



TELEVISION'S INDEPENDENT VOICE.

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**MULTI-YEAR PUBLIC MEDIA INITIATIVE TO FOCUS ON
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP**

Best-seller "Half The Sky" tops list of 50 docs coming to PBS

Geena Davis, America Ferrera, Queen Noor, Nicholas Kristof, and other influential leaders join advisory board

(San Francisco, CA) — The Independent Television Service (ITVS), in partnership with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and PBS, announced today the launch of [**Women and Girls Lead**](#), a multi-year engagement campaign to focus the power of independent documentary storytelling on the leadership and development of women and girls.

ITVS is spearheading an effort to provide public media with another powerful strategy to combine independently produced documentaries, community engagement, education, and impact that fully embraces new media and digital tools, and seeks to sustain a global conversation over several years.

"We are living in a brand new age where citizens exchange media and ideas on a continuous basis; public media has a responsibility to lead our audiences to content that has the potential to lift us up and move us forward as a society. This serves not only our mission and our viewers, but our community of independent producers as well by extending the reach of their diverse voices," said Sally Jo Fifer, President and CEO of ITVS.

More than 50 documentaries slated to air on PBS over the next three years form the backbone of the initiative. Among them are three mini-series including [**Women, War and Peace**](#), a five-part series from THIRTEEN/WNET executive produced by Abigail Disney, Pamela Hogan, and Gini Reticker—including the premier of acclaimed documentary film [**Pray the Devil Back to Hell**](#); and [**Kind-Hearted Woman**](#), the latest effort from veteran PBS producer David Sutherland, (*The Farmers Wife, Country Boys*), a four-hour FRONTLINE/ITVS special presentation that chronicles the journey of a 31-year-old Oglala Sioux woman risking it all to help her Indian community and abused women.

Finally, ITVS will soon announce a deal to bring [**Half The Sky**](#), the best-selling book by Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* columnist **Nicholas Kristof** and Pulitzer Prize winner **Sheryl WuDunn** to PBS in Fall 2012 as four-hour prime-time special presentation of the Emmy Award-winning series [**Independent Lens**](#), along with robust interactive and educational tools and celebrity



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involvement.

The pipeline of films will broadcast on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series [Independent Lens](#), [FRONTLINE](#), [P.O.V.](#), and other PBS programs, and as stand-alone presentations on PBS and other public television distribution platforms (NETA, APT, etc.). All films in the initiative will be supported by a robust online effort infused with social media and original digital content designed to inform and engage viewers beyond the broadcast through their “second screens.”

In service of these powerful and innovative documentaries, ITVS is building partnerships with leading service organizations including [CARE](#), [World Vision](#), and [the Girl Scouts of the USA](#). These partners, along with many others, will join ITVS and our independent filmmakers in more than 1,000 community, educational, and public affairs events over the life of the campaign and will have access to documentary content to help educate communities.

“Over the next several years, Women and Girls Lead will — through documentaries, television programming, and new media — tell the story of the important contributions, participation, and leadership of women and girls on behalf of their families, communities, and countries,” said **Patricia Harrison**, President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Harrison will chair an advisory board that includes such influential leaders as **Geena Davis**, **America Ferrera**, **Queen Noor**, **PBS President Paula Kerger**, **designer Eileen Fisher**, **New York Times** columnist **Nicholas Kristof**, and professor and scholar **Amartya Sen**, among others.

“I’m thrilled to lend my voice to the ‘*Women and Girls Lead*’ campaign,” said Academy Award winning actor Geena Davis, founder of the [Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media](#). “Women and girls are grossly misrepresented in our media. The powerful stories told by the documentary films included this campaign amplify the voices of women and girls, and bring visibility and value to their lives.”

“With our strong community roots and broad national reach, public broadcasting is the perfect venue for these important documentaries,” said PBS CEO Paula Kerger. “We have a long tradition of sharing content across multiple platforms that not only informs people about the world around them, but also inspires them to engage with their community. Women and Girls Lead will encourage the next generation of leaders to get involved, and go forth with courage and conviction.”

Rounding out the list of partner organizations on Women and Girls Lead is [CARE](#), [Futures Without Violence](#) (formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund), [Girl Scouts of the USA](#), [International Rescue Committee](#), [Points of Light Institute](#), [Women for Women International](#), [Women's World Banking](#), and [World Vision](#).

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