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CONTACT: Strategic Heights Media
Michelle Huff Elliott; Simone Smalls
info@strategicheights.com
212-634-7176

**TELEVISION AND FILM PRODUCER WILL PACKER TO RECEIVE
“DISTINGUISHED ABFF ALUMNI AWARD” AT THE
2016 ABFF HONORS**

*Annual Awards Gala to Salute Excellence in Motion Pictures and Television
Sunday, February 21, in Los Angeles*

Los Angeles, CA, December 21, 2016 --- The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) Honors is proud to announce it will be presenting television and film producer **Will Packer** with the “Distinguished ABFF Alumni Award” at the 2016 ABFF Honors. The awards gala will be held February 21, 2016, at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA.

ABFF Honors' mission is to celebrate Black culture by honoring individuals, movies and television shows that have had a significant impact on American entertainment, as well as the people who are proponents of championing diversity and inclusion in Hollywood. This year's event will be hosted by actor and comedian Mike Epps.

“We are very excited about ABFF Honors this year, and the opportunity to pay tribute to my friend Will, who got his start at the ABFF, and who continues to support the efforts and mission of the festival,” said Jeff Friday, President and CEO, ABFF Ventures.

Packer's long-standing history and relationship with the American Black Film Festival began in 1999 when his independent film *Trois* premiered at the ABFF. It became the fastest African American distributed film to surpass \$1 million in sales. Since then, Will Packer has premiered and screened six other films at the ABFF including *This Christmas* and *Takers*. Most recently, *Think Like A Man Too* opened the festival in 2014.

Producer Will Packer has established himself as one of Hollywood's blockbuster hit makers. In 2014, he accomplished the rare feat of producing two of the top six films at the box office, and is one of the only African American producers to have seven films debut at number one during opening weekend.

In 2013, Packer signed first-look production deals with Universal Pictures and Universal Television. Under both deals he develops new projects for the studios under his Will Packer Productions company.

His most successful film to date is *Ride Along*, starring Ice Cube and Kevin Hart, that debuted number one at the box office in 2014, with record-breaking receipts totaling over \$48 million during the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday weekend opening of the film, making it one of the biggest January opening box office tallies of all time. The film also went on to be number one at the box office for three consecutive weeks and grossed over \$154 million worldwide. Packer also executive produced the box office hit *Straight Outta Compton*, which has grossed over \$200 million to date and is the highest grossing music biopic on record.

Packer's number one films also include *No Good Deed* (2014), *Think Like A Man Too* (2014), *Think Like A Man* (2012), *Takers* (2010), *Obsessed* (2008) and *Stomp The Yard* (2007). His most recent release this year, *The Wedding Ringer*, starring Kevin Hart and Josh Gad, holds the world record as the #1 R-rated comedy opening in January. His next film, *Ride Along 2*, will debut in theaters on January 15, 2016, followed by *A Meyers Christmas*, that hits theaters November 11, 2016.

Collectively, Packer's films have grossed over \$780 million, making him one of Hollywood's most bankable producers.

Also making a major foray into prime time TV, Packer is the executive producer of two new comedies, *Truth Be Told* (NBC) that premiered in 2015 and *Uncle Buck* (ABC), that will debut in early 2016. Packer is also set to executive produce *Roots*, a remake of one of the most celebrated TV programs of all time as an event series that will air simultaneously on The History Channel, A&E and Lifetime networks in 2017.

ABFF Honors will be one of the highlights of the Hollywood Awards season and Black History Month. The event is produced by ABFF Ventures (a partnership between Film Life and Black Enterprise) in association with de Passe Jones Entertainment. The 2016 ABFF Honors sponsors are Cadillac (Presenting Sponsor) and Prudential (Gold Sponsor).

For more information about the 2016 ABFF Honors, log on to www.AbffHonors.com. Also, follow us on our social media platforms:

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/abff>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Black-Film-Festival/47321635722>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/AmericanBlackFilmFestival>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ABFFTV/featured>

Hashtags: #ABFFHonors; #ABFF20

ABOUT THE ABFF

The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) is an annual event dedicated to bringing awareness of quality entertainment content made by and about people of African descent to a worldwide audience. Committed to the belief that Black artists deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts, ABFF founder Jeff Friday conceived the festival in 1997 as a vehicle to encourage diversity in the film and television industry. Today, it is widely recognized for showcasing established and new Black talent, both in front of and behind the camera, and is regarded as one of the leading film festivals in the world. The ABFF will celebrate its 20th anniversary June 15-19 in Miami Beach, Florida.

For additional information about the festival, visit www.ABFF.com.

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