



CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES

## CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### *NGO LEADER & HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE JENNI WOLFSON STARTS SEPT. 9*

NEW YORK, NY – Chicken & Egg Pictures, the nation’s leading nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting women nonfiction filmmakers whose diverse voices and dynamic storytelling have the power to catalyze change, at home and around the globe, today announced the appointment of its first executive director.

Jenni Wolfson, an accomplished nonprofit professional and human rights advocate who has served in positions with NGOs and the United Nations for more than 20 years, will start on September 9. Wolfson will be based at the Chicken & Egg Pictures main office in Brooklyn, New York.

Wolfson joins Chicken & Egg Pictures from WITNESS, the international human rights video advocacy NGO co-founded by musician Peter Gabriel. Wolfson served as the organization’s Managing Director and Acting Executive Director, where she oversaw the day-to-day activities of a team of 32 staff members and a \$5 million budget. In this role, she built partnerships with the human rights, media, communications, entertainment, technology, corporate, and philanthropic communities.

Prior to joining WITNESS, Wolfson served in leadership positions at the headquarters of Unicef, the world’s leading organization for the protection and promotion of children’s rights, and the United Nations. At the UN, she served in numerous posts around the world, including the UN International Civilian Mission in Haiti and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva and Rwanda. She also wrote and still performs a solo play, RASH, about her experiences as a human rights activist. Wolfson earned a Master’s in the Theory and Practice of Human Rights from the University of Essex and a Bachelor’s in French and Psychology from the London Guildhall University. She also has an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Strathclyde.

Founded in 2005 by award-winning filmmakers and producers Julie Parker Benello, Wendy Ettinger, and Judith Helfand, Chicken & Egg Pictures matches strategically timed grants with creative mentorship to help filmmakers leverage their films during critical production and distribution phases. The organization has awarded over \$2.8 million in grants to 145 film projects and has provided over 4,000 hours of mentorship directly to filmmakers.

"We are thrilled that Jenni Wolfson will be joining Chicken & Egg Pictures as executive director," said Chicken & Egg Pictures co-founders Julie Parker Benello, Wendy Ettinger, and Judith Helfand. "Like many of our filmmaker grantees, Jenni has served on the front-lines of important human rights efforts. Her years of service, on the ground in countries such as Rwanda and Haiti for the United Nations, and more recently at WITNESS, where she managed a multi-million dollar NGO, give her a unique set of skills we know will effectively grow and impact the organization's work."

"In just eight years, Chicken & Egg Pictures has already left an indelible mark on the film industry as well as on the public conscience," said Wolfson. "I am thrilled to join with Julie, Wendy, Judith, and the professional staff and the grantees and extended family of filmmakers, who often risk everything to bring important issues to light. We are faced with many incredible opportunities as an organization, at this time when interest in documentaries continues to grow. I am honored to have the opportunity to help take advantage of these opportunities."

In 2011, Chicken & Egg Pictures created the Mother Wit Human Rights Film Fund, one of two mission-driven funds, to support women filmmakers who aim to address critical human rights challenges in the U.S. and abroad from both sides of the camera. The goal with this fund is to support a broad range of human rights issues including civil rights, reproductive rights, literacy, poverty, environmental and economic justice, and the basic human right to thrive (eat, pray, love, learn, and work) in peace.

Films that have received funding and mentorship support from Chicken & Egg Pictures include: *Freeheld* by Cynthia Wade (Academy Award® winner, Best Documentary Short Subject, 2008) and *Saving Face* by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Daniel Junge (Academy Award® winner, Best Documentary Short Subject, 2012); *The Barber of Birmingham: Foot Soldier of the Civil Rights Movement* by Gail Dolgin and Robin Fryday, and *Kings Point*, by Sari Gilman (both Academy Award® nominees); *Semper Fi: Always Faithful* by Rachel Libert and Tony Hardmon (Ridenhour Prize, 2012); *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry* by Alison Klayman (Special Jury Prize, Sundance Film Festival, 2012 and Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award, 2012); and *Call Me Kuchu* by Katherine Fairfax-Wright and Malika Zouhali-Worrall (Teddy Award, Berlin Film Festival, 2012) and *Brooklyn Castle* by Katie Dellamaggiore (NAACP Image Awards 2013 nominee).

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