

IN FOOTBALL WE TRUST

Facilitator Introduction

Thank you for screening *In Football We Trust*! We hope that our discussion guide acts as a useful tool for the film. To use the discussion guide to its fullest potential, we suggest you take the following steps.

STEP 1: Know the Material & Your Audience

Watch the film and read over the guide before your screening to highlight key sections of the film that you would like to discuss. The guide covers a variety of topics and refers to multiple scenes from the film. You might not have time to address the entire discussion guide following your screening so pick the questions that you think your audience would benefit most from.

STEP 2: Encourage Participation

Not all audiences are ready to engage immediately after viewing. This does not mean they are not interested but perhaps, unsure of how to start. Offer your own personal responses to questions and discussion topics as an example for participants and to encourage their participation. Then, go around the room and ask each viewer to respond. If you're in a large setting, ask someone ahead of time to prepare a question to ask.

STEP 3: Listen Carefully

Try to focus your attention on your audience's answers instead of preparing for the next question to ensure your audience feels appreciated for their contributions. Pick up on unique perspectives and mention how they might be able to expand the conversation. Also, be aware if anyone contributes something that could be followed up with a private conversation. Younger audience members may show signs of similar pressures in their lives but not want to discuss them in the open. If such opportunities arise, you or someone else should try to speak with them one-on-one.

STEP 4: Mediate the Conversation

Not everyone will agree. Your job is to help viewers understand issues from a variety of different perspectives. Do not dismiss anyone's opinion, even if you disagree. For example: some people might disagree with the pressure the Langi parents put on Harvey. You might ask the audiences: Is Kalesita encouraging Harvey out of love and pride? If you disagree with how Kalesita is trying to get her family out of poverty, what would you do differently in her position?

STEP 5: Have Fun!

If the discussion is getting too heated, you can change the direction by asking a lighthearted question. Have any of your parents ever dressed up like cheerleaders with face paint? What was your favorite part of the film?

Thank you for your time and help! If you have any questions or need additional advice, feel free to email us at infootballwetrustmovie@gmail.com. Good luck and encourage your communities to "make your own history!"

The *In Football We Trust* Team

Table of Contents

A Letter from the Directors	2
Discussion Starters	4
Intergenerational Relationships & Family Dynamics	4
The Face of the Community Versus the Struggles Inside	5
Growing Up Against Adversity	6
Facts & Statistics	7
Demographics	7
Migration	8
Poverty	9
Crime	10
Education	11
Sports	12
Sources	13
Engagement Campaign Objectives	14
Framing the Conversation	15
Creating a Safe Space for Dialogue	16
Potential Partners and/or Speakers to Consider	17
Audience Conversation Starters	18
Engagement Strategies Beyond a Panel	19
In Their Own Words	22
Resources	23
Pacific Islanders in the United States	23
Community Resources	23
Organizations	23

A Letter from the Directors



Tony Vainuku

Director,
In Football We Trust



Erika Cohn

Co-Director/Producer,
In Football We Trust

We are thrilled to share our film with you. Our subjects were vulnerable during the most challenging times of their lives. Their trials and tribulations changed us as filmmakers and inspired us to continue providing a platform for stories like theirs. We hope that youth who see the film will learn from our subjects' experiences and that parents will better understand the pressure that their teenage kids are up against. In addition, we hope the film creates awareness and opens discussions about new-immigrant communities, Polynesian heritage, and encourages viewers to confront their own expectations of the "American Dream."

I, Tony Vainuku, am first generation Tongan American born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah. My parents are both of Tongan descent and followed their parents to Utah in the early 1970's where their families practiced Mormonism. I didn't have much growing up, poor was the norm, and education was never viewed as a "better way" out of our then current circumstances.

The kids in my neighborhood looked up to notorious gang members and popular drug dealers. However, the Polynesians who played little league football with me found their role models in Junior Seau and Vai Sikahema, pioneers for our culture in the NFL. They made the "American Dream" appear reachable. We all relied on our size and speed throughout Little League, hoping to, one day, play in the NFL. Yet, it was my uncle, Joe Katoa whose life was told through a football highlight reel. Joe's football successes gave our family something to be proud of, and more importantly, hope. Tragically, after high school, Joe lost his father to a rare disease and with that, his drive to play football. Having dedicated twelve years to football, opportunity beyond the sport seemed nearly impossible. Joe's parents had never expected him to hold a job and his coaches ignored his academic challenges as long as he stayed eligible. Joe spent the next ten years of his life in prison becoming another tragic story for our family.

I left football during my sophomore year in high school after finding an outlet to express myself through songwriting and entertainment. My personal experiences with loss and redemption have inspired me to pursue filmmaking. Inspired by Joe's story, I began searching for an opportunity to address our childhood experiences and an avenue to critique the role that football played in our lives. *In Football We Trust* is the beginning of a lifelong career in sharing my perspective and understandings of the immigrant experience.

Tony and I, Erika Cohn, both felt very strongly about using sports as a catalyst to address a larger societal issue, which would be key to reaching a wide diverse audience. I had played competitive sports, and I was deeply missing the team comradery and thrill of the game (for me it was softball). Then, I met our four subjects, whose rare vulnerability and vitality deeply struck me. I fell in love with these charismatic teens, their stories, and their remarkable families. And so, we embarked on a five-year journey to make this film.

A Letter from the Directors

Growing up in Salt Lake City, I witnessed the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Pacific Islanders and the inherent racism that this community experiences. I felt that our film could be a very important look into the community and hopefully, express new insights about their lives and the issues that they face. I remember being struck by Harvey Langi when he said, “I am just a kid in high school, I’m just a kid,” while trying to deal with the overwhelming pressure and familial expectations to lift his entire family out of near poverty, by becoming a NFL star. Throughout the filming of *In Football We Trust*, the tension between religion, culture and the new-immigrant experience in America kept coming up, and I really wanted to tell that story.

In the film, we see our subjects strive for the promise (or at least the perceived promise) of the NFL. The “American Dream” phenomenon fascinates our society and unfortunately professional sport plays a large role in this. I think we need to put our idealism in check. I believe *In Football We Trust* will illuminate how our country’s infatuation with chasing the “American Dream” can often leave people entrenched in the very conditions they are striving to overcome.

We were so incredibly fortunate to have been welcomed wholeheartedly into our subjects’ lives. They often looked up to us, asked for advice or for our counsel, and we were humbled by that experience. Yet, it was me that in turn learned so much from them. I was so in awe of their wisdom, as it was beyond their years.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,
Tony Vainuku and Erika Cohn

Discussion Starters



Intergenerational Relationships & Family Dynamics

- In the film, Harvey's mom, Kalesita, says, "I think for the salvation of the Langi family is Harvey. And our hope right now is for Harvey." In response to this, Harvey explains, "It just sucks having so much pressure on your shoulders. Like it feels like um, like I can barely even carry it sometimes." How do parents' high expectations influence their children's success? Can parents' expectations be more harmful to their children in the long run?
- Star Lotulelei from the Carolina Panthers describes how children feel toward their immigrant parents: "We don't want to see our parents struggle. They brought us from the islands to America to kind of give us more of an opportunity and I think that's what we're doing, trying to take advantage of it. And football just happens to be the best way for us to do that." How do the struggles and experiences of immigration influence the relationship between parents and their children? Can these intergenerational dynamics lead children to place false hopes on unlikely futures?
- In reflecting on his time living with his father in Tonga, Fihi Kaufusi says, "Seeing him...shows me what I don't want to be. And it shows me that I can be something better than that. It gives me more drive to get everything that I need to do for my family since he's not doing it to take care of them, do the things I need to do." Harvey and the Bloomfield brothers also spoke of individuals in their lives whose examples, decisions, and life choices they did not want to follow. How important are (positive and negative) role models to motivating youth?

Discussion Starters



The Face of the Community Versus the Struggles Inside

- When Harvey's father, Sam, describes their neighborhood, he says that things have not been easy for them as a large Polynesian family with less economic means. He fears that his neighbors think their family is involved in dealing drugs and believes they have no idea how much their family struggles to make ends meet. How does dealing with negative stereotypes and poverty shape the experiences and dynamics of the family?
- The film illustrates how stereotypes, like Pacific Islanders being natural athletes, play out in the lives of four high school athletes and their families. How much of this stereotype acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy for Pacific Islanders, leading Pacific Islander parents, children, and their communities to push them into sports instead of other pursuits?
- How might alternative perceptions of Pacific Islanders shift the way they see themselves and influence the choices they make? What if parents, teachers, and others perceived Pacific Islanders as natural-born students or Pacific Islander cultures of family service as embodiments of leadership? How would that change the way others view and interact with Pacific Islander communities?

Discussion Starters



Growing Up Against Adversity

- Vita Bloomfield describes his family's dynamics: "Being a part of a family that people say is a gang family is really hard for me, and especially Leva, because you see your uncles and cousins come and go. Either they go back to prison, come out of prison, or they pass away, or they leave because they got deported. You don't get used to them being there. But you just know that they're there for a little bit." How does this context shape Vita's and Leva's day-to-day realities, choices, and life possibilities differently than Fihi's or Harvey's?
- Although Fihi, Harvey, and the Bloomfield brothers had very different experiences in high school, each of them eventually graduated. How much of the boys' life outcomes are linked to/are results of their high school football careers? To their family characteristics and dynamics? To their friendships? Social support groups?
- Throughout the film, Fihi, Harvey, and the Bloomfield brothers navigated the demands of high school football, family responsibilities, and adolescence. Not only did this mean dealing with the pressures of being student-athletes and of being central figures in their families' hopes for the future, this also meant dealing with the pressures and realities of crime, drugs, and violence at school and in their communities. How well do you think each of them dealt with these combined pressures? Do you think they had people to turn to for support or help?
- In the film, Vai Sikahema explains, "The thing that's difficult for the kids growing up is that their parents expect them to play in the NFL at the cost of everything else. It's hard to get in there. It's hard to get in; it's even harder to stay. And if kids grow up thinking that's all I'm going to do and nothing else, they're a long shot to succeed in life, period." Why would Pacific Islanders and other minorities like African Americans put so much faith in sports? For the subjects in the film, why is it "in football we trust"?
- Considering the subjects' struggles with poverty, what questions should we be asking about why other avenues for success are not as open to Pacific Islander youth as sports? What other kinds of opportunities should be available to help immigrant communities to escape poverty, and how might we develop those opportunities?

Facts & Statistics



Demographics

- Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) are the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S. Between 2000 and 2010, the NHPI population grew 40% faster than Latinos and Asian Americans. Currently, the NHPI population in the U.S. numbers 1.2 million; this number is expected to be over 2 million by 2030.
- The median age for NHPI is 26.5, which is younger than the national median age (37.2) and the youngest among all racial groups in the U.S. The Tongan (43%) and Samoan (42%) populations have some of the highest proportions of youth among NHPI ethnic groups (the Marshallese have the highest with 48% of Marshallese under the age of 18). In addition, NHPI groups have a larger youth population that is college-aged (ages 18–24) than the national average (13% compared to 10%).**
- Compared to the average household size in the US (2.5 people), NHPI have an average household size of 3.4. Tongan (5.0) and Samoan (4.0) Americans have some of the higher household sizes of NHPI ethnic groups.**
- Nationwide, 29% of NHPI speak a language other than English at home, and nearly 9% of NHPI are limited English proficient (LEP). In Salt Lake City, 68% of Tongan Americans and 45% of Samoan Americans speak a language other than English at home, and nearly 20% of Tongan Americans and 7% of Samoan Americans are LEP.**

Facts & Statistics



Migration

- Pacific migration to the U.S. is closely linked to the Islands' colonial histories and their ongoing political and religious associations with the U.S. According to U.S. Census records and historical studies, one of the earliest waves of migration from the Pacific Islands occurred from American Samoa after U.S. naval administration of the islands ended in 1951. Previous waves of migration from Tonga have been historically facilitated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or through "step migration" to American Samoa, Hawaii, and then, the mainland U.S. Today, 14% of the NHPI population is foreign-born, with American Samoa and Tonga being among the top places of birth for Pacific Islanders outside of the 50 United States. Over 1/3 of those foreign-born arrived within the last 15 years. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the net migration rate for Pacific Islanders will be 5% by 2020, the third highest rate of migration behind Asian Americans (14.4%) and Latinos (6.1%).*
- While the state of Utah has the third largest NHPI population in the U.S. (1.33%, compared to 26.16% in Hawaii and 1.57% in Alaska), the proportion of NHPI living in Salt Lake City (1.5%) is larger than any other city in the continental U.S. The growth rate of the city's NHPI population (58% between 2000 and 2010) is also higher than average. Salt Lake City has the fourth largest population of Samoan Americans and the second largest population of Tongan Americans in the U.S. West Valley City has the largest population of Tongan Americans of any city in the U.S.**

Facts & Statistics



Poverty

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) living in poverty increased 56% between 2007 and 2011, a growth rate higher than any other racial group and much higher than the growth in the total number of Americans living in poverty (18%) during the same period. On the whole, NHPI have a higher poverty rate (15%) than the national average (14%), are disproportionately low-income (35% compared to 32%), and have a lower per capita income (\$19,051 compared to \$27,334).
- In Salt Lake City, these numbers are less favorable: the NHPI poverty rate is 15% compared to 9% in the state of Utah; 53% of NHPI are low-income compared to 27% across the state; and the per capita income for NHPI in Salt Lake City is \$12,446 compared to \$24,895 statewide. In addition 22% of Tongan American youth live in poverty in Salt Lake City, compared to the average of 12%. **
- Although NHPI families have a higher rate (18%) of three or more workers contributing to income than the national average (11%), the unemployment rate for NHPI is higher (14% in 2011) than the national average (10%). Data shows that between 2007 and 2011, the number of unemployed NHPI increased by 123%, a rate higher than any other racial group and much higher than the national growth in the number of unemployed (64%) during the same period. **
- While approximately 65% of the total population in the US are homeowners, only 47% of NHPI are homeowners, a rate comparable to Latinos. And like other communities of color, NHPI homeowners are more likely to be at imminent risk of foreclosure (18.6%) than Whites (14.5%). Among renters, Tongan (58%) and Samoan (48%) Americans spend more than 30% of their income on rent. **

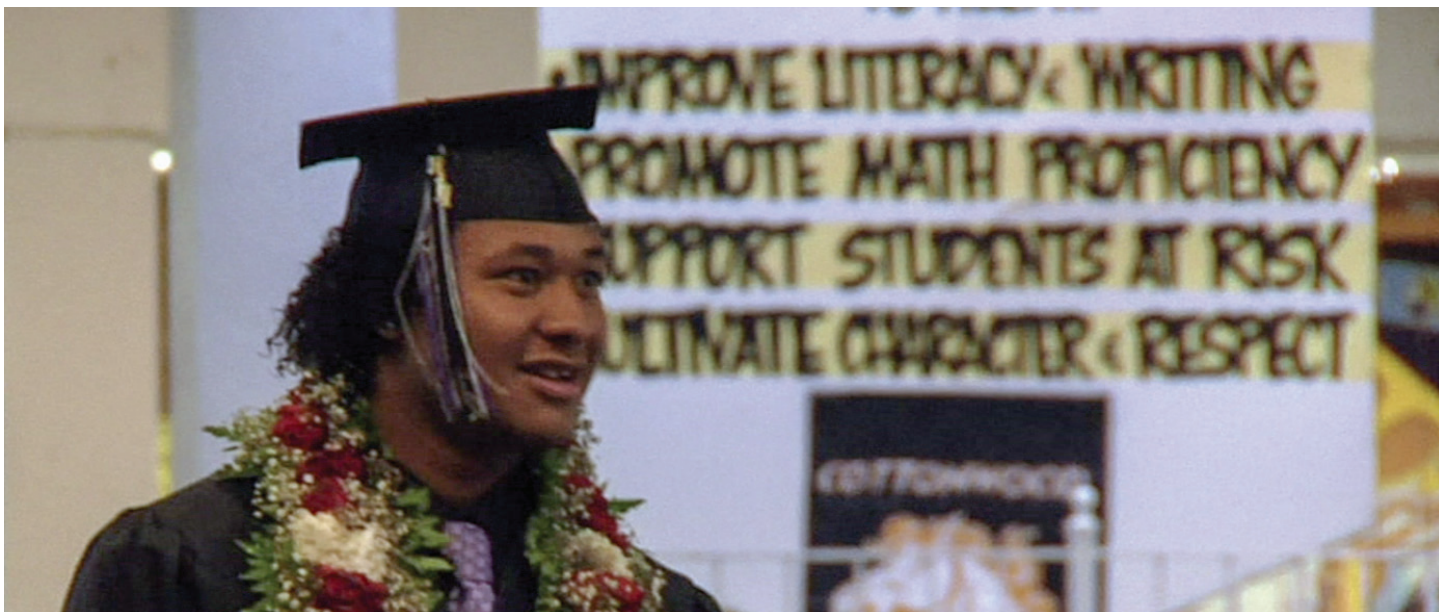
Facts & Statistics



Crime

- According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the growth of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) incarcerations between 2002 and 2010 was disproportionate to the population of NHPI, which is approximately 1.2 million, or about 0.4% of the total population. Nationwide in 2010, the ratio of NHPI adults in prison (447 per 100,000 adults) was higher than the ratio of White adults in prison (425 per 100,000 adults).
- At least 12,000 NHPI were under the supervision of the U.S. correctional system. In the same year, over 3,600 NHPI were in prison, 540 NHPI were in jail, 1,300 were on parole, and 6,800 were on probation. In the state of Utah, where the film takes place, the number of NHPI prisoners increased by 134% compared to a 27% increase in the total number of prisoners across the U.S.**
- The National Center for Education Statistics reported that in 2007, 8.1% of NHPI students in grades 9-12 were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (compared to 7.8% of all students); 9.5% of NHPI students carried a weapon to school (compared to 5.9% of all students); 9.6% of NHPI students engaged in a physical fight on school property (compared to 12.4% of all students); and 38.5% of NHPI students reported that drugs were made available to them on school property (compared to 22.3% of all students).
- 26.4% of students ages 12-18 who identified as Pacific Islander, American Indian, or Alaska Native reported that gangs were present at school, compared to 37.6% of African American students and 23.2% of all students.****

Facts & Statistics



Education

- Educational attainment among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) is similar to African Americans, with about 18% of NHPI adults achieving a bachelor's degree, compared to the national average of 28%. Despite this low rate, a study conducted by ACT shows that about 81% of NHPI students aspire to obtain a bachelor's degree or higher—a rate similar to the national average of college aspiration. In Salt Lake City, the number of Tongan (7%) and Samoan (9%) Americans who hold a bachelor's degree are even lower.**
- In 2011, only about 38% of NHPI college-aged youth were enrolled in college, a rate lower than the national average (42%). And of those NHPI students starting a four-year degree in 2005, less than 23% completed their degree in four years. The ACT study found that only about 17% of NHPI high school graduates met all four college readiness benchmarks for English, reading, math, and science, a rate less than the national average (25%) and much lower than White students (32%). In addition, NHPI rates of high school graduation are lower than average in regions with a significant population of NHPI; for example, 73% of NHPI in Salt Lake City compared to 78% of students in the state of Utah graduated from high school. Similarly, the dropout rates are higher than average in regions with a significant NHPI population; for example, 24% of NHPI students dropped out of high school in Salt Lake City compared to 19% of NHPI students in the state of Utah.**
- The 2012 National Household Education Survey reported that Pacific Islanders are on average less involved in their children's school-related activities than the national average. For example, only 84% of Asian or Pacific Islander parents attended a general school or PTA meeting in the 2011–2012 academic year (compared to 87% of all parents); 65% attended a school or class event (compared to 74%); 37% volunteered or served on a school committee (compared to 42%); and 23% met with a guidance counselor (compared to 33%).****

Facts & Statistics



Sports

- The National Collegiate Athletic Association estimates that 59% of high school football and basketball players believe that they will get a college scholarship based on their athletic ability. Less than 1% of high school athletes receive a scholarship of any kind to attend a Division 1 school, and only 2% of high school athletes will play collegiate sports of any kind at any level. Looking at football alone, 5.8% of high school football players go on to play for a college team.
- Of those college players, only 2.0% go on to play professional football. That means a high school football player has on average a 0.09% chance of making it to the NFL. Compare this to the fact that Samoans and Tongans are 28 times more likely to make it to the NFL than any other ethnic group.**

Sources



* Barringer, Herbert R.; Robert W. Gardner & Michael J. Levin. (1980). Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

** Empowering Pacific Islander Communities & Asian Americans Advancing Justice. (2014). A Community of Contrasts: Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Accessible at empoweredpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/A_Community_of_Contrasts_NHPI_US_2014-1.pdf

*** Georgia State University. (2006). From high school to pro How many will go? Accessible at bsbproduction.s3.amazonaws.com/portals/5181/docs/from%20high%20school%20to%20pro%20statistics.pdf

**** National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). Parent and family involvement in education, from the National Household Education Surveys Program of 2012. Accessible at nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013028rev.pdf

***** National Center for Education Statistics. (2010). Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic minorities. Accessible at nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010015/indicator5_22.asp

Engagement Campaign Objectives



Suggested objectives for screening *In Football We Trust* are to help communities better understand the impact of sports on youth and education, and to engage in a critical dialogue about the power of sports to shape ambitions and goals. This will include building more support for youth who face pressures to provide for their families and plan for their own future, and to raise awareness around the experiences of Polynesian communities in the U.S. Ways to do this may include:

- Igniting conversations about the various needs for opportunities and support systems for youth—what can our community do so the young men in the film don't have to rely solely on football as the only ticket out of poverty and away from gang violence?
- Connecting with organizations that provide resources, support, and opportunities for youth (e.g. provide tabling opportunities or organize an on-site resource fair).
- Highlighting local success stories from athletes, coaches, and community members who are working to combat these issues, especially those that are part of the Polynesian community.

Framing the Conversation

One of the most exciting and challenging aspects of screening events often takes place after the credits roll and participants begin to reflect on the film's connections to themselves, their community, and society. *In Football We Trust* suggests many compelling questions for further dialogue:

- What does it mean to be successful and at what cost?
- Who decides what success is?
- Are all young men and young women in this country receiving a fair and equitable education?
- How are young men and young women being prepared to succeed and thrive?
- How do sports enhance or hinder our youth's experiences?

Topics implicit in these questions are:

- Preserving one's cultural heritage as an immigrant;
- Intergenerational family relationships, particularly around gender and religion;
- The idea of the "American Dream";
- Issues of race, juvenile justice, public education, high school, college and professional sports;
- The health and safety of our children.

Conversations around each topic can be highly emotional and touch our personal lives in many ways. When discussed in large or small public forums, creating safe and inclusive settings for all participants is what invites the greatest learning and growth to occur.

Authentic engagement requires each member to feel welcome and able to express their opinions. Post-screening conversations are initiated to allow a plurality of voices to be heard and respected. These events are not intended to solve a problem in real time but to spark civic conversations, forge connections, and learn together in community. Discussing and negotiating terms to use and frameworks to follow with community partners and fellow facilitators prior to any event is always recommended.

Creating a Safe Space for Dialogue



With a youth focused event, or when there are young adults in the audience, it is particularly important to create a space for open, safe, and trusting dialogue. The sensitive topics in this film may “hit home” for some youth in the audience. In order to invite open dialogue given the issues, it is critical to be explicit about expectations and conversational norms especially with youth in the room. Be sure that your moderator consults the “Facilitator Introduction” section of this guide for tips on creating a safe space for conversations.

Given the film’s exposure to Polynesian cultural practices and the Mormon backdrop in Utah, it is important to be explicit and acknowledge that these communities may be unfamiliar to many in the audience. When possible, reach out for partnership opportunities with the local Polynesian community through civic, religious, or cultural affiliations. Inviting partnership includes working together to insure the success of the event on many levels. This could include offering visibility for their group, including volunteers and leadership in planning the event, working together on outreach, shaping the post-screening discussion and/or engagement activity, and carrying out the responsibilities of the event itself. Including multiple voices, experiences, and vulnerabilities brings a realistic view of the lives of the Polynesian community off the screen and into our lives. Being intentional in these efforts is an invaluable opportunity to learn and shift our assumptions. The role of the facilitator is to listen and ask for input from all community members.

Potential Partners and/or Speakers to Consider

Topics & Issues Relevant to the Film

The following topics and issues can help facilitate discussions, bridge community partnerships, and open up cross-cultural dialogue:

- Youth and Expectations/Pressures
- Youth and Sports
- Polynesian Culture and Heritage
- Immigration, Migration, and New-Immigrant Communities
- Intergenerational Family Relationships
- Criminal Justice System and Juvenile Justice
- Gang Violence Prevention
- Poverty and Economic Mobility
- Faith
- Gender Roles and Expectations
- Higher Education
- What are “Pipelines”?
- Expectations for the “American Dream”

Review the “Topics and Issues Relevant to the Film” and “Resources” sections of this guide, and consider the following ideas for types of potential partners and/or speakers to reach out to:

- GuideStar has a robust catalogue of contact information for non-profit organizations across the country, searchable by keyword, city, and/or state. Find relevant local non-profit organizations near you by searching for “youth” “sports” “football” “Polynesian” or other keywords: [guidestar.org/AdvancedSearch.aspx](https://www.guidestar.org/AdvancedSearch.aspx)
- Organizations that support youth, for example:
 - Find your local Boys & Girls Club, and see if they are part of their [Delinquency and Gang Prevention Initiative: bgca.org/whoweare/pages/findaclub.aspx](https://www.bgca.org/whoweare/pages/findaclub.aspx)
- Local sports-focused organizations that help build opportunities for youth:
 - Local athletes, coaches, and representatives from sports teams—at the high school, college, and/or professional level
 - Find a local chapter of the National Alliance for Youth Sports: nays.org/about/partners
 - Find a local league of Pop Warner, a non-profit that provides youth football and cheer & dance programs: popwarner.com/League_Finder.htm
 - Find a local chapter of the Positive Coaching Alliance (click on the map icon on the top that reads “Visit Our Chapter Websites”): positivecoach.org
- Organizations that provide resources for the Asian and Pacific Islander community, for example:
 - Find a local chapter of the OCA- Asian Pacific American Advocates: ocanational.org/?page=AboutUs_Chapters
 - Find a local chapter of the National Association of Asian American Professionals: naaap.org/joinnaaap
 - See if you have a Asian & Pacific Islander community center near you
 - Local college or universities: Asian & Pacific Islander student associations and Asian & Pacific Islander Studies departments and professors
- Faith-based organizations, for example the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints groups, Asian and Pacific Islander faith groups, and any inter-faith organizations to discuss the role faith plays in the lives of youth and their decision making
- Explore Meetups ([meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)) as a strategy to expand audience outreach efforts

Audience Conversation Starters

Your *In Football We Trust* DVD features two conversation starters: one on the menu screen before the film starts, and one that plays on screen for 30 seconds at the end of the film after the credits. Use the conversation starters before the film begins and at the start of your post-screening dialogue to encourage your participants to talk with one another about their responses. For example, ask participants to turn to a person sitting near them to share their answers for two to three minutes. Then, invite a few people to share with the entire group if time permits.

Pre-Screening Conversation Starter

What did you want to be when you grew up?

Depending on how you structure your event, you may want to tease out the above question with this follow-up: Did you face adversity or do you face adversity in pursuing that dream/goal?

Post-Screening Conversation Starter

What are ways you can support youth to manage the pressures of planning for their future?

Engagement Strategies Beyond a Panel

While panel discussions are always a great resource at events, the rich themes in *In Football We Trust* provide opportunities to brainstorm innovative ways to encourage audience members to engage with the issues discussed and interact with one another at your event. For example, consider the below themes in the film for ideas to build upon.

Polynesian Culture

Think about ways to engage in deeper content knowledge around Polynesian culture. For example, explore the Polynesian war dance, haka, that the young men in the film perform as they prepare to enter into football games. See if there are any local Polynesian community centers or student associations that can tell your audience more about the haka or even perform it at your event. Be sure to be sensitive about the way you integrate the haka into your event, so that it's an appreciation for and deeper understanding of its history and meaning rather than cultural appropriation.

Haka has its origins in Maori legend that comes from New Zealand. There are many versions of the haka, specifically adapted based on language and location. Traditionally, it was performed as part of the rituals of encounter when two parties met or when a visitor was welcomed into the community. Modern examples of occasions for haka include birthdays, weddings, funerals, and other celebratory events. Read more about the haka at the following links: britannica.com/art/haka and polynesianwardances.tumblr.com.

You could project on screen the words of the haka, or feature them on a large poster board. The words of the haka can be found at the following link, and are noted below:

news.bbc.co.uk/sportacademy/hi/sa/rugby_union/features/newsid_4076000/4076338.stm

Ringa pakia (*Slap the hands against the thighs*)

Uma tiraha (*Puff out the chest*)

Turi whatia (*Bend the knees*)

Hope whai ake (*Let the hip follow*)

Waewae takahia kia kino (*Stamp the feet as hard as you can*)

Ka mate! Ka mate! (*It is death!, It is death!*)

Ka ora! Ka ora! (*It is life!, It is life!*)

Tenei Te Tangata Puhuru huru (*This is the hairy man*)

Nana nei tiki mai (*Who fetched the sun*)

Whakawhiti te ra (*And caused to shine again*)

A upa ne ka up ane (*One upward step, another upward step*)

Upa ne, Kaupane (*An upward step*)

Whiti te ra (*The sun shines!*)

Sample discussion questions to pose to your audience around the haka include:

- What importance does enacting the haka have for the larger narrative of the film?
- What words, phrases, or movements stand out to you from the war dance?
- What words would you use to describe the scenes of the haka in the film? What connections do you think are being made between culture, identity, and sports?

Engagement Strategies Beyond a Panel

Sports

Consider how you might tease out the focus on sports in the film. For example, you could host a “tailgate” themed pre- or post-reception. Or if your venue permits and/or you feature any local athletes at your event, see if you can find ways for audience members to play with a football themselves (e.g., a football toss for prizes, etc.).

While sports themed activities will likely appeal to a wider and possibly new audience for your organization, it’s important to also remember the more sensitive issues around the role of sports raised in the film. Consider providing participants with fact or summary sheets from the following resources:

- NCAA: [Facts about NCAA Sports](#)
- CBS News Report: [8 Things You Should Know About Sports Scholarships](#)
- USA Today article: [NCAA Increases Value of Scholarships in Historic Vote](#)

A few statistics from the above reports to highlight may include:

- 6% of high school football players go on to play NCAA football, and only 2% of these players go on to professional contracts.
- There are currently 1.1 million high school football players and approximately 70,000 college football positions. (Note this is across Division I, II and III.)

Small or large group discussion ideas might include:

- Using the 3:2:1 strategy to debrief about the statistics. Participants share 3 things they didn’t know, 2 things that were surprising, 1 lingering question.
- With the individuals and families we met *In Football We Trust* in mind, discuss what conclusions or resolutions come to mind about the relationship between youth, sports, and the “American Dream.”

Youth

Think about ways to bring to life the role of youth in the film. Invite community partners and organizations directly aligned with the issues to host a table and engage with audience members directly about their support and services. Equipping our youth with both hope and opportunity is central to shift the paradigm and alleviate the unwanted or unsolicited pressures young men and women may face. Creating a space for community groups to come together, share best practices, and make coordinated efforts will benefit a cross-section of your community and take a proactive approach to the issues that surface in this film. Consider ways for youth to speak directly about the issues in the film and their own experiences at your event. For example, connect with youth spoken word, theater, and/or dance groups that could possibly perform at your event. Other organizations to consider working with include youth mentoring programs and organizations that celebrate cross-cultural traditions.

Engagement Strategies Beyond a Panel

Formats For Engaging in Deeper Dialogue

- **Partner Roundtables:** Organize a post-screening roundtable where community leaders or representatives are assigned to one small round table. After the film concludes, ask viewers to move to tables that have signs designating the organization/individual who will be at the table. This format invites a more open-ended discussion. However, if screening the film in a theater, this format requires audience members to move into space large enough for small tables. Alternatively you may choose to find a community center to host the screening eliminating the need to move. (Optimal strategy for larger settings with the objective of building community coalitions and addressing these issues collectively.)
- **World Café Conversation:** The World Café approach is somewhat similar to the partner roundtables method, but is less individual/organization driven and is focused much more on group conversational leadership. More information and free resources to design a World Café conversation are at: theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method. (Optimal strategy for large community settings.)

In Their Own Words

Throughout the film, the characters share emotionally difficult moments and events in their lives. The pressure placed on the young men to succeed in football and the reality of the “Polynesian Pipeline” and the “School to Prison Pipeline” remain ever present throughout the film. As audience members, we watch and witness the “trials and tribulations” each family experiences and openly shares. Many of these moments can be crystallized in the sentiments shared by the main characters and their families.

“In Their Own Words” is a post-screening process inviting audience members to dig deeper into an issue from the film represented by a quote or passage directly taken from the film. After the film concludes, a facilitator will ask audience members to circulate around the room selecting one quote or passage that resonates. Once selected, participants will have the opportunity to:

- Discuss their reflections on this quote with others who also found meaning in its expression.
- In a smaller group, or as a variation, audience members can write their reflections directly onto the easel paper that the quote is posted upon.

Quotes and statements from the film that could be used for this activity include:

Football, man, it's not a way out, it's a way up.

—Fua Bloomfield

Being a part of a family, that people say are a gang family is really hard for me, and especially Leva. Cause, when you see your uncles and cousins come and go. They come back from prison, they go back to prison, or they pass away, or they leave because they got deported. You don't get used to them being there. You just know that they are there for only a little bit.

—Vita Bloomfield

Gangs or football. Both are violent, they both are camaraderie. It's a continuous struggle for sure.

—Troy Palamalu

The world is yours until you just do something stupid.

—Harvey Langi

We don't want to see our parents struggle. They brought us from the islands to America to kind of give us more of an opportunity. I think that's what we are doing, is trying to take advantage of it, and football just happens to be the best way for us to do that.

—Star Lotulelei

The thing that is difficult for the kids growing up is that their parents expect them to play in the NFL. At the cost of everything else. Its hard, its hard to get in there, it's even harder to stay. Um, and if and if kids grow up thinking well that's all I'm going to do, and nothing else, um, its then they are a long shot to succeed in life period.

—Vai Sikaheima

If you fail this Harvey, all of your scholarships are going to be gone. That's when it hit me. If it is in my system and it is positive then just get a regular job and be a normal person, finally. And if it come out negative I promised myself that I am going to make it to the NFL.

—Harvey Langi

I don't like school but football makes it so if I don't pass my classes I can't play, so, I try to do my best. None of my family has ever been to college, you know they've gotten close. They have had very good offers but they have messed up and I don't want to be like that.

— Fihi Kaufusi

Resources

Pacific Islanders in the United States

Barringer, Herbert R.; Robert W. Gardner & Michael J. Levin. (1980). *Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities & Asian Americans Advancing Justice. (2014). A Community of Contrasts: Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Accessible at empoweredpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/A_Community_of_Contrasts_NHPI_US_2014-1.pdf

Harris, Philip M. & Nicholas A. Jones. (2005). We the People: Pacific Islanders in the United States. Census 2000 Special Reports. Accessible at census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-26.pdf

Lee, Helen & Steve Tupai Francis (Eds.). (2009). *Migration and transnationalism: Pacific perspectives*. Canberra, Australia: Australian National University Press.

Small, Cathy. (1997). *Voyages: From Tongan villages to American suburbs*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Spickard, Paul; Joanne L. Rondilla & Debbie Hippolite Wright (Eds.). (2002). *Pacific diaspora: Island peoples in the United States and across the Pacific*. Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.

Community Resources

Office of the White House. (2011). Winning the future: President Obama's agenda and the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. Accessible at whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/aapi_winningthefuture_20110506.pdf

For more data on the Pacific Islander community, visit data.gov/aapi.

Organizations

AIGA Foundation
aigafoundation.com

Asian & Pacific Islanders California Action Network (APIsCAN)
apiscan.org

The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
aapcho.org/aboutus

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
empoweredpi.org

The HYPE Movement
facebook.com/thehypemovement

Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc. (LEAP)
leap.org

Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Alliance (NHPIA)
apiahf.org/programs/nhpi-affairs/community-capacity-building/nhpi-alliance

National Pacific Islander Education Network (NPIEN)
npien.com

Pacific Resource for Education and Learning (PREL)
prel.org

Pacific Islands Athletic Alliance (PIAA)
piaahawaii.com

White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
ed.gov/edblogs/aapi

Credits

DEVELOPED BY

IFWT Productions, LLC

WRITING BY

Christina Kwauk

ADDITIONAL WRITING BY

Fran Sterling

Blueshift

ITVS ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION TEAM

Shaady Salehi

Managing Director, Distribution &
Audience Development

Duong-Chi Do

Director of Engagement & Education

Daniel Moretti

National Community Engagement
Manager

Venessa McDonald

Engagement Coordinator

ITVS

Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds, presents, and promotes award-winning documentaries on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web, and the Emmy® Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens* on Monday nights at 10 pm on PBS. Mandated by Congress in 1988 and funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, ITVS has brought thousands of independently produced programs to American audiences. Learn more at itvs.org.

INDEPENDENT LENS

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10 pm. The acclaimed series features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by Independent Television Service, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation at facebook.com/independentlens and @IndependentLens.

