

WIFT-AT ANNOUNCES 10TH WOMEN MAKING WAVES CONFERENCE AND NEW MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

(HALIFAX, NS) February 6, 2020 — Women in Film and Television - Atlantic (WIFT-AT) is pleased to present the 10th annual Women Making Waves Conference on March 6-7, 2020 at the Hotel Halifax. The Conference will welcome filmmakers from across Canada to present professional development sessions.

In its 10th year, the Conference continues to promote diversity and gender equity in film and television. Conference attendees can connect with other industry professionals, advance their careers by gaining insight from industry professionals and celebrate the outstanding work of women in film and television. WIFT-AT is excited to launch a new mentorship program that will match emerging women in the film and television industry with established professionals.

“The gender imbalance and lack of diversity in Canada’s screen-based industry is a missed opportunity to share the unique and diverse stories of Canadians with audiences around the world,” says WIFT-AT’s Board of Directors chair, Kimberlee McTaggart. “These are stories that audiences want to watch, and the success of women benefits the industry as a whole.”

Although there has been some progress, gender imbalance and a lack of diversity persist in the Canadian film and television industry due to systemic issues and bias. Since its inception in 2009, WIFT-AT has been enabling women to create change in the industry by offering programming, events, and networking opportunities designed to allow women to collaborate within a supportive, creative, and safe environment.

“Ten years ago, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women was introduced and, locally we were inspired to launch WIFT-AT,” says WIFT-AT’s Board of Directors founding chair, Jan Miller. “One of our goals is to salute the remarkable women and men in our industry who champion gender equality, safe workplaces, and strong diverse voices before and behind the screen. It not only makes good business sense, but our region is also infinitely richer for each small breakthrough. We’re looking forward to the next decade of inevitable forward momentum.”

The 10th Annual Women Making Waves Conference kicks off with a screening of the award-winning documentary *nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up* directed by Tasha Hubbard on Friday, March 6. On Saturday, the conference will feature a Spotlight Discussion with Meredith MacNeill, a case study on *nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up*, a

keynote address by feminist activist Sharon McGowan; as well as sessions on writing for the horror genre, the relationship between composers, editors and directors, and line producing. Back this year are the popular networking lunch, the IOM Media Ventures WAVE Awards Celebration Dinner and the CBC Pitch Competition. WIFT-AT is pleased to offer four additional workshops preceding the Women Making Waves Conference on Friday, March 6th. These will include a session on sound design, series producing, editing, and career strategies.

The CBC Pitch Competition is a highlight as WIFT-AT members are given the opportunity to pitch their short film scripts and one lucky winner will receive a prize package that includes cash and in-kind production services to produce their winning script. The WAVE Awards are also handed out during the Conference. These awards acknowledge remarkable women working in film, television or screen-based media for their contributions, accomplishments, emerging talent, vision and leadership dedication, and/or outstanding behind-the-scenes support.

Recognizing that mentorship is one of the most immediate and supportive opportunities to move ahead in one's career, WIFT-AT will introduce its new mentorship program. Many members have identified a need for such a program. This opportunity will provide members at different levels of experience the formalized opportunity to learn from, guide, and support each other through a series of focused one-on-one and possible group meet-ups over a nine-month period. At the 10th Annual Women Making Waves Conference, WIFT-AT will introduce the women who have signed on to be mentors and share details about the application process which will open in April 2020.

About Women in Film and Television - Atlantic

WIFT-AT is a non-profit professional association that connects our members and advances the careers of women working in film, television and screen-based media based in Atlantic Canada. Our mission is to grow and leverage the skills, talents, and potential of our members to ensure access to high-quality production and distribution resources; to exert influence at all levels of the industry; and to celebrate and extend the impact of the collaborative nature of screen-based production in the Atlantic region.

For more information, please contact Karlea Lewis, WIFT-AT Communications Coordinator at karlea@wift-at.com.