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Sustainable Lafayette Film Series Continues

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

Bicycle Times magazine. He and Brad Crane have been making strides on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee to make Lafayette bike friendly. "When I heard that Sustainable Lafayette was looking for a film on bikes for this summer series, I decided to get in touch with the producers," Carr says.

"We were very excited when we heard about the series," says Jacob Seigel-Boettner, who lives in Berkeley with his brother, both former Cal students. The two grew up using their bikes all the time, and for them it was just a natural mode of transportation. "Then as part of my studies at UC Berkeley I did some research and a short film on a coffee farmer in Ghana who's bicycle allowed him to become independent as he transported his coffee himself," recalls Seigel-Boettner. "The film was well received on the campus, and it made me realize that what I considered an easy way of transportation was so much more to others around the world."

Seigel-Boettner and his brother decided to make a movie with many more examples of people whose lives are transformed by bicycles. They were awarded \$25,000 as part of the Judith Lee Stronach Baccalaureate Prize at UC Berkeley to finance their project. "We did research through our connections with the bicycle world and decided on the five individuals across the globe that we were going to feature," explains Seigel-Boettner.

The movie features Fred, a health worker in Zambia who uses his bicycle as a means of reaching twice as many patients; Bharati, a teenager in India whose bicycle provides access to education; Mirriam, a disabled Ghanaian woman who works on bicycles as an escape from the stigma attached to disabled people in her community; as well as a Guatemalan farmer and a young California man who uses bicycles to escape from gang involvement.

"The story of the woman in Ghana particularly touched me," says Carr. "Through the program 'Bikes not Bombs' she learned how to build and repair bikes and joined a local shop that makes bikes for locals. It shows how it gave her a sense of pride, and people are looking at her as someone who is important in the community." He was also touched by the story of the young man in the Santa Barbara area who was entangled in local gangs, but who learned to repair bikes and now teaches others how to do it as a way to veer away from that path.

"If bicycles can do these kinds of things for these people, what could they do for me and my community?" asks Carr. "That was one of my takeaways from that film. It helped me revisit that thought: What we can do here to make bicycles a more ubiquitous mode of transportation in

Lafayette?"

The film will be shown at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 31 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Refreshments will be served and Seigel-Boettner will come to answer questions and discuss future projects. The August movie will be "Watershed," shown at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 13; it tells the story of the threats to the once-mighty Colorado River and offers solutions for the future of the American West's water supply.

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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