



Star studded project beckons to film makers

A MEDIA company has enlisted the help an Emmy award-winning director for their latest campaign against binge drinking.

Jonathon Stack will spearhead Beyond Empathy's *Five in a Row* project across the region from now until June.

The acclaimed director, in conjunction with five local film-makers, will oversee several arts-led workshops, with a view to producing short films to be showcased at the *Five in a Row* film festival, which will screen at the conclusion of the project.

The project comes after last year's *Message in a Bottle* program identified the need for more hard-media campaigns about the dangers of binge drinking aimed at

teenagers.

The *Five in a Row* project will bring the voice of young people to the community through digital media, while challenging attitudes to binge drinking.

Beyond Empathy is a media company which uses film, digital mixed media, and visual arts to build relationships between inter-generationally disadvantaged young people, and support agency staff in 13 locations.

Executive director of Beyond Empathy Kim McConville said it was real coup to have Stack onboard the *Five in a Row* project.

"This is a rare and unique opportunity for local Armidale artists," she said.

"In rural communities, opportu-

nities like this don't come along all that often."

Stack is a two-time Academy Award nominee for his documentaries *The Farm* (1999) and *The Wildest Show in the South* (2000) - the former was also awarded the Sundance Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize.

He is also the founder of Gabriel Films, which has produced more than 50 documentaries for film and television since 1991.

Expressions of interest are sought from local filmmakers wishing to participate.

Positions are paid and will run from October.

For further information contact Fiona Ballard of Beyond Empathy on 0425 779-427.