

Hello NIOT Community!

Since our last eNews, our films and message have continued to make their way out of our offices and into the world.

This Thursday, April 21, our Executive Producer Patrice O'Neill will be screening clips from NIOT documentaries and engage in a discussion with human rights activist John Shattuck and Professor Faye Ginsburg for **NYU Abu Dhabi's lecture series, [The Demands of Tolerance](#)**. The event is free and open to the public.

Earlier this month, our [Who Cares? I Do! Here's Why](#) short video was chosen to be part of the **Council on Foundations 44th Film & Video Festival** during the Annual Conference in Philadelphia, April, 10-12, 2011.

Finally, we are honored to be one of the eight film teams chosen to participate in **Good Pitch**, selected from more than 250 applicants. Sponsored by Channel 4 BRITDOC with the Sundance Film Institute Documentary Film Program, Good Pitch brings together filmmakers with NGOs, foundations, philanthropists, brands and media around leading social issues to forge coalitions and campaigns. We will be at the first Good Pitch at the Ford Foundation in New York City on May 20.

Close to home, we joined the interfaith community of Sacramento for its first **American Sikh Day**, following a possible hate crime. Surinder Singh and Gurmej Atwal had been gunned down during their routine walk, leaving Singh dead. Two days after we documented American Sikh Day on California's capitol steps, [Atwal](#) died as well. We look forward to sharing the film of how an entire community stepped forward to support their neighbors.

Thank you for helping us stop hate. Together.

The Not In Our Town team

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NIOT Hosts Rough Cut Screening of NIOT III: Light in the Darkness

Last week, a rough cut of our film, *Not In Our Town III: Light In the Darkness*, was screened in the Alan Splet Theatre of the beautiful [Zaentz Media Center](#), not far from our office in Oakland, Calif. The purpose was to explore the ways the film engages viewers with a small,

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Shout Out



Congratulations to Pat Skillen, president of the Parents, Family, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Fremont/ East Bay chapter. Pat was honored with a Love Hero Award from the Unitarian Universalist Association for her work in affirming the full humanity of all LGBTQ individuals. Read the story [here](#).

Community voices on NIOT.org

[The "T" Word](#)

This guest blog post comes from a concerned member with [Not In Our Town Princeton](#), a vibrant group in the NIOT community. In this opinion piece, the author addresses hate crimes and discrimination against the Muslim community in the U.S. The author finds hope in civil rights organizations, good Samaritans and interfaith movements.

[Not In Our School Week: Reflections from an English Teacher](#)

In late March, Gunn High School in Palo Alto, Calif. held its annual Not In Our



Viewers enjoy a moment on the Zaentz Media Center deck before the rough cut screening.

local audience. The feedback we received was tremendous and we found that many in the audience were as touched by the story of Patchogue, N.Y. as we were. [Read more.](#)

School Week. Kristy Blackburn, English teacher and NIOS program coordinator, reflects on the first day.

[**Tackling Difficult Topics in the Classroom: It Gets Better**](#)

Gunn teacher and NIOS coordinator Daisy Renazco shares how she used NIOS in the classroom.

For more news and discussions visit [Not In Our Town](#) on Facebook.

The Town That Fights Back: Elmwood, Ill.



"The color dark blue symbolizes victim awareness, and we are a community that rallies behind each other and when you hurt one of us you hurt all of us," said Elmwood parent Veronica Haskell about the group's blue ribbon action.

When a possible hate crime occurred earlier this month, the citizens of Elmwood stood up to intolerance.

A local football coach discovered his home and car spray painted with vulgar and demeaning phrases towards toward him and his two children with Down Syndrome. In response, the community organized a Not In Our Town group to spread the message of acceptance and community. They began with a [Facebook page](#), now 405-members strong.

In their own words: "A small group of us felt the need to do something positive to show our support. All it took was one message sent out by one person via Facebook to five others and the ideas started flowing. We decided to create this group to keep the actions of our movement uniform with the entire community and get everyone involved."

More on NIOT Elmwood: ["Elmwood Hangs Ribbons in Support of Hollis Family"](#)

Not In Our Town Model Spreads to Ukraine

with Project Keshet

I always believed and I tried to prove to others that each of us can do something to repair this world.

-Project Keshet activist Alina Verhofsckaya, Yalta, Ukraine



Not In Our Town was first introduced to Project Keshet in 2007, when producers Patrice O'Neill and Rhian Miller presented the Not In Our Town model to women from across the former Soviet Union who had gathered in Kiev, Ukraine. These women were part of Project Keshet, a Jewish women's organization that unites 150 grassroots women's groups serving 6,000 women. This year, nearly 20 cities in the former Soviet Union will be participating in Not In Our Town activities.

Yalta-based activist Alina Verhofsckaya oversees the Crimean region and South Ukraine. In this interview, Alina speaks about why interfaith-interethnic coalitions based on the Not In Our Town model work, and how it's provided structure to respond to hate crimes and larger community concerns. Read the interview [here](#).

If you've enjoyed this email, please pass it along, spread the word and connect with us on Facebook.

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