

## **The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous**

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### **JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS' "FOOTSTEPS OF MY FATHER" DOCUMENTARY RECOGNIZED AT BEST SHORTS FILM COMPETITION**

NEW YORK— The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) recently had the commercial opening of its new short documentary “Footsteps of My Father,” which explores the heroism of Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds in saving the lives of 200 Jewish American soldiers during the Second World War. The documentary was just recognized with a prestigious Award of Excellence Special Mention by The Best Shorts Film Competition.

The narrative, told through the lens of Edmond’s son, Pastor Chris Edmonds, and several American Jewish Prisoners of War, was directed by Paul Allman, and produced by JFR Executive Vice President Stanlee Stahl and Dean Beals who has co-produced JFR documentaries for many years. Ted Koppel, of ABC News’ Nightline, provided the historical narration for the film.

The film debuted on Friday, June 8, at the IFC Theatre in Manhattan. The film has been submitted for an Academy Award in the Best Documentary Short Subject category.

The Best Shorts Competition recognizes film, television, videography and new media professionals who demonstrate exceptional achievement in craft and creativity, and those who produce standout entertainment or contribute to profound social change. Entries are judged by highly qualified professionals in the film and television industry. Other high-profile winners of this internationally respected award including, Disney Interactive for Vinlymation: A Love Story and Oscar winning production Mr. Hublot from Laurent Witz from Luxembourg.

Master Sgt. Edmonds was captured during the Battle of the Bulge by the German army on December 19, 1944. As the highest-ranking officer in the Stalag IXA, a prisoner of war camp, Edmonds was responsible for the camp's 1,292 American POWs, which included some 200 American Jewish GIs. The camp’s commandant ordered Edmonds to identify the Jewish soldiers in order to separate them from the other prisoners. Instead, Edmonds refused, and when the

## FOOTSTEPS OF MY FATHER WINS BEST SHORTS FILM AWARD

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German commandant placed his pistol against Edmonds' head, demanding that he identify the Jewish soldiers, Edmonds responded "We are all Jews here," refusing to identify the Jewish soldiers thereby saving their lives.

Edmonds survived 100 days of captivity, and returned home after the war, but never spoke of his actions. Edmonds passed away in 1985, and only long after did his son, Pastor Chris Edmonds begin to put together the story of his father's heroism during the war. Posthumously, Edmond's actions have been recognized by Yad Vashem and The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous. The narrative of film follows the younger Edmond's exploration of the episode during the war.

"We are thrilled with the recognition that Master Sgt. Edmonds's story has received from The Best Shorts Film Competition. His story, one not only of heroism but also one of humility, provides an incredible role model to today's leaders and to so many others. His humility during his lifetime, by choosing not to publicize his actions provides an incredible and unique perspective into the Greatest Generation," said Stahl. "We are thrilled with the award and look forward to sharing his story with an even wider audience in the future."

This documentary was shown at the Portland Jewish Film Festival on Tuesday, June 19, 2018.

The JFR continues its work of providing monthly financial assistance to some 350 aged and needy Righteous Gentiles, living in 20 countries. Since its founding, the JFR has provided more than \$39 million to aged and needy rescuers – helping to repay a debt of gratitude on behalf of the Jewish people to these noble men and women. Its Holocaust teacher education program has become a standard for teaching the history of the Holocaust and educating teachers and students about the significance of the Righteous as moral and ethical exemplars. For more information, visit <https://jfr.org/>.