

A person wearing a dark beanie and a dark jacket with a grey sleeve is shown in profile on the left side of the frame, looking out towards a city skyline across a body of water. The skyline features numerous skyscrapers under a hazy sky. The water in the foreground is choppy with white foam from waves.

# THE HOMESTRETCH

A Filmmaker's Perspective  
on Youth Homelessness



## Societal Dynamics of Story

- The **personal value** of one's own story
- Who gets to tell their own story, **whose stories get told for them**, and why?
- The documentary filmmaker's role in bearing witness, giving voice, and **shaping larger narratives**

The Homestretch - official trailer



THE  
**HOMESTRETCH**

**“authentic, no-frills portrayal  
of what it means to be young and  
homeless in America”**

-Terrance F. Ross

*the Atlantic*



## Approach of The Homestretch

- Create space for **complex narratives** to unfold over time
- **Empower youth** to guide their own stories
- Illuminate the work of **service providers** and **educators** as central to the journey of the youth

# Kasey Reflects on The Homestretch

July 14, 2016

SIX YEARS AFTER WE FIRST MET, KASEY WRITES ABOUT HER PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AS AN OUTSPOKEN ADVOCATE AND SUBJECT OF THE FILM

My life changed in late November of 2010 when three women (white) walked into Teen Living Programs with a camera and boom pole asking to hear the voices of young people in “temporary living situations”. In other words homeless.



OUR VERY FIRST MEETING WITH KASEY AT TEEN LIVING PROGRAMS IN 2010 (WITH DR. OZELLA BARNES)

When you put a voice to an issue that people don't normally pay attention to you start to see a change in how people view those things. The Homestretch was that voice for the issue of homeless youth. It was the light that shined on the darkness of the topic of not only youth homelessness but LGBT homelessness as well.

I don't really know what made me give them the time of day, but when they asked could they hear me out one on one I guess I felt a tad special to have a voice that someone wanted to listen to. Which was the first time I had felt that way ever in life. Ever since that one meeting in the Milieu of TLP my life hasn't been the same. My eyes are more open to many issues in the world.

The Homestretch gave me a platform to voice the “other side of the story” telling the side of a youth who has experienced things that people only see in a black and white filter when there is so much more to a situation that meets the eye.



WITH SENATOR RICHARD BLUMENTHAL (D-CT) AND HER FELLOW SUBJECTS ADVOCATING FOR YOUTH IN WASHINGTON DC



BEING NAMED ONE OF THE “THIRTY UNDER THIRTY” ADVOCACY LEADERS IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY BY CHICAGO'S WINDY CITY TIMES



## Using Story to Create Change

- Goal 1: Help **defeat harmful stereotypes** surrounding youth who experience homelessness
- Goal 2: Use the film as a tool for **coalition building** between homeless youth support organizations, policy makers, and educational institutions

# PBS BROADCAST



**INDEPENDENT  
LENS**  
Monday, April 13th  
10/9c

- **1 million** viewers nationwide
- **919K** Twitter impressions
- **200K** Facebook reach
- **190** viewing parties
- **Streaming** on PBS.org
- **Outreach Partnerships** with





# LIVE EVENTS

over **30,000** people attended **569** events

**21**

film  
festivals

**50**

theatrical  
screenings

**209**

community  
screenings

**190**

broadcast  
parties

**80**

ITVS  
screenings


**19**

policy  
screenings

## SELECTED EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY RESPONSE

- **“Hate Free” Pizza Campaign** - raised \$180,000 during broadcast week that went to True Colors Fund for youth homeless service agencies.
- **Chicago Youth Storage Initiative** - As a response to the film, Chicago foundations and Windy City Times partnered in a \$100,000 citywide effort to create storage locker facilities for homeless youth.
- **CauseVox.com Campaign** - asked audiences to donate emergency supplies to homeless students in Chicago Public Schools and shelters.
- **An estimated \$150,000** was raised through individual calls to action for donations to local service providers.
- **Over 500 advocates and programs** nationwide were featured on panels, local television and press during Homestretch events.





*“Homestretch is a story  
about a broken system,  
not broken people.”*

**CHICAGO**  
MAGAZINE

## INTERAGENCY SCREENINGS AND POLICY DISCUSSIONS

- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)
  - U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
  - U.S. Department of Education
  - U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
  - U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- 
- **Consensus** on lack of capacity in government services for homeless youth
  - **Policy discussions** moderated by Terrance Ross, editorial fellow at *The Atlantic* & Tina Kelley, *New York Times* reporter and *Almost Home* co-author
  - Federal Policy screening in Washington, DC had simultaneous live screening events in all 10 regional HHS offices with **700+ officials, educators and advocates** in attendance. Online digital event through ITVS's OVEE platform.

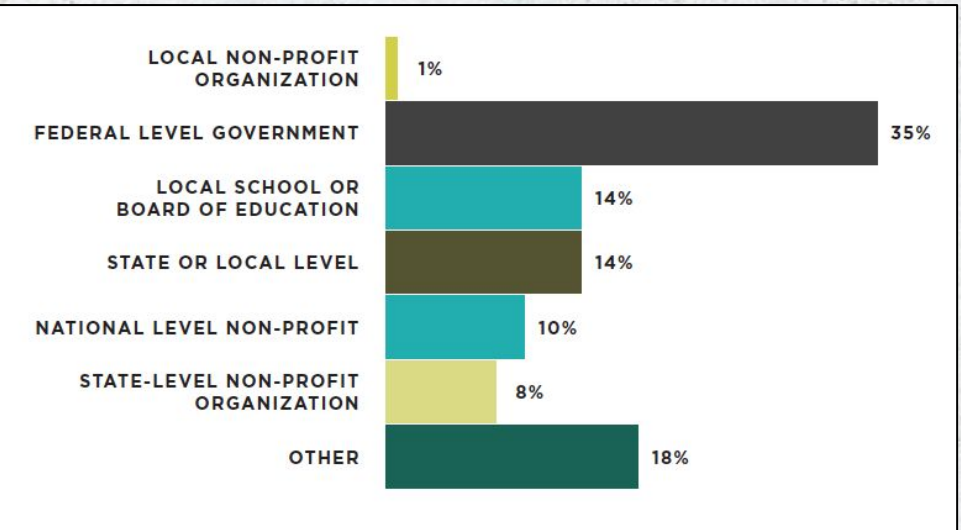


# THE HOMESTRETCH

## Connecting Audiences with OVEE, an Online Screening Platform: An Assessment of *The Homestretch* PBS Documentary



### Sample Breakdown



Caty Borum Chattoo  
Casey Freeman Howe  
Fall 2016

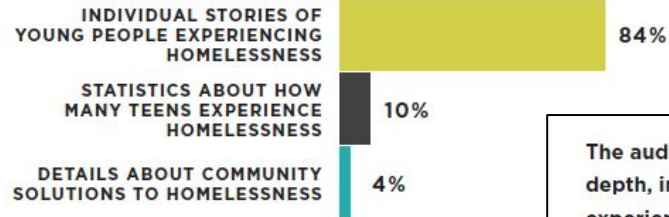
# Conclusion & Strategic Recommendations

THE  
HOMESTRETCH

## The Film & Social Issue

With regard to *The Homestretch* story, the intimate, emotional stories of the teens themselves were the most powerful connectors to the key issues. The audience responded the most to the stories of the teens and their hopeful, triumphant victories in overcoming their situations. Additionally, the discussion audiences most wanted to have was one about promising solutions to teen homelessness—not the problem. Future storytelling and campaign efforts on this social issue would do well to heed both insights: Tell the real stories of real people who are affected, and connect specifically to highlighting the solutions that can really work—and those that might need more institutional and/or financial support—in a community.

Which of the following elements was MOST compelling in this story?



The audience was most compelled by the in-depth, intimate stories of individual young people experiencing homelessness—not the statistics.

The stories of young people living their daily lives in the midst of the ongoing challenges of homelessness were, by far, the most compelling for this audience. More than eight in 10 viewers (84%) agreed the stories of the young people engaged them the most, compared with only 10 percent who said the same about the statistics about young people experiencing homelessness.



# THE HOMESTRETCH

- Value of **Peer-to-Peer** storytelling and **Youth Action** on the issue
- The film participated in a unique pilot program for a **City Wide Youth Summit on Homeless Education** which created an opportunity for Peer-to-Peer development of Youth Actions in Albuquerque NM





A person wearing a dark, textured knit hat and a dark jacket is shown in profile on the left side of the frame, looking out over a large body of water. In the background, a dense city skyline with numerous skyscrapers is visible across the water. The sky is overcast and the water has some whitecaps. The overall tone is somewhat somber and contemplative.

THE  
HOMESTRETCH

**"A bigger, a deeper  
and more lasting...  
portrait of a situation."**

- Robert Loyd, *Los Angeles Times*





Anthony



Kasey



Rogue



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more information at:  
[www.homestretchdoc.com](http://www.homestretchdoc.com)