHEY on the big screen.



Finn Wittrock (as Milton) and Alexandra Daddario (as Kitty Hershey) share a Hershey's kiss in a theater poster for the upcoming movie, HERSHEY.

Helping that movement reach families across America is Angel Studios, a company known for inviting moviegoers to become active participants in the stories that touch their hearts. Supporters are invited to help write the next chapter of this powerful story by giving underserved youth the opportunity to experience HERSHEY for themselves.

The movement is already taking shape.

In connection with the event, a Utah benefactor has pledged to cover movie tickets for disadvantaged children throughout the state. Organizers believe philanthropists across the country will follow, one state at a time, until one million underprivileged children have the opportunity to experience a story of hope, resilience, and belonging.

“

HERSHEY honors the inspiring work of a husband and wife whose greatest legacy is the lives they changed through compassion, generosity, and an unwavering belief that every child deserves opportunity.”

Sharon Paul

The initiative reflects the very heart of Milton and Catherine "Kitty" Hershey's legacy, demonstrating that compassion changes lives.

A lasting expression of the Hersheys' commitment to caring was the founding of the Hershey Industrial School in 1909, providing education, stability, and opportunity for children facing difficult circumstances.

Kirk Tanner, President and CEO of The Hershey Company, reflected on what makes Hershey unlike any other major corporation. "The center of our community is the Milton

Hershey School, which continues to carry on the values of Milton and Kitty Hershey," Tanner explained. "We serve more than 2,200 students living on campus where they receive an education at no cost to their families."

One of the evening's most memorable moments came from screenwriter, producer, and actress Sharon Paul, Co-CEO of Dandelion Media. Recalling deeply moving conversations with Milton Hershey School alumni, she shared their words that capture the heart of both the school and the film.

"The Milton Hershey School doesn't just provide education. It provides belonging."

In addition to telling the remarkable story behind one of America's most iconic chocolate



Milton Hershey with students at Milton Hershey School, one of the world's most well-known educational institutions established to provide opportunity and support for children in need.

companies, HERSHEY honors the inspiring life and work of a husband and wife whose greatest legacy became the lives they changed through compassion, generosity, and an unwavering belief that every child deserves opportunity.

Lindsay Smoot Hadley, co-founder and CEO of Harbor Fund, echoed this vision, "Harbor Fund believes stories have power to inspire generosity and create cultural and societal change." Co-founder Matt Peterson, who served as an executive producer on Hershey, helped unite philanthropists around their shared mission.

Jordan Harmon, President and co-founder of Angel Studios, described the synergy between The Hershey Company, Harbor Fund, Angel Studios, and the filmmakers as having "the highest probability of creating magic this November."

HERSHEY, directed by acclaimed filmmaker Mark Waters (Mean Girls; Mr. Popper's Penguins), with the screenplay by Sharon Paul and Timothy Michael Hayes, stars Finn Wittrock as Milton Hershey and Alexandra Daddario as Kitty Hershey.

Produced by Dandelion Media in collaboration with the Hershey Entities and in association with Aloe

Entertainment and Peachtree Group, the film brings together an accomplished team committed to sharing one of America's most inspiring true stories.

As the evening concluded, supporters were invited to join the mission by helping provide movie tickets so children across America can experience the film's message of perseverance, generosity, and belonging.



Milton Hershey's compassion for children became one of the defining legacies behind the upcoming feature film HERSHEY.



Finn Wittrock as Milton, and Alexandra Daddario as Kitty Hershey, kneel in the proposal scene in the movie, HERSHEY.

The true measure of this initiative's success will be the number of children who realize that they matter, that they belong, and that their future is filled with possibility.

More than a century after Milton and Kitty Hershey invested in children they would never meet, others are invited to answer that call today, because [HERSHEY is about more than chocolate.](#)

It's about giving hope.

And that is the sweetest gift of all.

[Karen Hall is a keynote speaker on emotional intelligence and leadership](#), a publicist, publisher, broadcast journalist, and founder of Momentum Media. Hall is also the founder of the Global Women's Collective, an international platform that elevates women's leadership through media, publishing, and live and virtual events. She currently serves as Editor-in-Chief and Executive Producer for the Los Angeles Tribune, a Grammy-nominated storytelling company, where she oversees international broadcasts. Through her work, Hall is known for helping mission-driven leaders around the world build trust and expand their impact through compelling storytelling and meaningful conversations.

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