

EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

Gina Ireland
Cardinal Blue Consulting
(424) 272-1541
gina@cardinalblueconsulting.com

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***EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE* DOCUMENTARY DEBUTS AT AUTFEST FILM FESTIVAL**

Autism diagnosis rate is on the rise and garners attention in TV & Film

Los Angeles, CA (May 26th, 2018) - *Extraordinary People*, a 30 minute documentary, follows the story of six very different individuals on the autism spectrum as they deal with personal challenges and find meaningful value through their work at a business called Extraordinary Ventures. The film debuted April 28th at the 2nd annual AutFest Film Festival where it screened at the Writers Guild of America Theater in Beverly Hills.

This month, the CDC reported research showing yet another increase in the incidence of autism spectrum disorder. The diagnosis rate is now one in every 59 eight year olds; a 150% increase since 2000. With a growing national conversation around autism, hit TV shows like ABC's *The Good Doctor* and Netflix's *Atypical*, which both had special screenings and Q&A panels at AutFest this year, are helping to stir up this conversation. Scott Badesch, President & CEO of the Autism Society of America states: "The documentaries and films that we showcase at AutFest educate and promote awareness, but also have the power to enhance the lives of individuals and communities on the autism spectrum."

Lori Ireland, Co-Founder of Extraordinary Ventures - a non-profit that employs over 50 individuals with autism - and Vice Chair of the Autism Society of America states the goal of *Extraordinary People* is: "to illustrate that autism is not a single diagnosis, and that while people across the spectrum are very different, a common denominator is the desire they all have for a meaningful life, including holding down a responsible job."

The film highlights how the Extraordinary Ventures business model could be replicated anywhere, and the increased need for such solutions.

- An estimated 80% of adults with autism are either unemployed or underemployed, despite their ability, desire and willingness to work and contribute to the economy.
- The great majority of adults with autism live on incomes below the poverty level party due to limited employment opportunities.
- The population of adults with autism is measured in the millions and each year 50,000 additional individuals with autism are entering adulthood.

Follow *Extraordinary People* on social to stay up-to-date with the film:

<https://www.facebook.com/extraordinarypeoplefilm>
<https://www.instagram.com/extraordinarypeoplefilm>

About Autism Society of America: The Autism Society of America has been improving the lives of all affected by autism for over 50 years and envisions a world where individuals and families living with

autism are able to maximize their quality of life, are treated with the highest level of dignity, and live in a society in which their talents and skills are appreciated and valued. They provide advocacy, education, information and referral, support, and community at national, state and local levels. For more information, visit <http://www.autism-society.org/>

About Extraordinary Ventures: Extraordinary Ventures is a non-profit business in Chapel Hill, North Carolina that was founded in 2007. Their mission is to develop sustainable businesses and employment for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities. Extraordinary Ventures currently employs more than 50 people across the full autism spectrum. For more information, visit extraordinaryventures.org

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