

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WEDU/PBS to Broadcast the Television Debut of Tampa Documentary Film,
*Because of Sam, World Down Syndrome Day – Sun., March 21st, 8 PM***

The film chronicles the inspirational life of Tampa Homecoming King Sam Piazza who was born with Down syndrome; and features Sam, his family and friends; and WWE Superstar Titus O’Neil.

Tampa, FL (Feb. 21, 2021) *Because of Sam* is an uplifting, independent documentary film about a young man, named Sam Piazza, who was born with Down syndrome. The film gives an inside look at Piazza’s inspirational journey from birth to the present day, and includes the perspectives of people who have been positively impacted by him. The film shows how Piazza overcame bullying, won Homecoming King at Gaither High School, and is an advocate for people with disabilities.

Piazza’s speaking career began when he was selected to serve as a **United Way Campaign Brand Ambassador**, at four years old. Today, at age 30, he continues to help others as an Advocacy and Inspiration Team member at **Gigi’s Playhouse**, a Down Syndrome Achievement Center; and advisor to the Hillsborough County **Sheriff’s Office** on the needs of people with intellectual developmental disabilities. Piazza is also a valued Team Member at **PDQ** (People Dedicated to Quality), a restaurant chain headquartered in Tampa, where he has worked for eight years.

Because of Sam transforms how the world views people with disabilities and inspires all people to pursue their dreams. Tampa native, and University of South Florida alumna, Renee Warmack produced, directed, and wrote the 50-minute heartwarming, independent film, which highlights non-profit organizations that helped Piazza achieve his goals.

Suzanne McCormick, US President, United Way Worldwide says, “I loved it! So uplifting! Truly inspiring!”

City of Tampa Mayor Jane Castor says, “...it will certainly inspire others to be accepting, encouraging, and inclusive of everyone.”

WWE Superstar Titus O’Neil says, “Be prepared to be wowed... because it’s something very special and something much needed, especially in the world today.”

Broadcast Details:

Movie: *Because of Sam* (BecauseofSam.com) – 50-minute documentary film produced by Renee Warmack

Date/Time: Sunday, March 21, 2021 at 8 pm

Channels: WEDQ (16 counties on the west coast of Florida) Find your provider’s channel at: <https://www.wedu.org/watch/how-to-watch>

Note: 7:30 pm – Watch the *Up Close with Cathy Unruh* interview featuring Sam Piazza and Renee Warmack

(MORE)

About World Down Syndrome Day According to the National Down Syndrome Society, World Down Syndrome Day (March 21st) is dedicated to all individuals with Down syndrome. Trisomy 21 is the clinical way of saying Down syndrome, which is the third copy on the 21st chromosome. In a person without Down syndrome, there are 46 chromosomes in the human body. Individuals with Down syndrome have an extra chromosome. Source: <https://www.ndss.org/world-syndrome-day-3-21/>

About WEDU PBS WEDU is West Central Florida's PBS station reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of multi-media platforms including: television programming, station website, www.wedu.org and social media platforms, monthly member magazine Premiere, educational outreach activities and special events. WEDU's focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for adults and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (M&RR, January 2021). For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU visit www.wedu.org; WEDU Public Media or call (813) 254-9338.

About Renee Warmack Productions Tampa native and University of South Florida alumna, Renee Warmack, MPA, is a Producer, Speaker and Coach who uses her inspirational movies, engaging events, and motivational coaching programs to help others claim their power and capture their dreams. Learn more at: BecauseofSam.com; ReneeWarmackProductions.com. Contact: 813-610-3132; ReneeWarmackProductions@yahoo.com

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