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For the program companion website, visit pbs.org/independentlens/hardroadhome

**MACKY ALSTON'S "HARD ROAD HOME" TO AIR ON
PBS'S INDEPENDENT LENS ON FEBRUARY 26, 2008**

*Film Showcases the Work of Harlem's Exodus Transitional Community, Where
Ex-Cons Help Ex-Cons Find a Life "on the Outside"*

(San Francisco, CA) —Odds are that if you go to prison and are lucky enough to get out, you'll be going back some time soon. When Julio Medina was incarcerated, he was a drug-dealing gang leader who ought to have died countless times. When he was freed 12 years later, he was a changed man. Upon his release from prison, Julio committed himself to being a different kind of leader – helping people live, instead of making people die. He created Exodus Transitional Community, a program in Harlem dedicated to breaking the cycle of incarceration that ensnares so many people of color on the streets of New York. The trick to Exodus is that its staff knows firsthand what it's like to go to jail. They're ex-cons – a badass group of do-gooders who are reaching their clients like no one could who hasn't walked a mile in prison shoes. Directed by Macky Alston, **HARD ROAD HOME** will be broadcast on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Terrence Howard, on Tuesday, February 26, 2008 at 10:00 PM.

Throughout **HARD ROAD HOME**, the characters aspire to freedom and security "on the outside," while grappling with the constant challenges posed by poverty, addiction, peer pressure, suspicion, the immediate needs of loved ones, and the relentlessness of rage, despair, and the desire to escape. Just when things look good, someone you've come to care about falls apart. Just when you have given up hope, someone beats the odds and hangs in. This is life at Exodus. **HARD ROAD HOME** tells the story of this high-risk, high-drama world and the extraordinary task of turning around the fate of any person born into it.

To learn more about the film and the issues, visit the companion website for **HARD ROAD HOME** at *Independent Lens* online. Get detailed information on the film watch preview clips, read an interview with the filmmaker and explore the subject in depth with links and resources. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions. **HARD ROAD HOME** companion website launches January 22 at pbs.org/independentlens/hardroadhome.

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About the Filmmaker

Macky Alston (Director)

Macky Alston's award-winning documentary films include *The Killer Within* (premiered Toronto International Film Festival 2006, aired on the Discovery Times Channel 2007), *Questioning Faith* (premiered Full Frame Film Festival and the Hot Docs International Film Festival and aired on HBO/Cinemax 2002), and *Family Name* (premiered Sundance Film Festival 1997 and aired on PBS' *POV* 1998). His awards include the Sundance Film Festival Freedom of Expression Award and the Gotham Open Palm Award. He has appeared in press around the world including *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *The Today Show*, and *The New York Times*. Alston also serves as Director of Auburn Media, a program of Auburn Theological Seminary dedicated to balanced, responsible coverage of religion in the media.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10:00 PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at pbs.org/independentlens. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

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