



Second Genesis Foundation has entered into a partnership with The Biscuit Factory, LLC. in the production of an independent feature documentary film project.

*WRITTEN OFF* challenges the stigma of opiate addiction by unravelling the intricate web of a single addiction story. In addition to production of the film, the project is mounting an outreach effort via screenings and discussion panels to help audiences gain a deeper understanding of the complex issues surrounding addiction. The project is also reaching out to policy makers, leaders and educators.

The Biscuit Factory produces factual programming for networks such as National Geographic, Discovery and Smithsonian Channel.

###

WRITTEN OFF tells the story of a young man named Matt Edwards who set out to become somebody and instead became a statistic. He was just another goofball teenager until fate intervened. After a minor surgery to repair an ingrown toenail, Matt was prescribed Vicodin for the pain. No one knew it at the time but from that moment, Matt's tragic destiny was sealed. He would later write that the experience of swallowing that first pill was like "like I had been touched by God."

We only know this because Matt left behind a treasure trove of journals that documented his every thought, yearning, fear, impulse and milligram of ingested opiates. The intimate and sharply detailed journals would ultimately form the basis for the vivid WRITTEN OFF, serving as a road map to oblivion and a dire cautionary tale of a young man who, despite desperately trying to stop, ultimately committed slow suicide with his escalating addiction.

From the moment that Matt Edwards swallowed that first Vicodin, he was hooked. His life in rural Wisconsin would revolve around the quest for more and stronger drugs, escalating to OxyContin, to morphine and finally to the accidental heroin overdose that would kill him in September 2010.

Matt's own prescription painkiller addiction crisis mirrored that of the nation itself, one that has found both opiate pills and heroin exploding in popularity and overdose deaths. The insidiousness of the dependency is embodied in the way it transforms previously decent people into lying, stealing users of family and friends who utterly lack a conscience while seeking their daily fix.

As WRITTEN OFF illustrates with wrenching clarity, Matt enlisted those in his orbit as his unwitting enablers while he popped pills and shot up to make it through each day under the guise of proclaimed innocence.

At the head of that list was his mother Jane, whom we see as brave, articulate and devoted yet ultimately helpless in the face of her son's self-destruction. We also get to know Paula, a Polish work-exchange student from Krakow who falls in love with the fun-loving Matt in the summer of 2005 – before his addiction had taken complete hold of his every move. Then there is Rose, a dynamic and loyal friend to Matt who would rescue him repeatedly as he descended into a stark and hopeless junkie's existence.

The three women stood by helplessly as someone they deeply loved destroyed himself. Their grief on display in WRITTEN OFF remains raw and close to the surface nearly six years after Matt's death, showing them to be still bewildered by the events that stole a young man from them who paid the ultimate price for his bad choices.

What is perhaps most frightening about the documentary is the idea that we can watch someone who was once so engaged in life and so intelligent become so enslaved by mind-altering substances. The audience is supplied a front-row seat to a horror story as Matt's personality morphs him into someone scarcely recognizable to those around him as well as to those just getting to know him.

But ultimately, it is the addict's fight and fault and his alone. That needs to be the educational message that emerges from WRITTEN OFF. It doesn't matter how smart you are, how aware of your addiction you are, how well you document your own demise on paper, or how efficiently those around you load the gun before you put it to your temple. Matt Edwards was the captain of his own sinking ship.

The film serves as a timely, persuasive warning for all who would consider abusing opiates – prescription and otherwise.

Please visit our website for more information:

[www.written-off.com](http://www.written-off.com)

# WRITTEN OFF

"THE JOURNALS WILL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING"



THE BISCUIT FACTORY PRESENTS A MOLLY HERMANN & ROB LYALL PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH SECOND GENESIS FOUNDATION  
"WRITTEN OFF" FEATURING MICHAEL SCHWENDEL JANE FUNK ROSE WORDEN PAULA KOWALSKA ANIMATION BY PIXELDUST STUDIOS  
AND CAROL HILLIARD ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY ROB MIGRIN EDITED BY KERRY SULLIVAN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROB LYALL  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DAVID REYES AND RONDA HACKBART CROWDFUNDED IN PART BY KICKSTARTER  
PRODUCED BY MOLLY HERMANN AND ROB LYALL DIRECTED BY MOLLY HERMANN

[www.WRITTEN-OFF.COM](http://www.WRITTEN-OFF.COM)