

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA JOINS THE MOVEMENT TO BRING “SELMA” TO STUDENTS**

**MORE THAN 300,000 STUDENTS IN 29 LOCATIONS ACROSS THE U.S. WILL SEE ACADEMY AWARD® BEST PICTURE NOMINEE “SELMA” FOR FREE**

HOLLYWOOD, CA (January 21, 2015) – Champaign-Urbana has joined the massive national campaign by African-American business leaders to raise funds for free student admission to the Academy Award®-nominated and Golden Globe-winning film “SELMA,” expanding the unprecedented movement to a total of 29 locations nationwide.

Following the lead of a team of African-American business leaders in New York and across the U.S., funds have been established in Champaign-Urbana that will allow students to see “SELMA” for free at the participating theater while supplies last. To date, more than 300,000 middle and high school students across the U.S. will experience the critically acclaimed film for free.

Byron Clark, Co-Chair, NEBC, and Aaron O. Ammons, President, NEBC, are organizing the efforts in Champaign-Urbana.

“‘Selma’ is a film that powerfully illustrates the sacrifices made for African-Americans to have the right to vote. We believe that understanding this struggle places a value on voting that benefits everyone, but especially our youth. We, the North End Breakfast Club, initially sponsored a private screening and discussion of ‘Selma’ when it was released locally, and saw people were moved by it. We decided to take action to make sure it’s accessible to as many young people as possible. It would be a shame if the price of a ticket became a barrier to students experiencing this movie,” said Clark.

“The North End Breakfast Club is very happy to have the support of Paramount Pictures. As we continue to engage our community through the use of historically informative films such as ‘Selma,’ we know these films will have a profound impact on the thought process of the individuals who attend the viewings and post discussions,” said Ammons. “As President, and on behalf of the members of NEBC, I want to say thank you for your progressive thinking and courageous support for this initiative in Champaign, Illinois and across the country.”

Clark and Ammons are following the lead of business leaders in Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Central Florida/Orlando, Charlotte, Chicago, Connecticut, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami, Montgomery, Nashville, New Jersey, New Orleans, New York City, Oakland/San Francisco Bay Area, Philadelphia, Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill, San Francisco, Sarasota, FL, St. Louis, Stockton, CA, Washington D.C. and Westchester.

The participating Champaign-Urbana theater is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Carmike 13 | Champaign |

Tickets will be available beginning January 31st.

Viacom’s Paramount Pictures, which is distributing “SELMA,” is coordinating the programs with participating theaters in the U.S. For a list of participating theaters in select cities offering free admission to students during this program and for information on group sales, visit [www.SelmaMovie.com/studenttickets](http://www.SelmaMovie.com/studenttickets)

Middle and high school students who present a current student ID or report card at the box office of any participating theater will receive free admission while tickets last.

The nationwide efforts are inspired by the success of the program in New York City, in which 27 African-American business leaders created a fund for 27,000 of the city’s 7th, 8th and 9th grade students to see the film for free. Due to the overwhelming demand, the New York City effort sold out in the very first weekend and was expanded to 75,000 tickets.

To help get the word out about the program, tweet using the hashtag #SelmaForStudents.

Directed by DuVernay and starring David Oyelowo as Martin Luther King Jr., “SELMA” is nominated for Academy Awards® for Best Picture and Best Original Song for “Glory” by Common & John Legend. The film earned a Golden Globe Award for Best Song for “Glory” and was nominated for Best Picture, Best Actor and Best Director.

Paramount Pictures, Pathé, and Harpo Films present “SELMA.” Produced by Christian Colson, Dede Gardner, Jeremy Kleiner, Oprah Winfrey, the film is executive produced by Brad Pitt, Cameron McCracken, Diarmuid McKeown, Nik Bower, Ava DuVernay, Paul Garnes and Nan Morales. The film is written by Paul Webb. “SELMA” is directed by Ava DuVernay.

“SELMA” is the story of a movement. The film chronicles the tumultuous three-month period in 1965, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign to secure equal voting rights in the face of violent opposition. The epic march from Selma to Montgomery culminated in President Johnson (Tom Wilkinson) signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the most significant victories for the civil rights movement. Director Ava DuVernay’s “SELMA” tells the story of how the revered leader and visionary Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (David Oyelowo) and his brothers and sisters in the movement prompted change that forever altered history. The film also stars Tom Wilkinson, Cuba Gooding Jr., Alessandro Nivola, Giovanni Ribisi, Common, Carmen Ejogo, Lorraine Toussaint, with Tim Roth and Oprah Winfrey as “Annie Lee Cooper.”

“SELMA” is playing in theaters nationwide. To learn more about the film, go to <http://www.selmamovie.com>

# # #

**About Paramount Pictures Corporation**

 Paramount Pictures Corporation (PPC), a global producer and distributor of filmed entertainment, is a unit of Viacom (NASDAQ: VIAB, VIA), a leading content company with prominent and respected film, television and digital entertainment brands. Paramount controls a collection of some of the most powerful brands in filmed entertainment, including Paramount Pictures, Paramount Animation, Paramount Television, Paramount Vantage, Paramount Classics, Insurge Pictures, MTV Films, and Nickelodeon Movies. PPC operations also include Paramount Home Media Distribution, Paramount Pictures International, Paramount Licensing Inc., and Paramount Studio Group.

Media Contact:

Paramount Pictures

Ashley Bodul

ashley\_bodul@paramount.com

Champaign-Urbana