



COLLEGE WEEK to premiere on AMERICA REFRAMED
A film by Derek Grace

Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 8 p.m.
on Public Television's WORLD Channel

AMERICA REFRAMED
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The film vividly captures the excitement and enthusiasm that comes with young people experiencing "success" – a rare commodity in most of the communities and homes of young people in the oppressed neighborhoods of Chicago and many areas like it across the country. — Michelle Materre, Associate Professor, Media Studies and Film, The New School

May 13, 2016 – (New York, NY) – Derek Grace's celebrated documentary **COLLEGE WEEK** will premiere **Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 8 p.m.** on WORLD Channel ([check local listings](#)), as part of the fourth season of **AMERICA REFRAMED**, public media's newest documentary series hosted by Natasha Del Toro. The broadcast is in support of CPB's American Graduate and will be followed by 90 days of free streaming for audiences across the U.S. at www.worldchannel.org/americareframed starting on June 8th.

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As graduation season commences, **COLLEGE WEEK** is an insider's perspective, rarely represented in mainstream media, about a tenacious group of teachers at Spencer Elementary Technology Academy. The school, located in Chicago's Austin neighborhood, is committed to providing its students with access to technology, while setting high standards of excellence. Largely known for its high rates of homicide, crime, poverty and violence, Austin is one of the city's largest communities. Despite its notoriety, Austin also has a caring community of homeowners and working class families striving to make positive changes.



In **COLLEGE WEEK**, filmmaker Derek Grace documents the positive impact of teacher and parent involvement on student success. For elite charter and public schools in affluent Chicagoland communities, “College Week” is perceived as a customary practice, but in poor communities like Austin, schools more often serve as incubators for the school-to-prison pipeline. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) describes this phenomenon as a disturbing national trend wherein children with histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

The teachers’ unwavering love and dedication counters a full spectrum of issues students regularly face. In the film, we hear students and teachers provide eyewitness testimonials of the seemingly insurmountable challenges that this school and its community manage to work around on a daily basis: break-ins, gunfights, the loss of family and friends to gun violence, confrontations with drug dealers and gang leaders, and more.

Filmmaker Grace explains, “This film honors the values that my late father passed on to me. He firmly believed that education is the way out of poverty. In the lives of these children, the steadfast support and confidence from just one teacher may be the sustenance needed to carry them through in academia and in life. Thus, I hope that **COLLEGE WEEK** can serve as a possible model for other schools and communities that are undergoing similar challenges to explore because as a society we all benefit by instilling pride, hope and love of learning to the next generation.”

Film credits:

Director: Derek Grace

Web and Social Media

AMERICA REFRAMED can be accessed online via
<http://worldchannel.org/programs/america-reframed/>
and,
<https://www.facebook.com/WorldChannel>
<https://www.facebook.com/AmericaReFramed>

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Media Contact

Journalists and reviewers may contact Neyda Martinez at **917 656 7846** or via email at neyda@amdoc.org for interviews and special requests.

AMERICA REFRAMED Series Credits

Executive Producers: Justine Nagan, Chris Hastings, Chris White
Series Producer: Carmen L. Vicencio
Host: Natasha Del Toro

About AMERICA REFRAMED

AMERICA REFRAMED is a co-production of the WORLD Channel and American Documentary, Inc. and is hosted by journalist Natasha Del Toro.

Season 4 of AMERICA REFRAMED curates a diverse selection of films highlighting innovative and artistic approaches to storytelling from emerging and veteran filmmakers alike. Viewers will be immersed in personal stories from the streets of towns big and small to the exurbs and country roads that span the spectrum of American life. The documentaries invite audiences to reflect on topics as varied as culture, healthcare, politics, gun violence, religion and more. Several episodes feature a roundtable discussion moderated by host Natasha Del Toro with special guest commentators and filmmakers.

In 2015, AMERICA REFRAMED won a GRACIE Outstanding Series award, and was nominated for an EMMY award as well as an Independent Documentary Association award for best curated series. In its first season, AMERICA REFRAMED received five 2013 CINE Golden Eagle Awards, and one Imagen Awards nomination.

AMERICA REFRAMED Co-Producers

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia arts organization dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and



community participation. AmDoc is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. For more information, visit: www.amdoc.org

The WORLD Channel delivers the best of public television's nonfiction, news and documentary programming, including original content by and about diverse communities, to U.S. audiences through local public television stations and streaming online at worldchannel.org. WORLD reached 35.8 million unique viewers 18+ last year (55% adults 18-49) and over-indexes in key diversity demographics. Online, the WORLD Channel expands on broadcast topics and fuels dialogue across social media, providing opportunities for broad and diverse audience interaction.

WORLD is programmed by WGBH/Boston, in partnership with American Public Television and WNET/New York, and in association with PBS and National Educational Telecommunications Association. Funding for the WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Ford Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Kendeda Fund. For more information about The WORLD Channel, visit www.worldchannel.org

