

Thousands of people depart from cities all across America in caravans; picking up passengers at countless stops along the way as they journey to our nation's capital. These caravan riders are mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters. They are affluent and poor, white and black, straight and gay. They are making this pilgrimage because they are living with and dying of AIDS. Having witnessed too many of their loved ones succumb to the deadly disease, they press onward; experiencing illness, joy, betrayal and brotherhood. Believing that every step they take brings them closer to ending AIDS once and for all, and, in the words of one rider, brings them:

CLOSER^{TO} GOD

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**FILMWORKS
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 **HOUSING WORKS**

CLOSER^{TO}
GOD

www.CloserToGodMovie.com

FILM SYNOPSIS

They sleep in gymnasiums, churches, and cheap hotels. They are forced to share medications and accept each other's differences. People of different ages and races bound together for their survival on this journey across the country. Closer To God is the quintessential American road movie. It is the story of how a group of strangers find in each other the strength and will to change the world.

This story is not just about their extraordinary journey, but where these riders come from and where they are heading. Tommy, a Native American, Vietnam Veteran, and grandfather. Mika, the homeless mother who just lost her baby to adoption. Joey, the self-proclaimed "hillbilly" whose partner was murdered because he is HIV-positive.

On the road there is joy and sadness, victory and defeat. Despite increasing illness and the loss of some riders, the caravan pushes onward. Upon reaching Washington, the members of the caravan join thousands of other similarly determined souls from all 50 states, holding five days political action featuring congressional visits, educational programs, and acts of civil disobedience. These caravan riders are part of the Campaign To End AIDS, and they are journeying to Washington to end AIDS once and for all, even if it means sacrificing themselves in the process.

Closer To God is both a validation of the valiant efforts of these caravan riders and a searing exposition of the legions of Americans who have been marginalized by our culture and forgotten by our government. People whose only real objective is to be treated as they are: human.

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/synopsis/>

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

Miss Judith

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/judith/>



The fearless and fiery leader of the San Diego caravan, Miss Judith is a grandmother from Fort Worth, Texas. Upon learning that she had contracted AIDS, Miss Judith spiraled into a 10-year cycle of addiction and imprisonment. Upon her release, Miss Judith emerged spiritually renewed and with a mission.

Every morning before departing for the day's journey, she implored the members of the Campaign To End AIDS caravan to hold hands in a "circle of love"—a prayer that began in San Diego with a group of just six riders and grew to more than 50 before the journey's end. Despite a contentious relationship with many of the caravan riders and battling illness along the way, Miss Judith's grit and determination helped her to emerge a hero.

Joey Cash

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/joey/>



Cousin of legendary country singer Johnny Cash, Joey's road to the Campaign to End AIDS was tragic by any measure. Though the story that led him on his journey involved murder and heartbreak, Joey was quick to console or protect any of the other caravan riders during times of struggle. The caravan's self-proclaimed "Arkansas hillbilly," Joey is like one of his cousin's

songs; dark, enigmatic, and loving.

Tommy

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/tommy/>



A Vietnam Veteran, Native American, and grandfather, Tommy was one of six riders to join the Campaign To End AIDS San Diego caravan at its start in San Diego. Intensely emotional, Tommy shared his Native American culture and tearfully discussed his hopes and fears in daily cell phone conversations with his partner, Cricket One Feather. Tommy had perhaps the

most difficult journey of all the riders.

Damien

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/damien/>



From Jackson, Mississippi, Damien joined the Campaign To End AIDS San Diego caravan and immediately became one of the group's strongest leaders. He helped Tommy through illness and sang beautiful solos in churches along the way (evidence of his background in gospel music). Sadly, Damien's demons chased him all the way across the country, leading to the caravan's most difficult choice.

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES (CONT.)

Mika

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/mika/>



A homeless mother living out of two plastic bags in hurricane-ravaged Jackson, Mississippi, Mika has endured a lifelong struggle with addiction. She joined the Campaign To End AIDS San Diego caravan after only one month of self-imposed sobriety and was soon tested by her old demons. Mika continually struggled with the other women of the caravan who neither trusted nor accepted her, despite the fact that most of them used to be in her position. Mika's faith and determination may lead her back to the daughter that was taken from her.

Kahlo

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/kahlo>



A 19-year-old from Las Cruces, New Mexico, Kahlo is of Mexican and Native American heritage. A precocious young man wiser than his years, Kahlo was often the voice of reason during disagreements or confusion. Speaking publicly about his HIV-positive status and harrowing childhood experiences for the first time, Kahlo may well be a future leader of the AIDS movement.

Robin Webb, Ph.D.

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/robin>



A Ph.D. and Mississippi native, Robin was the most educated and affluent member of the Campaign To End AIDS caravan. The recent loss of his partner and the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina took a toll on Robin, which led to a very difficult relationship between him and his co-leader Judith. Throughout the journey, Robin was the cool breeze to Judith's fire.

Charles King

<http://www.closetogodmovie.com/cast/charles>



As the President and CEO of Housing Works and architect of The Campaign To End AIDS, Charles King was the man who convinced many of the San Diego caravan riders to join the movement. An inspiring and controversial figure who is HIV-positive himself, Charles was a primary target for both praise and criticism by caravan riders nationwide.

THE CAMPAIGN TO END AIDS



The Campaign to End AIDS (C2EA) is a diverse coalition of people living with HIV/AIDS, and those who care about them. C2EA demands that our leaders exert the political will to stop the AIDS epidemic worldwide, once and for all.

Miss Judith, Mika, Tommy and the rest of the Closer To God cast traveled from San Diego to Washington, DC as part of the C2EA movement, joining thousands of other HIV-positive individuals in staging five days of congressional lobbying, educational programs and acts of civil disobedience. Today the Campaign To End AIDS extends nationwide, with growing activist networks in every state.

<http://www.CampaignToEndAIDS.org>

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Housing Works and Filmworks Brooklyn are currently seeking additional funding to finance the post production and additional shooting necessary to complete Closer To God within the next year. To inquire about donations or investment levels, please contact:

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