

# MFDA

MICHIGAN FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

*Generations of Caring*

*The nation's oldest Funeral  
Directors Association –  
serving our members  
and the public for  
134 years*

December 23, 2014

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Mr. Keith Famie  
Visionalist Entertainment Productions  
28345 Beck Road Suite 404  
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Keith:

We at the MFDA are proud to be the broadcasting presenting sponsor for the fall debut of the 13 part series *The Embrace of Dying how we deal with the end of life*, on Detroit Public Television. We are also excited about the theatrical media charity premiere.

We are certain that this documentary will have a dramatic impact on the work we so passionately do as funeral directors in communities across Michigan and the country, as well.

I am sure the rich subject content and real life human interest stories about how we all approach the end of life will be a topic of interest to both young and old. We certainly see how this will become a must watch series—for everyone must face these issues at some point in their lives.

We applaud you for taking on this important and rich subject for your documentary story telling.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Schramm, CFSP, CCO  
President

May 7, 2013

Mr. Keith Famie  
Executive producer  
Visionalist Entertainment Productions  
28345 Beck Road Suite 404  
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Keith.

Your series of films, *Embrace of Aging: Men's Perspective*, *Embrace of Aging: Women's Perspective* and *Embrace of Dying* are trailblazing works. Your documentaries explore the most challenging but natural part of life, highlighting the journey towards end of life. I appreciated viewing *Embrace of Aging: Men's Perspective* and the other two films' trailers. I feel that all three are thought provoking and right on target for what we should be addressing at this critical juncture in time. As we discussed, the baby boomers are aging but not necessarily gracefully.

Now more than ever, our culture is devoted to the lengthening of life and the enhancement of our quality of life. Yet we have few answers for the growing numbers who want help and guidance as they navigate that journey. I am very excited to see you unfold the core issues and concerns and document diverse responses that offer encouragement and resolution for many of the questions raised.

I am "all in". Count on me and call upon the entire Jewish Hospice and Chaplaincy Network to be collaborators, resources and friends for this project. We will be looking for every opportunity to disseminate and promote your work. We will be proud to associate ourselves with the embracing trilogy and to "brand" our organization with your evocative message(s).

I look forward to "embracing" your mission and working closely with you in the future.

Best wishes,



Rabbi E.B. (Bunny) Freedman



April 23, 2013

Mr. Keith Famie  
Executive Documentary Producer – Visionalist Entertainment Productions  
28345 Beck Road, Ste. 404  
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Mr. Famie:

Your series of films, ***Embrace of Aging: Men's Perspective***, ***Embrace of Aging: Women's Perspective***, and ***Embrace of Dying***, are groundbreaking work. Aging and death are taboo subjects in America. Our culture ignores the inevitability of biology, viewing aging and death as optional experiences. This cultural blind-spot is bumping up against the sliver tsunami of the impending baby boomers that come to the aging and dying experience unprepared.

The last film in the series, the ***Embrace of Dying***, is an important film that will explore the taboo subject of death and dying. There is a labor coming into the world and a labor in leaving. We know much more about the labor of birthing than the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual labor of leaving our earthly home. Individuals, families, friends, and even health care professionals approach this time with denial, apprehension, and misconceptions leading to unnecessary suffering.

By 2030, America and, in fact the entire world, will have more elderly than has existed in all of human history. We can wear house the elderly out of sight (which will be us baby boomers) in 800 bed institutions, or begin to have constructive dialogue on how to make this last great journey and final act of life meaningful for all touched by the end-of-life experience.

As the President and CEO of Hospice of Michigan, called the "Harvard of Hospice" in the nation, I have witnessed how embracing and facing the end-of-life without denial of its existence can allow for great joy, making amends, saying goodbye, and miracles of emotional and spiritual healing for patients and their loved ones even while the body is failing.

For all the reasons stated above, I am passionately in support of the ***Embrace of Dying*** film and fully committed to contributing creatively and financially to this "labor of love." I look forward to working with you as you bring a full, robust exploration of the history, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual issues at the end-of-life to film.

With sincere appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dottie Deremo".

Dorothy E. Deremo, RN, MSN, MHSA, FACHE  
President & CEO





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April 5, 2013

Mr. Keith Famie  
Executive Documentary Producer - Visionalist Entertainment Productions  
28345 Beck Rd, Ste 404  
Wixom MI 48393

Dear Mr. Famie:

It was a pleasure to meet you and learn more about your *Embrace of Aging* films. I am particularly excited about your new film that will focus on "Embracing Death"! Although a difficult subject to address with patients, it is an important one, as important as dealing with their disease. Because of the fears and taboos that are associated with it, it is often whispered and discussed among physicians in hushed tones, instead of discussing it openly and honestly. This taboo surrounding death often leaves the patient alone, scared, terrified about the process, and fearing abandonment in one of the most critical places in their life. I believe this documentary, "Embracing Death," is much needed and will be a much discussed piece of work. I am in full support of this film and will offer my support and guidance throughout this creative process. Your interest in following the course of a young cancer patient with a lethal heart tumor will be a very reflective and poignant view on this difficult subject. I believe this will add an added aspect of this project not yet explored in other projects, as death is a journey and a process. I look forward to working with you on this project!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Monika Leja'.

Monika Leja, MD  
Assistant Professor Clinical Cardiology  
University of Michigan Health Systems