

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Matthew Heron-Duranti

Counterfeit Cow Productions, LLC

347.468.0524

[CounterfeitCow@gmail.com](mailto:CounterfeitCow@gmail.com)

[www.CounterfeitCow.com](http://www.CounterfeitCow.com)

“HOMELESS IN A COLLEGE TOWN” Documentary

Amherst, MA, 1/2/2013 - Counterfeit Cow Productions, LLC is currently filming a documentary in Amherst, entitled “Homeless in a College Town”. You may have seen this crew of filmmakers up and down North Pleasant Street, camera in hand, hanging out with the homeless.

The filmmakers are gaining first-hand experience of what it’s like to live in a college town without a home. Visiting tent communities, and working with local organizations that provide services for those who have been hit hard by the economic down fall, documenting the efforts the town and the citizens have put towards helping those who are struggling.

“There’s a phenomenon sweeping the Nation.” says Sari Gagnon – Director of *Homeless in a College Town*. “Amherst, MA is home of the flagship school for the University of Massachusetts, and two other colleges, Hampshire College, and Amherst College. In the recent recession Amherst, like many other college towns across the country, has seen a rise in numbers amongst their homeless population.”

Though it may sound unusual that homeless folks would flock to little college towns all over the United States but that is exactly what’s happening. College campuses have 24 hour facilities, many year round, and the homeless can blend right in with the students.

College towns already have services in line for the student’s benefit that the homeless can also take advantage of. For example, Amherst has a free bus line, and many downtown stores have deals and giveaways to bring in student business.

In addition college students often volunteer time and goods to shelters and soup kitchens as part of college’s community service programs. So many services are often close to campuses.

On the flip side, 28.9% of the Amherst population has fallen below the poverty level. Mostly due to the unemployment rate and jobs in a college town are hard to come by because they are often seasonal and minimum wage. Rent is extremely high in the town of Amherst as well, due to the high demand of student housing and the lack of housing on campus.

“It’s not uncommon to meet homeless people with college educations, or jobs! But the standard of living is so high that finding and keeping a place to live has gotten so difficult for many individuals.” says Gagnon.

Counterfeit Cow Productions is working on a project to provide help to this crisis. The production team is trying to raise funds to donate a statue that will double as a piggy bank, to be placed in Downtown Amherst Center. "The statue will be in place forever, a symbol to raise awareness in this community and at the same time help raise funds for the services in town that help the homeless. We're excited because this way we can have a lasting impression on the community in place long after we're gone." said Gagnon.

The Counterfeit Cow Productions team is hopeful that this documentary will help teach other college towns how they can also help their homeless.

"We're hoping that we can put a face on this homeless crisis, and that college students everywhere will have a heightened sense of awareness." Gagnon says.

College kids can hopefully take their experience with them when they graduate into their prospective fields. So maybe doctors, lawyers, and politicians etc. in the next generation are sensitive to the needs of homeless individuals.

Gagnon concludes. "We're all in this life together, so why shouldn't we walk hand in hand when things get tough?"

Counterfeit Cow Productions, LLC is a young, multi-media company with several projects in various stages of development. CCP was founded by Producer Matthew Heron-Duranti and associates. Artist and assistant producer Sari Gagnon is the creator, and driving force behind production for "Homeless in a College Town."

To learn more about our project and how you can help please go to: [www.CounterfeitCow.com](http://www.CounterfeitCow.com) or follow us on Twitter