

AMERICAN LIFE

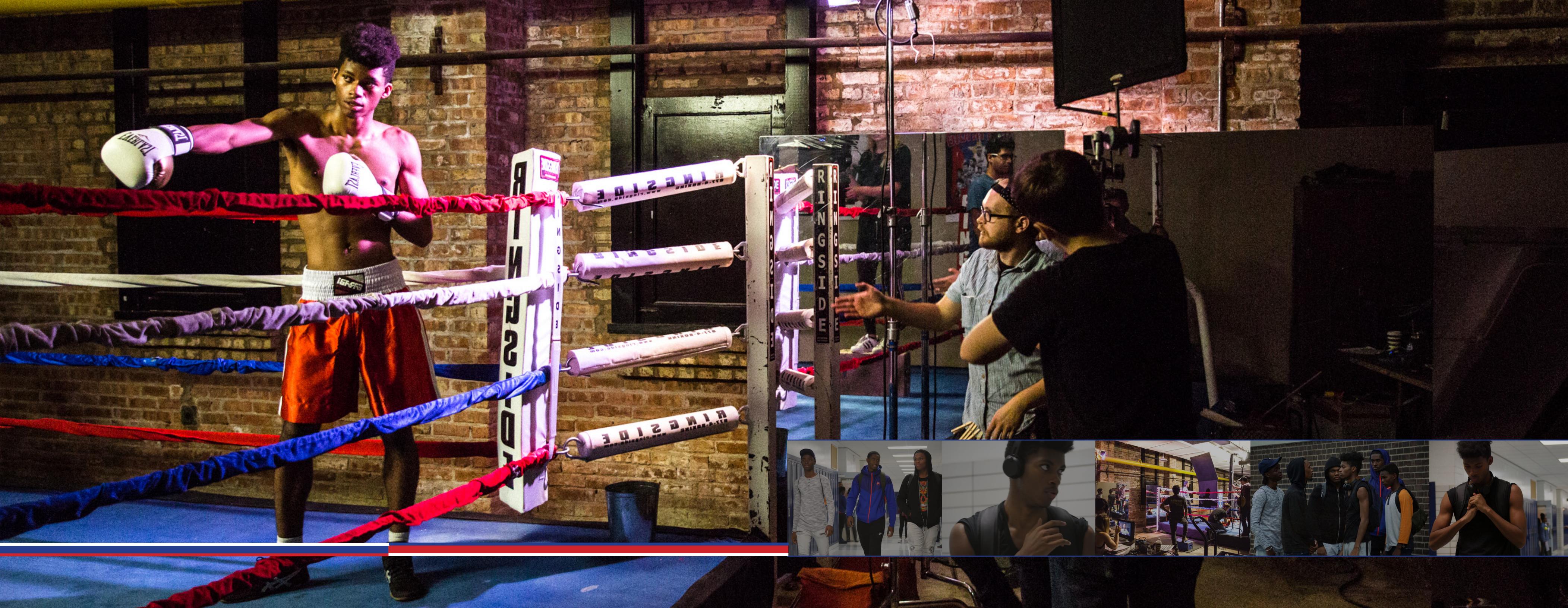
A FILM BY

Emily Harmon &
Calisto Lemashon OloIngojine

SYNOPSIS

17-year-old Michael uses boxing for moments of escape from his violent Chicago community. But, when a gang won't stop using his brother Tray 14, he leaves his gloves behind and does what he feels he must to protect his family.







EMILY HARMON

Director

Emily Harmon is a filmmaker dedicated to depicting powerful human stories that explore issues we must address for a better world. Her goal in highlighting these stories is to lift up voices that are often deemed insignificant, thus silenced. She has worked with several nonprofits in their efforts to empower communities to fight injustice, locally and globally.

CALISTO LEMASHON OLOLNGOJINE

Producer

Calisto Lemashon Oloangojine is a creative film and television producer focused on social activism and advocacy. A Fulbright scholar from Kenya, he holds an MFA from Columbia College Chicago, in creative film producing. Lemashon is a passionate individual with a keen focus on how films impact society, by telling people-centered and lead stories. He firmly believes in the importance of protecting artist freedom of expression, he has since ventured into documentaries films developing concepts that tackle various themes in social development around the world. Lemashon is currently working with the United Nations Support Mission in Somalia as a Digital Media Producer.



DIRECTORS STATEMENT



The City of Chicago remains one of the most segregated and economically unbalanced cities in the US. A result of this is gang and gun violence which disproportionately impacts youth coming from the city's Western and Southern neighborhoods, mainly Black/African & Brown/Latin American Children. **American Life** doesn't tell an unheard of story, but it is one many choose to ignore. It's not an easy story to digest or tell. I'm a white woman from Des Moines, Iowa. This story is far from my own experience so figuring out how to tell it in an authentic way took a long, long time. Research, research, research, interviews with folks involved with Chicago gangs, and a fantastic story consult named Julian Walker made conceptualization possible. This was the fourth short film I've written and directed and by far the most intensive. We had to work with a tight budget and manage multiple locations, stunt choreography, and the 10-hour day mandated for working with child actors. But we did it! Our cast and crew were all amazing and pulled through some intense challenges, like getting stormed out of our last day of production. Because of Chicago's stormy skies, we had to wait a month to complete principal photography. It was difficult but worth it. I truly believe this is a story that can inspire conversation. No child should have to choose violence in order to try and feel safe and that is the world for many right now. We all have power to change that, but first we have to talk about it. Then, we have to demand policy change.

- Emily Harmon

PRODUCER STATEMENT

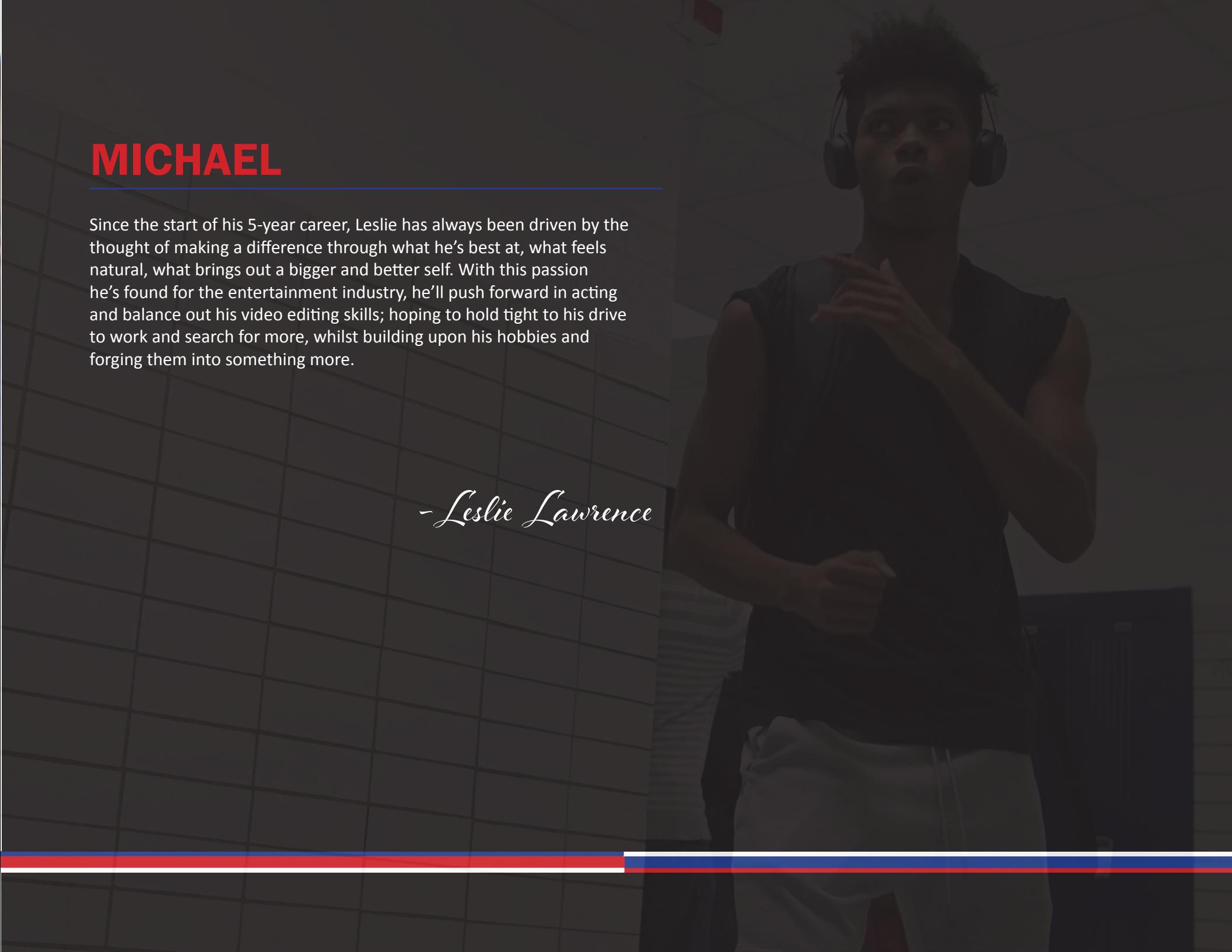


American Life is a significant story, I was drawn to it by the sheer resolve of the characters which is constantly questioned, and that gives the story a dynamic arc. This keeps one deeply engrossed in watching the characters develop to be as raw and relatable. In our evolving society, we fail to see the role peers and bullies play in the character development of our children. This is what, *American Life* takes a dramatic look at, with the need for Michael and his brother Tray to make choices, in a unique aesthetic. My background with civic advocacy through media was a guiding factor in letting the story lead as it tells their story while cracking on our perceptions and ability to understand a different point of view. It is easy to be a human, what's harder is being able to relate and comprehend our differences as solvable. *American life* was a different experience for me, working in a high production value product outside of my home, the teamwork and deep relations which I formed will forever be a guiding standard in future productions.

- Calisto Lemashon Oloangojine



A 17-year old boy loses faith that his boxing can protect his brother from joining a street gang so he chooses a deadlier option.



MICHAEL

Since the start of his 5-year career, Leslie has always been driven by the thought of making a difference through what he's best at, what feels natural, what brings out a bigger and better self. With this passion he's found for the entertainment industry, he'll push forward in acting and balance out his video editing skills; hoping to hold tight to his drive to work and search for more, whilst building upon his hobbies and forging them into something more.

- Leslie Lawrence



TRAY

Jabari McCoy played the role of Tray for the film, **American Life**. He began acting at an early age in commercials and short films. He is homeschooled and enjoys history and science. Jabari's favorite sports are soccer and basketball. He spends his spare time playing the piano, solving the Rubik's cube, and reading a good mystery book. He thanks Calisto and Emily for the opportunity to be a part of their film.

-Jabari McCoy

ANDRE

Pierre Washington was born in Alaska, and grew up in Atlanta around art and military, bounced around a lot after turning 10 but always kept music close to me and always put on a different face and every city had a different version of me, that's why a lot of my friends who do know me, say I could be an actor and that's what made me want to act. (Also my dad pushing him into doing **American Life**) 'I always wanted to perform but I have severe stage fright, which is how I knew music wasn't going to work, but when I get to act I can just be in the moment'. His beliefs are you must take care of your mind, body, and spirit and art help with all three. It is something he would pass on to his kids.

-Pierre Washington

TARGET AUDIENCE

Our immediate audience is the American suburbia - young adult and older. Those not living this experience are most likely to pretend it doesn't exist and we want to spark conversation among those with resources and power to invest. Our core audience represents those with an interest in knowledge sharing and investment in younger generations through professional, educational, youth, civic advocacy, empowerment & knowledge sharing platforms. A key component is ensuring this story turns into conversations with policymakers, about how infrastructure and funding cuts continue to negatively impact children. Our audience also includes 11 to 21-year olds living in toxic, violent environments.





CAST

Michael Leslie Lawrence

Tray Jabari Mccoy

Andre Pierre Washington

Boy 1 Ifeoluwa Ajay

Boy 2 Javonte McCullough

Boy 3 Antoine Patterson

Extras Waliyah Amoso

Asia Bell

Disney Caldwell

Shayla Dooley

Jamell Farley

Starr Harris

Dajuan Jones

Avianna Jones

Aaliyah Noland

India Preston

CREW

Executive Producer Calisto Lemashon Oloingojine

Director Emily Harmon

Director of Photography Paige Hochstatter

Production Designer Alexis Vergara

Editor Angela Estrada

Music Director Khamani Hagood

1st Assistant Director Youssef Gouda

2nd Assistant Director Jason Boateng

Line Producer Veronica Kovach

Location Manager Dashawna Wright

Location Scout Tavares Johnson

Production Assistant Julian Walker

Casting Director Veronica Kovach

1st AC Kein Bartlett

1st AC Madelyn Momano

1st AC Nihal Dantluri

1st AC Dagny Koehler

2nd AC Kelsey Neumann

Gaffer Zach Alsen

Best Boy Grip Caitlin Spiritus

Key Grip Troy Berkowitz

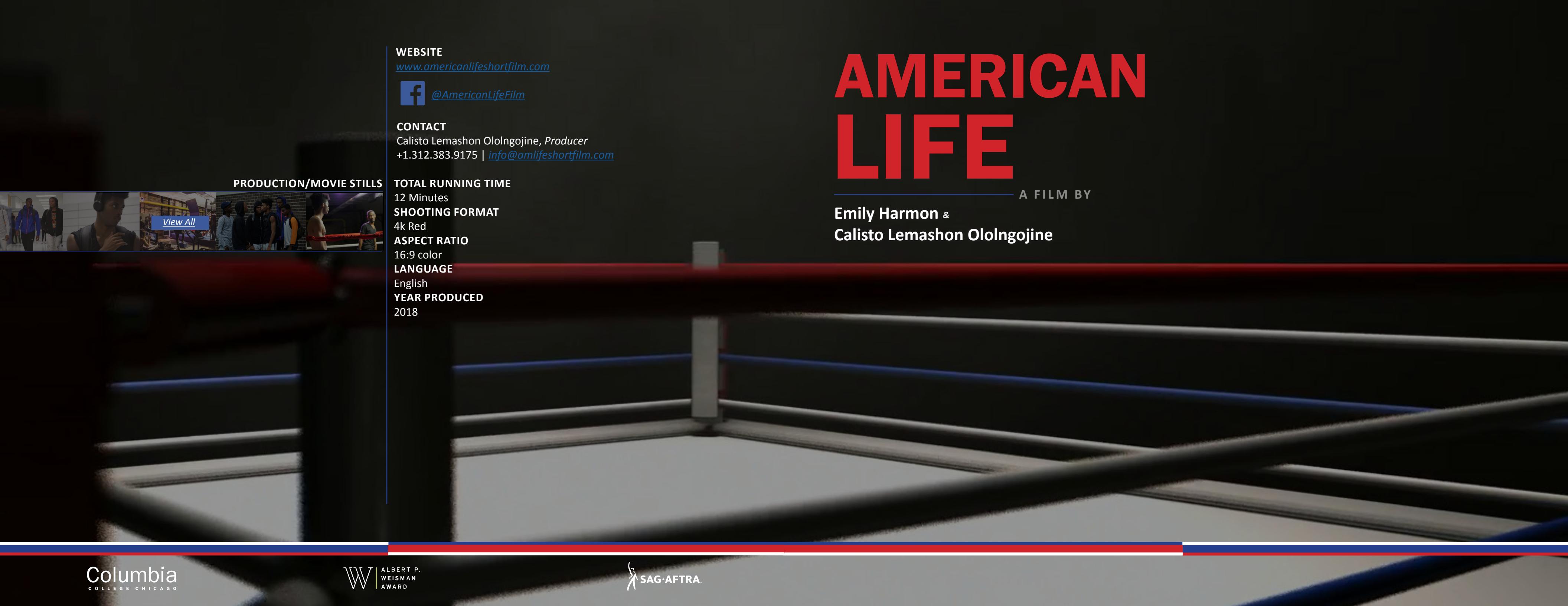
Key Grip Alex Halsted

Key Grip Jake Ellerbrake

CREW

Continued

Best Boy Electric	Becca Johnson
Best Boy Electric	Henry Genutis
Grip	Thomas Schroeder
Swing	Noah Kelly
Data Wrangler 1	Mia Peluso
Still Photographer	Thang Lee
Still Photographer	Courtney Leflore
Stunt Coordinator	Rachel Flesher
Assistant Stunt Coordinator	Zack Payne
Make-up Artist	Karen Mace
Art PA	Lala Mahmudova
EPK Designer	Kwasi K Design
Script Supervisor	Aleix Quintana
Assistant Script Supervisor	Julian Walker
Post Production Supervisor	Eddie Membreño
Sound Mixer - Tomoko Fukuda	Tomoko Fukuda
Assistant Sound Mixer	Mitchell Werber
Boom Operator - Maya Muerhoff	Maya Muerhoff
Sound Designer	Diego Trejo Jr.
Colorist	Matthew Filipek



AMERICAN LIFE

A FILM BY

Emily Harmon &
Calisto Lemashon Oloingojine

WEBSITE

www.americanlifeshortfilm.com



@AmericanLifeFilm

CONTACT

Calisto Lemashon Oloingojine, Producer
+1.312.383.9175 | info@amlifeshortfilm.com

TOTAL RUNNING TIME

12 Minutes

SHOOTING FORMAT

4k Red

ASPECT RATIO

16:9 color

LANGUAGE

English

YEAR PRODUCED

2018