

KOVOD Award Entry

☐ Category for which you wish to apply:

- ✓ **Replicable Programming - Behavioral Health Services**

☐ Agency name and community:

- ✓ **Jewish Community Services - Baltimore**

☐ Agency Budget:

- ✓ **A: Agency Operating Revenue over \$2.5 million**

☐ Contact information for the point person on the submission:

- ✓ **Howard Reznick, LCSW-C**
Sr. Manager, Prevention/Education
410-843-7451
hreznick@jcsbaltimore.org

☐ Staff listing by title (of staff involved in program):

- ✓ **Howard Reznick, LCSW-C**
Sr. Manager, Prevention/Education
- ✓ **Serena Shapero, BA**
Health Educator and Social Media Specialist

☐ 200-word (max) summary description of program or video purpose:

- ✓ One of our young adult health educators proposed the idea to combine a provocative film, the current indignation towards the demeaning sexualization of adults and children exposing corporation driven selling of the body via electronic media, and a call to action. We spear-headed an exclusive local film tour of *The Illusionists*, bringing its independent film-maker Elena Rossini in from Paris to help spread the message of positive body self-image. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cW4UT7VmkgY>

Being “uncomfortable in our own skin, in our own bodies” underlies the pervasive sense of unworthiness that many teens and young adults so want to mask. This often leads to negative self-assessment or less than healthy behaviors meant to take away that uncomfortable feeling. Many of us base looks on unattainable “airbrushed photo-shopped” images which leads to dissatisfaction with one’s own self. Effectively reaching teens and young adults with positive mental health information is an ongoing challenge that we boldly take with this project.

This kind of “tour” is a replicable model for other cities on this or other health related topics. We believe it sent a positive message and was well worth our investment in meeting our community education goals concerning a major mental health issue.

☐ Total program or production cost if applicable and funding sources:

- ✓ The cost to our agency was \$1,985 or a total of \$7,939 spread among our partners . We originally needed at least two other major partners willing, like we were, to commit \$3500 maximum each to insure we would cover expenses, along with a few high schools willing to pay \$500 each for single viewings. We immediately found a major partner in a local treatment center for eating disorders. We approached and got buy-in from two, area universities’ health centers, both with significant Jewish populations. They marketed it to their various academic departments and put on campus wide showings, as well as brought it to numerous classes. We reached out and had two private high schools paying to bring the program to their students. Additionally we partnered with a local Jewish Day School who co-sponsored with us for a community wide showing. Lastly we held a 3 hour continuing education session for helping professionals.

All this and we came in \$3,330 below budget!

☐ A pdf file or link pertaining to the program or video as part of the strategy:

- ✓ <http://theillusionists.org/film/teaser/>

☐ List of 3 major outcomes and evaluation method(s) used to determine those outcomes and/ or video impact:

- ✓ In all we had 10 screening in 5 days with close to 1000 participants who watched the film and engaged in discussions with Q&As with the filmmaker-producer Elena Rossini. [See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8I5k0XeIMQ> which beautifully and wordlessly fully describes the tour] The continuing education session evaluations had attendees rating the 3 hour session extremely high with 94% reporting learning something new and giving a satisfaction rating of 4.9 out of a possible 5!

Additional outcomes included:

1. A creative partnership for a weekly campus radio program
2. Two young adult contributing bloggers to our website
3. A student club who created t-shirts distributed free at their campus showing
4. A spin-off collaboration with Ms. Rossini of an upcoming counter point online photo project to The Illusionists called “The Realists”, which speaks truth to media in acknowledging our imperfections, in praise of authenticity. The website features photos of everyday people who then describe what real beauty is to them.
5. Ten additional local programs so far requested featuring the film and discussion are now scheduled at area schools, one youth group, a local Hadassah chapter, and at 2 Jewish overnight summer camps -as word has spread about the impact of the experience.