

Press Release

Press Contact

Steve Saleeba

upstander@hollywoodagency.com

401-480-6466

“Bounty” Premieres in-person in Boston, Invites Audiences to Confront History of Scalp Bounty Hunting

The documentary short was co-directed by citizens of Penobscot Nation in collaboration with Emmy® Award-winning Upstander Project

Boston (April 5, 2022) - The documentary short film [Bounty](#), a collaborative project between Emmy® Award-winning Upstander Project and citizens of the Penobscot Nation, will make its Boston premiere at an in-person event on April 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Old South Meeting House.

“We all deserve to learn the truth of what happened on Boston’s Freedom Trail — including that 19 of these hideous scalp bounty proclamations were signed in Boston’s Old State House where *Bounty* was filmed. There is power and healing in coming together just a block from this space to tell and witness previously silenced stories” said Adam Mazo, filmmaker and co-founder at Upstander Project.

Filmmakers Dawn Neptune Adams (Penobscot) and Mazo will join Upstander Project learning director Dr. Mishy Lesser and Revolutionary Spaces CEO Dr. Nathaniel Sheildley in a panel discussion moderated by Chris Newell of Akomawt Educational Initiative. The event, co-hosted by Revolutionary Spaces and Upstander Project, is free and open to the public. Registration is requested [here](#).

Bounty reveals the hidden story of the Phips Proclamation, a single example of the rampant use of scalp-bounty proclamations to exterminate Penobscot people in order to take their land in what is now New England. In the film, Penobscot parents and children resist erasure and commemorate survival by reading and reacting to one of the dozens of government-issued bounty proclamations that motivated colonial settlers to hunt, scalp, and murder Indigenous people.

“This film is about our survival and the survival of Penobscot people,” said Adams. “We're still here, we're still practicing our culture. We're still speaking our languages. We're still very much among you, no matter how invisible we seem to be.”

Across the region between 1675 to 1760 colonial governments issued at least 79 bounty proclamations. English colonists, many who became revolutionary war heroes, targeted nearly every tribe by name in

order to take their land to create the United States. Beyond New England, at least 50 scalp bounties were issued elsewhere in the United States until 1885.

"I would love for people to have an awakening about Indigenous people in America. I would love for people to not feel defensive or blamed or upset about this project. I would love for them to feel like they are just learning the whole history of America," said filmmaker and Penobscot Nation Tribal Ambassador Maulian Dana.

The *Bounty Teacher's Guide*, produced by Upstander Project, is an essential companion to the film. It examines how scalp bounty proclamations were used systematically by English colonial authorities to exterminate Indigenous Peoples and seize the land that became the United States. "The *Bounty Teacher's Guide* is an invaluable tool for presenting information in a developmentally appropriate and accurate way. The commitment of Upstander Project to supporting students and educators is commendable and much appreciated," said Margaret Messier, an English curriculum coordinator at Wakefield Public Schools in Massachusetts.

Dr. Mishy Lesser said, "the hunting of Native people was domestic terrorism and unleashed an avalanche of hatred and suspicion of Native peoples that continues today. My hope is that those who cling to a false narrative about the origins of the United States will read this guide and someday concede that the repeating of harmful falsehoods is bad for our national psyche and for our future as a pluralistic country."

Learn more about the film at bountyfilm.org.

About the Penobscot and Wabanaki People

Today in Maine, there are four federally recognized tribes located in five communities: the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Mi'kmaq Nation, the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township, the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point, and the Penobscot Nation. Each community maintains its own tribal government and cultural center, and each manages its respective lands and natural resources. Some have their own schools. Abenaki live in what is now Vermont and New Hampshire. Other Native peoples live in towns and cities across these states. All are collectively known as the People of the Dawnland.

About Upstander Project

Upstander Project uses storytelling to amplify silenced narratives, develop upstander skills to challenge systemic injustice, and nurture compassionate, courageous relationships that honor the interconnection of all beings and the Earth. Our award-winning films have been viewed by millions of people around the world and our educator workshops have impacted the learning of more than 100,000 students. Our aim is to produce a constellation of resources to help people see that it is possible to face hard truths about ourselves personally and collectively, find our place in the world, and use that understanding to build strong, just communities.

Filmmaking Team

Bounty was made by Dawn Neptune Adams (Penobscot), Maulian Dana (Penobscot), Adam Mazo, Ben Pender-Cudlip, and Tracy Rector embracing a collaborative model of filmmaking and creating story together. We are Penobscot and settler and we share a commitment to uplifting Indigenous voices and telling the truth about the history of these lands we all call home. Beyond the five people listed here, the broader team included educators, program managers, advisers, editors, artists, and other contributors who collectively make up Upstander Project. Full biographies for our team are available at upstanderproject.org/team.