

# Boston Business Journal

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October 9-15, 2009 Vol. 29, No. 37

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October 9-15, 2009

BostonBusinessJournal.com

Boston Business Journal **7**

## 50 Eggs lands in AMC's basket with latest documentary

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Mary Mazzio's decision to quit her job as a commercial real estate lawyer at Boston-based law firm **Brown Rudnick** 11 years ago wasn't an easy one.

Despite the fact that her life as a lawyer was lucrative, she thought that by dedicating her new career to politics or film, she would help improve society on a grander scale.

"I didn't come from a privileged background. I had to scrap for everything and it was the generosity of many people who fueled me," said Mazzio, 48. "I remember saying, 'I can't do this for the rest of my life.' It was hard to leave a very lucrative profession, but I thought, if I'm going to create social change it has to be at a policy level."

After attending **Boston University's** film program and gaining traction from her first documentary, "A Hero for Daisy," about women college athletes fighting discrimination, Mazzio formed the documentary film company **50 Eggs Productions** in Wellesley in 2000.

Mazzio's new film, "Ten9Eight," is in a sense a culmination of her aspirations as a documentary filmmaker and as a business woman.

"Ten9Eight," is a documentary that follows a group of inner-city teens competing in a business plan compe-



Mary Mazzio's latest documentary, "Ten9Eight," will be screened by AMC free for teachers and students Nov. 12. The distributor will then screen the film in select theaters for one week.

tion run by the **Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship** in New York. The film's message speaks to Mazzio's goal of working to prevent kids from dropping out of school and teaching them skills they can use. To promote the film, Mazzio has inked a unique deal with **AMC Entertainment Inc.**, which has agreed to screen the 84-minute film in

limited release in its theaters in eight cities, for one week. The film opens Nov. 13.

Kansas City, Mo.-based AMC Entertainment has also agreed to screen the documentary for free for teachers and students on Nov. 12.

"AMC has never had an exclusive relationship like this," said **Robert J. Lenihan**, president of programming at AMC Entertainment. "When I saw (Mary's) movie, I thought it was an excellent documentary. It's very compelling in terms of these young kids competing. There's a great sense of life and vitality coming from them. Plus there is an element of competition — you're rooting for some kids, so it works on an entertainment level too."

In many ways Mazzio's documentary films — she's made five over the course of 10 years — is the first stage in her firm's business plan. As with her other films, "Ten9Eight" will eventually be made into educational DVDs for classrooms. Mazzio has also developed a profitable career booking speaking gigs across the country. Sales from DVDs and revenue from the speaking engagement are important revenue streams.

Mazzio will not disclose revenue, but says that 50 Eggs is profitable.

"With any kind of filmmaking, it's cyclical, we've got robust years and

we've got lean years," said Mazzio.

50 Eggs draws much of its funding from grants. "Ten9Eight" was underwritten by the **John Templeton Foundation** in West Conshohocken, Pa. and the **Kauffman Foundation** in Kansas City, Mo.

"Really the inspirational nature of the story, when you consider the obstacles that were overcome by these folks in the movie, that reaffirms the power in all of us to change our destiny. Amid the gloomy economic realities of today, an inspirational message such as this is very timely," said **Thom Ruhe**, director of entrepreneurship at the Kauffman Foundation.

Mazzio has a soft spot for entrepreneurs, having herself launched 50 Eggs after being secure in a stable job.

But Mazzio learned several entrepreneurial lessons while she was training to try out for the Olympic rowing team for the 1992 Olympic games, a spot that was not a guarantee. She made the team.

Trying out for the Olympic team "taught me a lot of lessons. It taught me to never take no for an answer and to embrace failure, because when you screw up, that's when you grow as a person," said Mazzio.

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