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**Mayor Miro Weinberger Promotes Vermont International Film Festival
Tribute to George Stoney, Father of Public-Access Television**

Burlington, VT – Mayor Miro Weinberger today visited with Vermont International Film Festival (VTIFF) and community leaders to promote the Festival and tomorrow's tribute to George Stoney, documentary filmmaker, educator, and father of public-access television. Stoney, who recently died on July 12, 2012, helped invent socially responsible film making, which led him to launch the community media movement. Weinberger was joined at the event by: Orly Yadin, filmmaker and executive director of the VTIFF; Lauren-Glenn Davitian, executive director of CCTV Center for Media & Democracy; Bill Stetson, VTIFF underwriter, former chair of the board of the Vermont Film Commission, and emerging artists supporter; and Doreen Kraft, executive director of Burlington City Arts.

"I am thrilled that we have brought the festival back to Burlington and have spread ourselves all around town," said Weinberger. "From Church Street and the Downtown to the Waterfront to the Old North End and the South End, the Festival has helped us knit our community together during this special event."

"We have made every effort this year to reach out, through the selection of films and choice of themes, to as many parts of our community as possible," said Yadin. "Our intention was to both honor the audience who has followed us over the years and to attract new and younger cinema-goers, and the diverse composition of our programming committee reflected this decision."

Stoney had a profound impact on Davitian, who shared these thoughts: "George Stoney believed that video was one tool in the toolkit of social change and that public access TV channels could open the door to all members of a community to make a difference. CCTV's community media efforts became a vital way for us to document and advance Burlington's progressive agenda and to expand free speech opportunities across Chittenden County and then, Vermont. Today there are 25 community media centers, running 44 channels to every corner of our state. George inspired us – and continues to do so."

Tomorrow's panel presentation, titled "Tribute to George Stoney: How Film Can Change Lives" will take place at Main Street Landing at 1pm and is a free event. The program will look at two major aspects of Stoney's work: how he forced us to rethink the role of documentary film and its ethics, and his role in launching the idea of public access media, or citizen journalism.

Participants include moderator Greg EplerWood (Mediavox), Larry Kirkman (Professor in Film and Media Arts and former Dean of the School of Communications at American University), David Bagnall (filmmaker, Stoney collaborator, Adjunct Instructor at NYU Film & TV Department), Judith Helfand (filmmaker and Stoney collaborator) and Davitian (CCTV-Channel 17-PEG access advocate VT). For more information about the tribute, please visit www.vtiff.org/schedule/george-stoney-special-tribute.

The VTIFF began in 1985. This year's Festival showcases films with themes on the environment, food, music, gender, and others. "Attendance so far this year has been wonderful, and we are getting amazing feedback," added Yadin. "Yet this is just the first step in a five-year plan to place VTIFF on the regional map as one of the most sought-after film festivals in the northeast."

To learn more about VTIFF, please visit the Festival website at www.vtiff.org.

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