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CONTACT

Adrianna Paidas 646-762-8704 adrianna.paidas@beckmedia.com

Jamedra Brown
Fleischman, ITVS 415-356-8383 jamedra.brown@itvs.org

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AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY “MISSING IN BROOKS COUNTY,” CHRONICLES THE HARROWING REALITIES FOR MIGRANTS, SET TO PREMIERE ON PBS’S INDEPENDENT LENS JANUARY 31

Film Follows Community Activists and Families in Brooks County, Texas, as They Work to Find and Protect Migrants Traveling Through the Deadliest Entryway into the United States

(San Francisco, CA) November 30, 2021 — More migrants go missing in rural South Texas (Brooks County) than anywhere else in the U.S.—it’s estimated to be the location of 3,000 deaths since 2008. The documentary film, “Missing in Brooks County,” chronicles families whose loved ones have disappeared after crossing the Mexico border, and community activist Eddie Canales is often the last hope to try to bring those missing back home.

From filmmakers Jeff Bemiss, Lisa Molomot and Jacob Bricca, “Missing in Brooks County” will make its broadcast debut on PBS’s INDEPENDENT LENS on January 31, 2022 at 10:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)). The film will also be available to stream on the PBS Video app.

In an effort to deter migrants from crossing the Mexico-United States border, U.S. Border Patrol has intentionally structured a path for illegal travel across the border, but only through the most desolate and unforgiving terrain. However, this combative deterrence measure remains unsuccessful. Every year, large numbers of people continue to attempt the journey north, across the border and into the desert, often leading to fatalities.

Canales runs the South Texas Human Rights Center, but he also holds an unofficial community role. As an activist private detective, he fields calls from families asking for his help, desperate to locate missing relatives. The documentary depicts two families searching for these loved ones: Homero Roman and Juan Maceda.

Longtime U.S. resident Homero Roman was deported to Mexico after a traffic stop at age 27 because he was undocumented. After struggling to adjust in an unfamiliar country, Homero eventually tried to return to the U.S.—his home of two decades—but disappeared along the journey in Brooks County. Juan Maceda, who was faced with an impossible choice between lifelong poverty in Mexico or gang affiliation, went missing after he left to travel north across the border.

With migrant deaths along the Mexico-U.S. border at an all-time high this year, the timely documentary follows Canales as he searches for answers. "Missing in Brooks County" points a humanizing lens on the law enforcement agents, human rights workers, and activists who come face to face with the life and death consequences of a broken immigration system.

"If lawmakers were to meet the families of the missing, they would think differently about the deadly policies they are creating."

Canales and the families work together, in a race against time, to provide life-saving resources for migrants, despite oppositional forces trying to deter their progress.

Nominated for Best Political Documentary at the 2021 Critics Choice Documentary Awards, "Missing in Brooks County" also emerged as a standout-doc in a number of festivals, winning "Best Documentary Feature" at the Newburyport Documentary Film Festival, "Best Documentary Feature Doc" at the Boston Film Festival, and "Best Southern Feature" at the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival.

Visit pbs.org/brookscounty for more information about the film.

About the Filmmakers

Jeff Bemiss

An award-winning filmmaker, Co-Director/Producer Jeff Bemiss' work has aired on network television and PBS. He is a graduate of USC's School of Cinematic Arts. Jeff's film *The Book And The Rose* was a semifinalist for the Academy Award for best short film. Recently, Jeff shot and directed the award-winning short *Coaching Colburn*, which premiered at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival.

Lisa Molomot

Lisa Molomot (Co-Director/Producer), a graduate of the American Film Institute, has directed documentaries about the American Southwest in recent years, including *The Cleaners*, *Teaching in Arizona*, and *Soledad*. Prior to those films, her award-winning film *School's Out* was an integral part of the outdoor education movement. Lisa's first documentary, *The Hill*, was broadcast on PBS's America Reframed.

Jacob Bricca

Jacob Bricca, ACE (Producer/Editor) has edited over a dozen feature documentaries, including the 2016 Sundance Special Jury Prize winner *The Bad Kids* and the international theatrical hit *Lost in La Mancha*. Fluent in Spanish, Jacob brings experience editing multicultural stories like

Precious Knowledge and *Beyond the Border*, both of which were broadcast on PBS. He is a graduate of AFI.

CREDITS

Directed, Filmed, and Produced by	Lisa Molomot and Jeff Bemiss
Produced and Edited by	Jacob Bricca, A.C.E.
Music by	Ted Reichman
Executive Producers	Abigail Disney Gini Reticker Steven Engel Heidi Reavis Jenna Helwig Stephanie Angelides Sally Jo Fifer Lois Vossen
Supervising Producer	Shana Swanson
Consulting Producers	Molly O'Brien Sarah Feuquay Diane Moy Quon

ABOUT INDEPENDENT LENS

INDEPENDENT LENS is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 p.m. ET. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, Acton Family Giving, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation: facebook.com/independentlens and on Twitter [@IndependentLens](https://twitter.com/IndependentLens).

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