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BODY & SOUL: DIANA & KATHY
to Have Its Television Premiere on PBS During
National Disabilities Awareness Month

Academy Award–Nominated Director Alice Elliott
Unveils Disability Rights Documentary

“Kathy Conour and Diana Braun each define the word ‘fighter’ in a wholly unique and inspiring way; together, they personify the refusal to let fear and uncertainty cripple one’s life.”

—Nathan Southern, *All Movie Guide for NYTimes.com*

(San Francisco, CA)—Two of the country’s most remarkable advocates for people with disabilities model a grand experiment in living independently and making a difference. The award-winning film **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy** unveils the extraordinary lives of Diana Braun and Kathy Conour as they slip out of “the system,” become advocates for all people with disabilities and reveal a life of profound friendship, no matter what the odds. **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy**, directed by Academy Award nominee Alice Elliott (*The Collector of Bedford Street*) will have its television premiere on PBS in October 2009 as part of the network’s National Disabilities Awareness Month programming (check local listings).

Diana Braun, who has Down syndrome, and Kathy Conour, who has cerebral palsy, met at a sheltered workshop in Illinois three decades ago and vowed to live independent, noninstitutionalized lives. Fearful of being shut away in a nursing home or forced into a state-run institution, Diana and Kathy broke the rules and survived to tell their story. **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy** chronicles their ongoing fight to live independently and their joint decision to break the rules requiring them to be homebound. Diana and Kathy make the trek from Springfield, Ill., to Washington, D.C., to state their case before the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. For Diana and Kathy, this is a journey that is physically dangerous and technically illegal, so the stakes are uncommonly high.

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Although they comprise the largest minority in the United States, people with disabilities are routinely denied equal access and rights. **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy** exemplifies the abilities of people with disabilities and helps us understand an important and complex social issue. **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy** is a rare look at a friendship between two people who have disabilities—and their tireless activism for the rights of all people who have disabilities.

During the five years of filming, director Alice Elliott was allowed extraordinary access to Diana and Kathy's lives. Told in an intimate, vérité style, **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy** brings audiences into a private world and sweeps us into a way of life rarely seen on screen and seldom understood.

BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy has received a number of awards and recognitions, including a nomination for the International Documentary Association Distinguished Documentary Award and the TASH Positive Images in Media Award (shared with *Including Samuel*). The film was produced, directed and filmed by Alice Elliott (*The Collector of Bedford Street*) and edited by Rose Rosenblatt (*The Education of Shelby Knox, Live Free or Die*). **BODY & SOUL: Diana & Kathy** is a co-production of Alice Elliott and Independent Television Service (ITVS), with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

About ITVS

Independent Television Service funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the Emmy® Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens*, which airs Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. ITVS is a miracle of public policy created by media activists, citizens and politicians seeking to foster plurality and diversity in public television. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since ITVS's inception in 1991, its programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing television audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people. For more information about ITVS, visit www.itvs.org.

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