

# PRESS RELEASE

September 8, 2008

## FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL

exploring the complexity of the human experience



In October, FOCUS Film Festival, with SIFE and DSPS, present two FREE films to be shown at the Feather River College Gallery in Quincy. High resolution photographs available upon request.

**Thursday, October 2: *The Way Bobby Sees It*** is a gripping story about Bobby McMullen, the legendary mountain bike racer who rides downhill, fast and blind. Bobby, a Redding native, lost his vision as a result of diabetes in 1993. The film documents his mission to race the most difficult downhill course in the country. Tucked away in Downieville, California, this 17-mile course is treacherous for any rider, especially one who needs a guide to "see." "I use verbal commands and the shape in front of me," McMullen explains. "I can hear them (the guide) shift and hear their bike rattle. I don't see any detail, but I can find where they're at. Hearing their voice gives me depth perception and direction better than anything else."



Photo credit: Steve Behr

Bobby's mountain bike skills, fearlessness, and love for the sport help him ride gracefully, and sometimes not so gracefully, across cliff edges and down steep drop-offs. This is extreme sport at its gnarliest. *The Way Bobby Sees It* is one man's determination to live an active life even when the path is completely out

of focus. **Special guest: Meet Bobby McMullen for a QA following the screening.**

**Thursday October 23: *Darius Goes West*** Where would you go if you'd never been away from home? What would you do if you didn't have much time left? Darius went West! Meet 15-year-old Darius Weems from Athens, Georgia, who was born with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), the most common fatal genetic disorder to affect children worldwide. In 1999 he watched his beloved older brother, Mario, pass away from the same disease at age 19. Soon after, Darius lost use of the muscles in his legs and had to use a wheelchair to get around.



A group of Darius' college-age friends decided there was no need for his quality of life to disintegrate along with his muscles. In the summer of 2005, they rented a wheelchair-accessible RV and took Darius, who had never seen mountains, the ocean or even crossed a state line, on the adventure of a lifetime. The ultimate goal of their 7,000-mile cross-country journey was to reach Los Angeles and convince MTV's hit show "Pimp My Ride" to customize Darius' wheelchair. Along the way, they evaluated wheelchair accessibility in America, celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and raised awareness of DMD. They also found joy, brotherhood and the knowledge that life, even when imperfect, is always worth the ride.

**FOCUS Film Festival** explores documentary and feature films which "focus" on and examine the complexity of the human experience: culture, relationships, aging, disability, lifestyle, and more. The Festival features productions from a wide range of sources bringing Northstate audiences an opportunity to experience innovation, creativity, and diverse perspectives through the medium of film. FOCUS Film Festival is a project of Far Northern Regional Center. For more information and past events see, [www.farnorthernrc.org/focusfilmfestival](http://www.farnorthernrc.org/focusfilmfestival)