

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 7, 2018

**Former Foster Child Turned Hollywood Film Writer To Give Keynote Speech at SOS  
International Foster Awards Gala**

**Vancouver, British Columbia** The local chapter of the world's largest non-governmental organization focused on supporting children without parental care and families at risk is pleased to announce the 2018 SOS International Foster Awards Gala at the Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm.

While raising funds for local children in foster care, guests will be inspired by **award-winning film and literary writer Antwone Fisher who has worked in Hollywood for 20 years as a writer and producer**, with an impressive fourteen writing projects or assignments with the major studios.

Among those projects is the feature classic, *Antwone Fisher*, directed by and starring Oscar-winning actor Denzel Washington, written by Antwone and based on his own life. The film garnered numerous nominations and awards. Antwone received the renowned **Humanitas Prize**, the **Screenwriter of the Year Award** from the National Association of Theater Owners, and was listed in *Variety's* "**Fifty People to Watch.**" Antwone's first book, *Finding Fish: A Memoir*, about his inspiring story, became a **New York Times best seller**.

Born in an Ohio prison to a teenage mother, Antwone became a ward of the state and was placed in foster care. **He spent two years in a loving foster home, but was subsequently moved and suffered twelve years of abuse at the hands of his new foster family.**

Unable to locate a new placement for him, at age 14, Antwone was sent to a reform school in Pennsylvania where he remained until he graduated high school at 17. Emancipated from foster care, **he found himself in the world alone and homeless, living on the streets of Cleveland.**

**Antwone set on a course of healing when he joined the U.S. Navy, where he served his country for eleven years.** After his honorable discharge from the military, Antwone became a Federal Correctional Officer with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and, after three years of service, he took a job at Sony Pictures Entertainment working as a Security Officer. It was at Sony Pictures that Antwone was referred to a free screenwriting course.

The purpose of the SOS International Foster Awards Gala is to recognize leadership and success in foster care, to celebrate inspiring former foster children who have triumphed over adversity, and to raise money to help current foster children and youth in dire need.

"We are thrilled to have Antwone flying in to Vancouver to give the keynote speech at our gala," said Douglas Dunn, executive director of SOS Children's Village B.C. "We are also pleased to

have local singer **Desirée Dawson**, winner of the CBC Searchlight Competition, provide live entertainment. If you want a little hint about who the incredible winner of this year's SOS International Foster Award is, simply Google 'Rapping Dad'."

Only 6% of SOS Children's Village B.C.'s funding comes from the government, with the vast majority coming from individual and corporate donors. SOS B.C. uniquely focuses on lifelong engagement with foster children and embracing their cultural heritage, and is fighting to fix the foster care system in this province. **SOS Children's Village B.C. is setting the standard for the care of foster children and youth in British Columbia.** Indeed, the village in Surrey - the only SOS Children's Village in Canada - has a track record of 100% of foster youth graduating high school within two years of expected date, versus only 40% of foster youth graduating in the provincial foster care system.

Some tickets are still available for the gala and can be purchased at [www.sosbc.org/gala](http://www.sosbc.org/gala).

#### **About SOS Children's Village BC**

SOS Children's Villages is the world's largest non-governmental, non-denominational child development organization and cares for fostered, orphaned, or abandoned children. It has existed for over 65 years with presence in 135 countries and 572 Villages. British Columbia is home to the only SOS Children's Village in Canada. SOS Children's Village BC provides homes, a supportive community, and programs to help foster children and youth in need grow into caring, self-reliant adults.

**-30-**

#### **For more information please contact:**

William Brennan, Manager of Communications  
SOS Children's Village BC  
T: (604) 574-2964 ext. 104  
E: [williambrennan@sosbc.org](mailto:williambrennan@sosbc.org) Web: [www.sosbc.org](http://www.sosbc.org)

**Please visit our Media Room: <https://www.sosbc.org/the-village/media-room/>**