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“JOHN – LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS” DOCUMENTARY TRAILER RELEASED IN SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Filmmaker says COVID-19 is great concern for some living with mental illness
Producer of the “Electronic Crack Film” Profiles Rapper with Schizophrenia

Elkton, MD, May 8, 2020 - Filmmaker, Joseph Piner, the producer of such films as “Electronic Crack Film” and “Uncertain Days Living Homeless” released last Friday his official trailer for his upcoming documentary entitled *John – Living With Mental Illness* in support of those living with mental health conditions.

May is Mental Health Month in America and the timing could not be better for releasing the documentary trailer, according to Piner, who plans to release his latest film within the next two months. The documentary, which has been in the making for more than two years, profiles Cecil County, Maryland resident John Smith, a local rapper who lives with schizophrenia and has experienced a number of psychotic episodes as a result of fearing the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

“I have interacted with John almost weekly for the last two years and I have noticed that his psychotic flareups have increased since the Coronavirus began impacting the region and the rest of the world,” says Piner, a native of Elkton where Smith resides. “He (Smith) even told me and others that he wanted to call (Maryland Governor) Hogan to share his thoughts on a cure for the virus,” Piner said recently.

Piner says he was motivated to help bring awareness to mental health stigmas after meeting Smith on the street several years ago. Piner was visiting a family member in Elkton when Smith approached him on the street and asked if he could demonstrate his rap talent. Piner was not only impressed with Smith’s talent for rapping and coordinated choreography but, he was equally impressed with learning about Smith’s life story.

Piner soon met with Smith again and began filming him. Piner immediately thought how he might find a way to chronicle Smith’s talent for rapping along with a way to share Smith’s struggles in juggling his mental health issues on a daily basis.

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Piner has also witnessed others who live with mental illness demonstrate resilience. He has interviewed others within the mental health community to include clinicians and advocates. As a result of meeting Smith and following his journey for more than two years, Piner has since become an advocate for mental health wellness and serves on a committee of supporters for Smith's wellness and mental health recovery that includes local doctors, social workers, peer support recovery specialists, community leaders and a cadre of other mental health professionals.

"John's like a rock star around here," Piner says. Over the last two years, Piner has witnessed on many occasions people stopping Smith on the street asking to take selfies with Smith. Piner has also witnessed many business owners welcoming Smith inside their establishments to perform his latest rap songs and coordinated dance moves. Whether shopping for a flashy new outfit at the local Goodwill store or dropping by the Happy Hair Salon to say hello to the stylists and patrons, Smith spreads positivity wherever he goes according to the Cecil Whig, a local newspaper.

Smith, aka "Rapper John," "The Lyrical Musician" and "The Human Studio," is the primary subject of the filmmaker's mental health wellness documentary. Piner told the Cecil Whig that he wanted his film to help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health wellness to include suicide prevention. Smith has a long and well documented journey with mental health challenges to include living with schizophrenia. Smith has also experienced multiple suicide attempts.

Piner began his video and film career in 1985 with home videos. As time went on, he began video tapping weddings and other events. In 1994, he founded Piner Video Productions and has since enhanced his business from producing weddings and corporate videos to include documentary filmmaking. The company has evolved over the years and is now CineFocus & Media Productions.

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The Twilley Group is a communications firm based in Maryland. For more information about filmmaker Joseph Piner, CineFocus & Media Productions and John Smith, contact Monte Twilley at The Twilley Group at (667) 207-9831 or info@thetwilleygroup.com.

Below is a link to Joseph Piner's YouTube page where his latest documentary trailer was released.

[John - Living With Mental Illness Official Film Trailer](#)