

# INTELLIGENT LIVES (WORKING TITLE)

A new documentary film project by filmmaker Dan Habib, creator of *Including Samuel* and *Who Cares About Kelsey?*

Watch the film preview at:  
[www.intelligentlives.org](http://www.intelligentlives.org)



When Micah Fialka-Feldman (above) was 11 years old, he scored 40 on an IQ test. His parents insisted he be included in general education classes, and Micah developed a strong circle of friends and earned a regular high school diploma. Micah graduated from high school, attended college, and is now a co-teacher at Syracuse University. He is featured in *Intelligent Lives*.

The perception of intelligence is a powerful force in the systematic segregation, maltreatment, and unfulfilled potential of hundreds of millions of individuals with disabilities in the U.S. and worldwide. The documentary film project *Intelligent Lives* (working title) explores how the segregation of people with intellectual disabilities became the norm, why this segregation is slowly being dismantled, and how some people with intellectual disabilities are blazing a bold new path.

## ***Intelligent Lives* will explore three central themes:**


- The history and legacy of intelligence testing, which was used to justify the forced sterilization and institutionalization of tens of thousands of Americans during the 20th century
- How narrow perceptions of intelligence continue to disproportionately limit people with disabilities, leading to the isolation and unfulfilled potential of millions of people in the U.S. and worldwide
- An emerging paradigm in which people with intellectual disabilities participate in general education classes, college, meaningful employment, relationships, and other aspects of community life


## ***Intelligent Lives* will include:**


- A preview film (14 min.)
- A nationally broadcast feature-length film (approx. 80 min.) and educational DVD
- A companion documentary (approx. 40 min.) focusing on national best practices in transition for youth with disabilities from high school to college and career
- Extensive educational and outreach resources, including a website, educational guide, and social media components

***Intelligent Lives* will be an essential educational and public awareness resource** for preschool through college educators and specialists, employers, disability advocates, public policy decision makers, non-profit organizations, young people, families, and the general public

## **CURRENT STATISTICS**

 **17%** of students with intellectual disabilities are included in general education classrooms alongside their non-disabled peers

 **40%** of students with intellectual disabilities received a regular high school diploma

 **24%** of adults with intellectual disabilities are employed

## FILM PRODUCTION TEAM



**DAN HABIB, PRODUCER/DIRECTOR**, is the creator of the award-winning documentary films *Including Samuel*, *Who Cares About Kelsey?*, *Restraint and Seclusion: Hear Our Stories*, and many other short films on disability-related topics. Habib is a filmmaker at the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability.

*Including Samuel*, which features Habib's son Samuel who has cerebral palsy, was broadcast nationally on public television stations in the fall of 2009, has been translated into 17 languages, and is used as a teaching tool worldwide. *Who Cares About Kelsey?* was broadcast nationally on public television in the fall of 2013.

In 2012, Habib received the Champion of Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association, and in 2013 he received the Justice for All Grassroots Award from the American Association of People with Disabilities. In 2014, Habib was appointed by President Barack Obama to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.



**MELANIE PERKINS McLAUGHLIN, CONSULTING PRODUCER**, is a documentary filmmaker with over 20 years in film production. She has worked on films for HBO, PBS, ABC, A&E, The Discovery Channel, and The History Channel. Perkins McLaughlin's independently produced 2007 film *Have You Seen Andy?* was

broadcast on HBO and won a National Emmy Award for Best Investigative Journalism.

That same year, Perkins McLaughlin received a prenatal diagnosis: her third child had Trisomy 21 (Down syndrome) and a congenital heart defect. Perkins McLaughlin is in development on a feature length documentary (work in progress) *Accepting Grace*, that shares the experience of life with Down syndrome from a family perspective — including prenatal diagnoses.



**JAMES RUTENBECK, EDITOR**, has over 50 editing credits, including films for PBS, BBC, Discovery Channel, and Showtime. They include the Emmy award-winning *Siamese Twins* for NOVA, *American Denial* for *Independent Lens*, and *People of the Shining Path* for Britain's Channel Four. His feature-length film *Scenes from a Parish* was broadcast on the PBS series *Independent Lens* in 2009. Rutenbeck was the recipient of the DuPont Columbia Journalism Award for his work as producer on the PBS series *Unnatural Causes*. Rutenbeck recently produced, directed, and edited two half-hour films for *The Raising of America*, about the social ecology of child development in the U.S. He is currently Executive Producer of *Class of '27*, a series of three short films about the lives of very young children in remote parts of rural America.

He is the parent of an adult son with autism.



**CHRIS COOPER, ACTOR**, will narrate the historical portions of *Intelligent Lives*. Cooper won the 2003 Best Supporting Actor Academy Award for his 2003 role in *Adaptation*. He has been an actor on stage, screen, and television for three decades, with notable roles in *Lone Star*, *American Beauty*, *Seabiscuit*, *The Bourne Identity*,

*October Sky*, *August Osage County*, *Lonesome Dove*, and dozens of other films.

In 1987, Cooper and his wife, Marianne Leone, had their son, Jesse. Jesse loved to windsurf and write poetry, and he also had cerebral palsy and epilepsy. Cooper and Leone became advocates for inclusive education, and Jesse became a high school honor student. In 2005, Jesse died suddenly from a seizure at age 17. Leone wrote the 2010 book *Knowing Jesse*, and she and Cooper continue to volunteer their time and resources for non-profits focused on disability rights.

Lead Supporter:  MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC AMERICA



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**Additional Supporters:** John P. Hussman Foundation • National Association of School Psychologists • New Hampshire Association of Special Education Administrators

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
PLEASE CONTACT:

Dan Habib  
dan.habib@unh.edu  
603.228.2085 x 46

Institute on Disability/UCED

