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## VIDEO: ReelAbilities Disabilities Film Festival Opens Feb. 1 With Iraq Vet Flick 'Warrior Champions'



The Huffington Post [Rachel Tepper](#)

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WASHINGTON -- For the first time, the D.C. area will play host to [ReelAbilities Disabilities Film Festival](#), a nine-day event featuring films that promote awareness of the disabled that kicks off Wednesday evening.

The festival, started four years ago by a Manhattan Jewish community center, has now spread

to several JCCs across the country. In the D.C. area, the [Washington DCJCC](#), [JCC of Greater Washington](#) and [JCC of Northern Virginia](#) will present films at six venues across the region, touching on a variety of disabilities including autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, blindness and mental health.

Susan Barocas, the director the Washington DCJCC's film program, said she and the other JCCs "all hope very much that this breaks down stereotypes about people with disabilities." Although the scheduled films aren't categorically Jewish, the festival's goals are very much entrenched in the tenets of Judaism.

"I think it's very much part of Jewish values to build community, to be inclusive," Barocas explained, adding that the festival falls under the category of *tikkun olam*, the Jewish notion of "repairing the world" by making it a better place for the people living in it.

On Feb. 1, the festival opens at [Avalon Theatre](#) with "[Warrior Champions](#)," which profiles the lives of four Iraq War veterans who return home with life-threatening injuries. Despite the odds, the vets dream of competing in the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing. The film, according to its website, "challenges every notion of what it means to be disabled." Check out the full schedule of events [here](#).

[Tickets](#) for opening night ticket are \$25, and all other films are \$10 for general admission and \$7 for seniors and students with ID. Free tickets are available to disabled members of the community; interested parties should email [info@djff.org](mailto:info@djff.org) with the exact time, location and name of the film.

[Stirton and Stockwell](#) from [Renaud](#) on [Vimeo](#).

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