

BYkids

BEEKEEPER

Saving the pollinators, and finding your passion (USA)
26:16 minutes, airing on public television in 2023



KEITH GRIFFITH III, 15, SHARES THE ART, THE JOY AND THE ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF BEEKEEPING.

The 15-year-old beekeeper Keith Griffith III has embraced a mission: to spread the word about the ecologically critical honeybee. Rising temperatures, habitat loss and pesticides have disrupted bees' ecosystems worldwide, threatening their very existence. A world without pollinators means a world with fewer fruits and vegetables.

His film, BEEKEEPER, explains the essential role of pollinators in the environment and food production. But it's also a tale of finding one's way, as well as one's self.

Keith explains what bees have taught him: cooperation, community and emotional well-being, lessons he shares in workshops and talks around his hometown, Louisville, Kentucky. Keith began keeping bees about four years ago, when both of his parents were incarcerated. Beekeeping helped him manage the stress of not having his parents at home.

What started as a hobby, encouraged by his beekeeping uncle, soon became a passion. The young entrepreneur also founded Beeing2gether, a company that

sells bee-inscribed merch, raw honey and actual hives. He's even written a book about the benefits of bees, the aptly titled *Honey Bees & Beekeeping: A Mental Health Miracle*. Keith sums it up beautifully: In taking care of the bees, he says, the bees take care of you.

KEY SCENES IN “BEEKEEPER” INCLUDE:

- Keith harvesting and selling honey
- Keith calling his dad in prison
- Keith reuniting with his father after his release, and showing him his beekeeping work
- Prepping honey for next season

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT—Keith Griffith III

I wanted to make this film because my family and I have a story to tell. As a beekeeper, I've learned that honeybees consistently act in social ways that benefit the entire hive—even at the sacrifice of individual gain. They are inherently altruistic, and they are great examples for understanding the significance of symbiotic relationships.

Beeing2gether was designed in part to mimic the honeybees' level of latent inhibition—the ability to ignore unimportant stimuli, saving energy and brain cells for the things that truly matter: family, community, nature and being together.

MENTOR’S BIO – Evan Mascagni

Evan Mascagni is an award-winning documentary filmmaker from Kentucky. Most recently, he co-directed and co-produced *Building a Bridge*, on the church and LGBTQ+. It premiered at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and was executive produced by Martin Scorsese. He is now in production on an environmental documentary and one on criminal justice. He also co-founded Player Piano Productions, which creates branded content for nonprofits and social impact companies.

MENTOR’S STATEMENT

Keith is an extraordinarily thoughtful and compassionate young person and it was an honor to work with him on this project. Getting to know his family and going back to spend time in my hometown is something that I will cherish for a long time.

Not a lot of people “get their flowers while they can still smell them,” and what I love about this film (and Keith's family) is that they aren't shy to express their love, gratitude and admiration for one another. They are a model for us all to better

understand the interconnectedness of ourselves, our family and the planet. As Keith and his family always say, "we're better off Beeing2gether."

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Stephanie Apt, Sammy Chadwick and Holly Carter

ABOUT BYKIDS

BYkids produces real-world films for kids, by kids. Talented young storytellers from around the world are paired with seasoned filmmakers to create powerful documentaries about their lives. In partnership with public television and education innovators, we share their films and their educational resources to help make global issues feel personal, relevant and actionable for millions of students. Our work serves as a catalyst for change, igniting important conversations and inspiring a new generation of social activists.