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NEWS RELEASE

2/7/2022

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Documentary Screening Sponsored By Florence County AODA/Mental Health Coalition Focuses Attention On Opioid Crisis Through Unique First-Person Account Of Addiction

[Florence, WI] –

In 2016 more Americans died from overdoses than in the entire Vietnam War conflict. And yet those new casualties are rarely considered victims of disease. With the support of Rep. Ann Kuster, (D-NH), Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Heroin Task Force, the documentary film *Written Off* is challenging conventional thinking about addiction. Also, an early hallmark of the AIDS crisis, stigmatizing victims of addiction has very real consequences – cutting them off from treatment, community and funding. By taking the viewer inside an individual's fight against opioids, through personal journals, *Written Off* combats stigma and humanizes the victim.

The film chronicles the life of Matthew Edwards, whose addiction to opioids began at age 15, after being prescribed pain medicine for a minor surgery. His grippingly honest writing reveals the secrets he tried so hard to conceal throughout a decade long struggle to escape addiction.

“Every day, there’s another story about the opioid epidemic, another overdose, another mug shot. But these stories often work to reinforce the stigma of addiction instead of humanizing it,” explains filmmaker Molly Hermann, who wrote, directed and co-produced *Written Off*. “Matt didn’t want to do drugs but he didn’t know how to get out. That struggle is right there in his own words, he chronicled every cc and milligram that went into body and every dollar he shelled out to get more, all as he tried desperately to get clean.”

This screening is brought to you by the Florence County AODA/Mental Health Coalition. For more information, contact 715-528-4837.

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