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Rotary Grant Helps Bring The Film *Including Samuel* To Concord Schools

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DURHAM, N.H.-The Institute on Disability (IOD) at the University of New Hampshire has received a \$2,500 grant from the Rotary Club of Concord to support screenings of the film "Including Samuel" and free dissemination of the educational version of the film throughout the Concord school district. More than 70 staff from three Concord schools attended the first screening on May 15, 2008, at Red River Theatres in Concord. Additional screenings for staff and students are being planned for the fall.

These screenings are part of the IOD's Inclusive Communities Project, a program that leverages the IOD's expertise and the new documentary film "Including Samuel" as resources to promote greater acceptance and inclusion of children with disabilities in schools and communities. "Including Samuel" filmmaker Dan Habib left the Concord Monitor in April to join the IOD as filmmaker in residence and as director of the Inclusive Communities Project.

"The Rotary Club of Concord is proud to support the Institute on Disability's Inclusive Communities Project and the 'Including Samuel' program for the Concord School District," said Kim Burgess, chair of the community support committee of the Rotary Club of Concord. "One of the guiding questions that we must ask for all of the Rotary's service activities is 'Will it be beneficial to all concerned?'. 'Including Samuel' boldly yet poignantly examines a very difficult topic and subsequently benefits all of us. Those with disabilities can learn so much for others, and more importantly, those without disabilities can truly realize the abilities of those with disabilities."

"It isn't often that we experience something that profoundly moves us and elevates our entire perspective about what it means to be human," said Dorinda Gibney, professional development coordinator for the Concord School District and one of the organizers of the May 15th screening. "'Including Samuel' did exactly that for me. I'm very much looking forward to helping bring Samuel's luminous story to the rest of the district."

Before his son Samuel was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, Habib rarely thought about the educational inclusion of people with disabilities. Now he thinks about inclusion every day. Shot and produced over four years, Habib's award-winning documentary film "Including Samuel" chronicles the Habib family's efforts to include Samuel in every facet of their lives. The film honestly portrays his family's hopes and struggles as well as the experiences of four other individuals with disabilities and their families. "Including Samuel" is a highly personal, passionately photographed film that captures the cultural and systemic barriers to inclusion in schools.

Since the film debuted in November 2007, "Including Samuel" has been screened at

universities, national conferences, film festivals and independent theatres across the country. The film has also been featured on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, as well as in the *Washington Post* and the *Boston Globe*. *Exceptional Parent Magazine* called it a "must see" film.

For more information on the Institute on Disability and the film "*Including Samuel*", please visit www.iod.unh.edu.

The Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire was established in 1987 to provide a coherent university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of persons with disabilities and their families. Its mission is to advance policies and systems changes, promising practices, education, and research that strengthen communities to ensure full access, equal opportunities, and participation for all persons.

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