

**UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING HOSTS INNOVATIVE NEW
FILMMAKING WORKSHOP FOR VETERANS****Veterans Learn To Make Short Films At Free Weekend Workshop**

11 October 2023—Cheyenne, WY: **The Patton Veterans Project** (PVP) is hosting a free film workshop at the University of Wyoming in Laramie December 1-3 — and is designed especially for veterans. The workshop, led by Benjamin Patton (grandson of WWII's General George Patton) and a team of professional film instructors, enables veterans to collaborate on creating short films that express meaningful service experiences.

Founded by Patton in 2011, PVP has helped nearly 1500 vets make more than 400 films at major military installations and colleges across the US and abroad. The **I Was There Film Workshops** are open to any and all veterans in the region, and have proven highly therapeutic for participants, particularly those coping with posttraumatic stress and other challenges of service and transition.

The films are typically fictionalized portrayals (not documentary) and the vets control every aspect of the process. Servicemen and women ranging from enlisted to senior officers of all branches and all ages appreciate the safe, creative space of the workshop setting. As one retired OEF/OIF soldier and recent alum noted: *"The workshop helped me find my voice and realize that my story matters."*

Cheyenne VA Psychologist Dr. Chuck Drebing, who co-authored a clinical study of the I Was There film workshops, said: "In my 30+ years of working with veterans, I've never seen anything as transformative and powerful as this. The vast majority leave the experience with a more positive attitude toward their future and ready to move forward in their lives."

A key feature of the program are the post-workshop community screenings at which the Veterans show their films to the community. Strictly voluntary, these screenings have proven valuable, both as validation for participating vets and enlightening for military families and community members who often struggle to fully grasp the impact of deployments and the rigors of service on their veterans. Says founder Ben Patton: *"The video camera is the most powerful and widely used form of communication ever, and everyone - military and civilians alike - understands the medium. It's a language we all speak."*

The free workshop will be held at the U of Wyoming Union in Laramie beginning at 5:30PM on Friday, Dec. 1, and runs all day Saturday, Dec 2 and Sunday Dec. 3. (Participants must attend all three days.) Meals are included. Additional workshops will be held throughout 2024 Aims Community College, University of Northern Colorado, Colorado State University and Univ. of WY.

**Benjamin Patton can be reached for comment at (917) 968-6096,
and Dr. Chuck Drebing at (774) 217-8668.**

For more information or to register for this or future film workshops, call Mike Leeman at (970) 657-5500 or send an email to workshops@pattonveteransproject.org.