

## Pasos de Heroe

Based on real events, this film tells the story of Eduardo, a 10 year-old boy who lost his leg in the on-going armed conflict in Colombia. However, that is not an impediment to his determination to form a soccer team and enter his town's local tournament despite his disability and opposition from his school's director. Director Henry Rincón: "This story is special. We want to tell the story of a hero that doesn't have any superpowers... We want to show people how we are all heroes in our own way. More importantly however, we want to dedicate this project to the whole population of handicapped people in the world, specially those who were victims of a landmine - of which there are more than 8000 in our country, from which almost 600 are children."

**Themes:** sports; disabilities; conflict

**Director:** Henry Rincón (2016)

**Official film website:** <http://pasosdeheroe.com/ws/>



## SET THE STAGE | THOUGHT-STARTERS

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Colombian Conflict a four-sided war that has involved narco cartels, rightwing paramilitaries, the leftist guerrilla Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, and the government army. The conflict is the world's longest continuous war, causing the internal displacement of around 5 million people. Colombia ranked as the second most mine-affected country in the world in 2014 accounting for 286 of the 3,678 mine victims recorded. There have been over 11,000 mine victims in Colombia since 1990. A historic ceasefire deal was signed in June 2016. Soccer and violence have been entwined, though not necessarily related, throughout Colombia's history. The Colombian national team first qualified for the FIFA World Cup in 1962, near the end of La Violencia, a period when more than 200,000 people were murdered. Colombia would not return

to the World Cup until 1990, the same year the Colombian drug cartels reached the height of their power. Since Colombia's soccer achievements have followed periods of intense violence, the international media has viewed them as inseparable.

### WORDS TO KNOW

- **Landmine:** an explosive device concealed under or on the ground and designed to destroy or disable enemy targets.
- **Ceasefire:** a temporary suspension of fighting, typically one during which peace talks take place; a truce.

## TALK ABOUT IT | DISCUSSION

- What does this film say about the resilience of children?
- What feelings did you share with any of the characters in the film?
- What motivates the school director to oppose Eduardo's team entering the tournament?
- What life lessons can be learned from the choices made by the characters in the film?
- Although the Colombian Conflict is not directly mentioned in the film, how is its presence felt?
- Examine the role of soccer in Latin American culture and society.

## GET CREATIVE | EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



## MAKE CONNECTIONS | ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### BOOKS

#### **Fútbol!: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America**

By Joshua H. Nadel

Discover the dreams, passions, and rivalries that are at stake in Latin America's most popular sport. Fútbol! explains why competitors and fans alike are so fiercely dedicated to soccer throughout the region. From its origins in British boarding schools in the late 1800s, soccer spread across the globe to become a part of everyday life in Latin America—and part of the region's most compelling national narratives. This book illustrates that soccer has the powerful ability to forge national unity by appealing to people across traditional social boundaries.

### FILMS

#### **Club Frontera**

Directed by Chris Cashman

A riveting documentary about the Club Tijuana Xoloitzcuintles (Xolos) professional Mexican soccer team and their positive impact on the city of Tijuana, Mexico. The compelling film follows players, fans, political figures, sports personalities, and enthusiasts from both sides of the border as they share their personal stories of how the newly emerging success of the Xolos is changing Tijuana for the better.

#### **Dreamtown**

Directed by Betty Bastidas

A documentary about the precarious dream of a young Afro-Ecuadorian soccer player, Anibal Chala, as he strives to make it to the professional leagues, and eventually sees his dreams become reality. This coming-of-age story follows Anibal over the span of five years, from the youth minor leagues until he secures a place on Ecuador's First Division team, ranking among the country's top 10 players at the young age of 17.

### LOCAL CONNECTIONS

<http://www.antojitoscolombianos.com/>

The owner of **Antojitos Colombianos**, Javier Rodriguez, is from Cali, Colombia. He moved to San Diego 28 years ago to study business at San Diego City College, and then decided to build his life here. Javier capitalized on his previous experience in hotel management, as well as his love for food, and spent the next twenty years managing various restaurants. Antojitos Colombianos is the first Colombian restaurant in San Diego and opened for business in January 2012.

### BEYOND THE FILM | RELATED INTERNET LINKS

<https://www.halotrust.org>

The **HALO Trust** creates safe and secure environments in war torn communities by clearing landmines, managing stockpiles of weapons and destroying unexploded ordnance. At least 12% of the country's population has been displaced during the years of conflict, with an estimated six million IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) in 2014, the second highest number after Syria. Landmines continue to have a huge effect on the civilian population, causing physical harm, preventing farming and affecting livelihoods

**Media Arts Center San Diego** offers project-based Youth Media classroom residencies where students can learn the art of digital storytelling. Contact Larry Da Silveira at [larry@mediaartscenter.org](mailto:larry@mediaartscenter.org) or (619) 230-1938 to learn more.