



FILLING THE GAPS

ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE FOR ALL.

DIRECTED BY **JIM TUTTLE**

2024 / UNITED STATES / ENGLISH / DOCUMENTARY SHORT
DIGITAL / 16X9 / 5.1, STEREO / 32 MIN

[FILLINGTHEGAPSFILM.COM](https://fillingthegapsfilm.com)

PRESENTED BY



PRESS & BOOKINGS: films@findhelp.com or agordona@findhelp.com



directed by
JIM TUTTLE

director of photography
ALEX LANCIAL

music
JOE FOURNIER

produced and edited by
JIM TUTTLE & ALEX LANCIAL

executive producers
**ERINE GRAY
AMY GORDONA**

associate producers
**AMBER LOMBARDI
AYLA BURKE**

featuring
**AMBER LOMBARDI
COURTNEY VANNAH
LINDA RAYMOND
MIKE LOMBARDI
BECCA MATUSOVICH
ROBYN SHAFER
ILMI CARTER
JOEL FURROW
RAISSA B. IGIHOZO
LAUREN DURELL
NELSON GEEL
SARAH SHERMAN
JENNIFER BRUNACINI, DDS
HEATHER GEEL**

**MAINELY TEETH
THE LOMBARDI FAMILY
THE GEEL FAMILY
MAINE HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
THE OPPORTUNITY ALLIANCE
CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH NETWORK OF MAINE
OCEANSIDE HIGH SCHOOL
THE ROOT CELLAR
WEST QUODDY HEAD LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM
AMERICAN LEGION POST #9**

cinematographer
JIM TUTTLE

drone operator
ALEX LANCIAL

archival material provided by
AMBER LOMBARDI

production rentals
MAINE STUDIO WORKS

editor
KELLY WEST

assistant editor
MANDA HENDERSON

sound design
LYMAN HARDY III

colorist
PARKE GREGG

special thanks

**MAINE VETERANS DENTAL NETWORK
NORTHEAST DELTA DENTAL
SOCIETY HILL FARM**

**THE PEOPLE, TOWNS AND CITIES OF:
MACHIAS, MAINE
PORTLAND, MAINE
ROCKLAND, MAINE
CUTLER, MAINE
WISCASETT, MAINE
ALLISON TURRELL, STUCK ON ON
STAFF AND EXECUTIVE BOARD OF FINDHELP**

title and credit design
ALEX LANCIAL

“A LITTLE FURTHER OUT”
Written by Christopher Robert Henderson
Performed by Bronze Radio Return
Courtesy of Musicbed

findhelp legal support
**DUDLEY McCLELLAN
DAWN FRIESEN**

findhelp finance support
**CHAD DENTON
RYAN BROEKE**

findhelp marketing team
**PAM O'NEAL
CANDACE STOHS-KRAUSE
LISA WEISER
ALY WHEELER**



When the pandemic hit in 2020, Amber Lombardi, founder of Mainely Teeth, knew it was time to realize her dream of creating a mobile dental clinic. Built out of a converted horse trailer, the clinic-on-wheels was road ready in two months.

ABOUT THE FILM

LOGLINE

How a dental hygienist in Maine is revolutionizing the oral health care system with a horse trailer turned clinic-on-wheels.

SYNOPSIS

‘Filling the Gaps’ follows the remarkable journey of Amber Lombardi, the dedicated oral health advocate behind Mainely Teeth, a nonprofit dental clinic addressing limited access to dental care in Maine. The disparities are striking: According to the American Dental Association, more than 15% of Americans reportedly avoided going to the dentist despite needing care, primarily due to financial barriers. Driven by her passion for dental hygiene and health equity, Amber and her husband, Mike, co-founded Mainely Teeth in 2020.

Amber’s vision became tangible through Mainely Teeth’s unique initiative—a mobile dental clinic in a converted horse trailer, outfitted with teledentistry technology. This innovative approach improves accessibility for underserved communities across the state. As the organization expands its reach, the documentary introduces viewers to the compelling story of Nelson, a U.S. Coast Guard Veteran and one of Maine’s last lighthouse keepers. Highlighting the human side of the dental health crisis, ‘Filling the Gaps’ reveals that Nelson, who had been wearing the same worn-out dentures that the Coast Guard issued him more than 50 years ago, will receive a much-needed new set through Mainely Teeth.

Amber’s tireless effort to break down barriers is reflected in the diverse patient population served by Mainely Teeth: asylum-seeking families, toddlers in Head Start programs, high school students, people with developmental disabilities, and elderly veterans like Nelson. The documentary captures the impact one organization can make while striving for systemic change.

MEET THE CREW



JIM TUTTLE
DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, EDITOR

Jim Tuttle is an award-winning documentary filmmaker with Findhelp’s storytelling initiative. Based in Austin, Texas, he has more than 10 years of journalism experience, having worked internationally for news outlets, for nonprofit organizations, and in higher education. His work has been published by The New York Times, The Player’s Tribune, The Dallas Morning News, National PublicRadio, and Texas Public Radio, among others. He enjoys traveling, camping, and exploring roadside oddities.

ALEX LANCIAL
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, PRODUCER, EDITOR

Alex Lancial is an award-winning filmmaker based in Austin, Texas. She co-founded Huckleberry Studios with her husband, Jim Tuttle, a filmmaking house with a focus on weddings. She has more than 10 years of experience, having worked as a video producer for The Boston Globe and in higher education. Her work has appeared on HBO, PBS, Al Jazeera America and The Today Show, among others. She enjoys the art of organization, cooking, building with lego, and tap dancing.

JOE FOURNIER
MUSIC COMPOSER

Joe Fournier is an award-winning composer for film and media based in Los Angeles. Born and raised in New England, Joe grew up with a love for the distinct rural beauty of Maine. Inspired by Mainely Teeth and the unique sounds of the Pine Tree State, his score for Filling the Gaps blends cinematic score with folk instruments like the Banjo and Mandolin, found in both Acadian and Americana folk music.

FINDHELP FILMS
PRODUCTION COMPANY

Findhelp is leading the modernization of the social safety net, and we know our work would not be possible without dedicated people across the United States who are helping their neighbors every day. That’s why we created Findhelp Films: to share inspiring documentaries about community leaders who are taking action and making change.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

As the leader of Findhelp’s storytelling initiative, I’m grateful for the opportunity to make films about some of the incredible people who are using our software platform and taking action to make positive change. Amber Lombardi and her nonprofit dental practice, Mainely Teeth, perfectly exemplify the stories we strive to tell.

I learned about Amber and her bold mission to help revolutionize access to oral healthcare in Maine through her outspoken support for Findhelp, which she uses to intake all her new patients and connect them with other community resources to help meet their basic needs. Her tenacity, passion, and commitment to helping all people were immediately apparent, and I was especially excited to follow the journey of her clinic-on-wheels from the city of Portland to remote rural communities that remind me of where I grew up.

As we dug deeper into the story, I was surprised to learn about the significant disparities that exist when it comes to oral healthcare access. During our first conversation, Amber shared the results of a study she had helped conduct in 2020, which estimated that 80,000 children in Maine didn’t even have a toothbrush. While filming we met toddlers with multiple cavities, high school seniors who couldn’t remember the last time they’d visited a dentist, and a military veteran who had been wearing the same worn-out set of dentures that the Coast Guard issued him more than 50 years ago.

That patient, Nelson Geel, shared his story and his time with us generously. We so appreciated getting to know him and his family, and even visiting the historic lighthouse where he served as head lightkeeper during his final year in the Coast Guard. Seeing him finally receive his new dentures was unforgettable.

We were also deeply impacted by Amber’s personal story of doubting her own ability, struggling as a young single mom, and ultimately finding support from the right people to realize her dream. I’m so thankful that she and all the other amazing folks we met were willing to be vulnerable and share their stories with us. That includes Amber’s children, her husband Mike, the staff and volunteers who help run Mainely Teeth, and all of the other patients who allowed us to film their appointments.

I want this film to inspire others to use their skills and passions to help make a difference in their own communities. Hopefully it will also raise awareness about the need for better access to dental care, as part of a broader need to address the overall social determinants of health. Amber and Mike have built something that can serve as a model as we seek out solutions to complicated problems.

Sincerely,

JIM TUTTLE
DIRECTOR, ‘FILLING THE GAPS’



Jim Tuttle, director of ‘Filling the Gaps,’ films dental appointments at Maine Head Start Programs. Mainely Teeth works with The Opportunity Alliance to visit children at these programs regularly.



Mike Lombardi, co-founder of Mainely Teeth, fearlessly tows 'FLOSSEM,' the dental clinic-on-wheels, across a bridge in Wiscasset, ME. The trailer is outfitted with teledentistry technology, allowing them to provide a high level of care in the most rural parts of the state.

DRIVING MILES FOR SMILES:
THE STORY BEHIND ‘FILLING THE GAPS’

Despite being a crucial component of our overall health, access to oral healthcare remains an elusive privilege for many people across the United States. A study conducted by the American Dental Association (ADA) showed that more than 15% of Americans needed dental care but did not obtain it, and financial barriers were the top reason. Many providers don't accept patients with Medicaid, and people living in rural communities are sometimes more than an hour drive from a dentist's office.

“The traditional model of care has been working very well for some, but it has completely blocked other people,” said Courtney Vannah, Program Manager of Oral Health Initiatives at MCD Global Health. “It needs a revolution.”

That’s where Amber Lombardi comes in.

Amber brought her passions for dental hygiene and public health to Maine after learning about the need for better access to care there. For more than a decade, she dreamed of creating a mobile dental clinic that she could use to reach people all over the state. When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the schools where she had been providing cleanings and oral health screenings, Amber knew it was time to build the clinic. She and her husband, Mike, went all-in on the dream and co-founded a nonprofit called Mainely Teeth. Built out of a converted horse trailer, the clinic-on-wheels was road ready in two months.

“I knew going into this that it was going to be a labor of love, and that it was going to be something I would dedicate my life to,” Amber said. “This is just a small step to try to help fix that system.”

Drawing on her own past struggles as a single mom with two young kids, Amber works tirelessly to ensure access to quality care for the most vulnerable. People from all walks of life receive treatment through Mainely Teeth, which has expanded to physical offices in addition to the traveling clinic. Their patient population includes asylum-seeking families from all over the world, toddlers in Head Start programs, high school students, children and adults with developmental disabilities, and elderly military veterans.

“Mainely Teeth was really born out of my desire to try to meet people where they’re at,” Amber said. “We do not turn anyone away. We’re here to fill the gaps between the underserved and uninsured populations.”

Amber continues to advocate for better access to oral healthcare for all as Mainely Teeth expands its reach using advancements like oral health cameras and teledentistry. They hope to serve as a model for systemic change across the country.



Amber Lombardi, founder of Mainely Teeth, jokes with Nelson Geel, a U.S. Coast Guard veteran who received a replacement set of dentures through the nonprofit. His only other pair were a worn out set that he received from the Bureau of Veterans Affairs in 1972.



Amber Lombardi, founder of Mainely Teeth, cleans a child's teeth at Maine Head Start Programs in Portland. The nonprofit is able to meet people where they are at in a variety of ways: with a beach chair and portable setup like the one seen here, with the mobile clinic parked outside schools and in low-income communities, and with a brick-and-mortar location at The Root Cellar in Portland.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What inspired the making of the film?

Jim Tuttle, the film’s director and leader of Findhelp’s storytelling initiative, learned about Amber and her bold mission to help revolutionize access to oral healthcare in Maine through her outspoken support for Findhelp, which she uses to intake all her new patients and connect them with other community resources to help meet their basic needs. Her tenacity, passion, and commitment to helping all people were immediately apparent, and he was especially excited to follow the journey of her clinic-on-wheels from the city of Portland to remote rural communities in Maine.

Where can I find resources related to dental care access?

We highly recommend reading the book ‘Teeth’ by Mary Otto. It highlights the disparities that affect all Americans in regard to oral healthcare. You can see current statistics related to the issue from the American Dental Association on their [website](#).

Do you have any supplemental videos like trailers I can share?

We will be releasing trailers on a monthly basis starting with a theatrical trailer on World Oral Health Day, March 20. The best way to share new trailers as they are released is to [subscribe](#) to our YouTube channel and [follow us](#) on LinkedIn. We also created a short video about how Mainely Teeth uses Findhelp to improve accessibility and bring whole-person care to underserved communities in Maine.

Where can I find more information about Mainely Teeth?

Mainely Teeth’s mission is to break down barriers to oral health care and provide access to quality, compassionate dental care to individuals, families, and communities. For more information about the organization, please visit [MainelyTeeth.org](#). If you are a patient in need of care, find Mainely Teeth and other organizations like it on [Findhelp.org](#).

How long did the film take to make?

We started development for ‘Filling the Gaps’ in December 2022. Production consisted of two trips to Maine totaling 12 days. The first production trip was in April 2023 and the second was in September 2023. Post-production lasted six months and ended in March 2024.

What is Findhelp Films?

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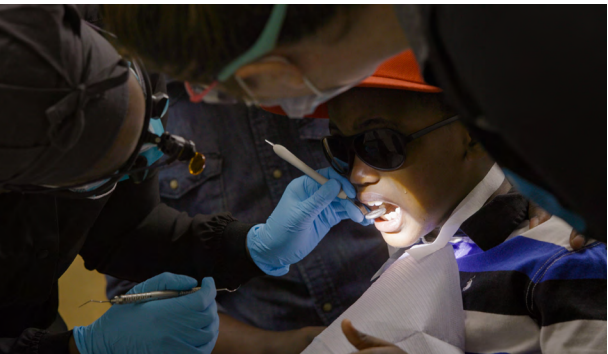
How can I watch the film?

Before the summer release, ‘Filling the Gaps’ will be screened privately by invitation only. Email films@findhelp.com to request a private link. You can also see an exclusive preview plus a Q&A with the director at Findhelp’s Connect Summit 2024. RSVP [here](#).

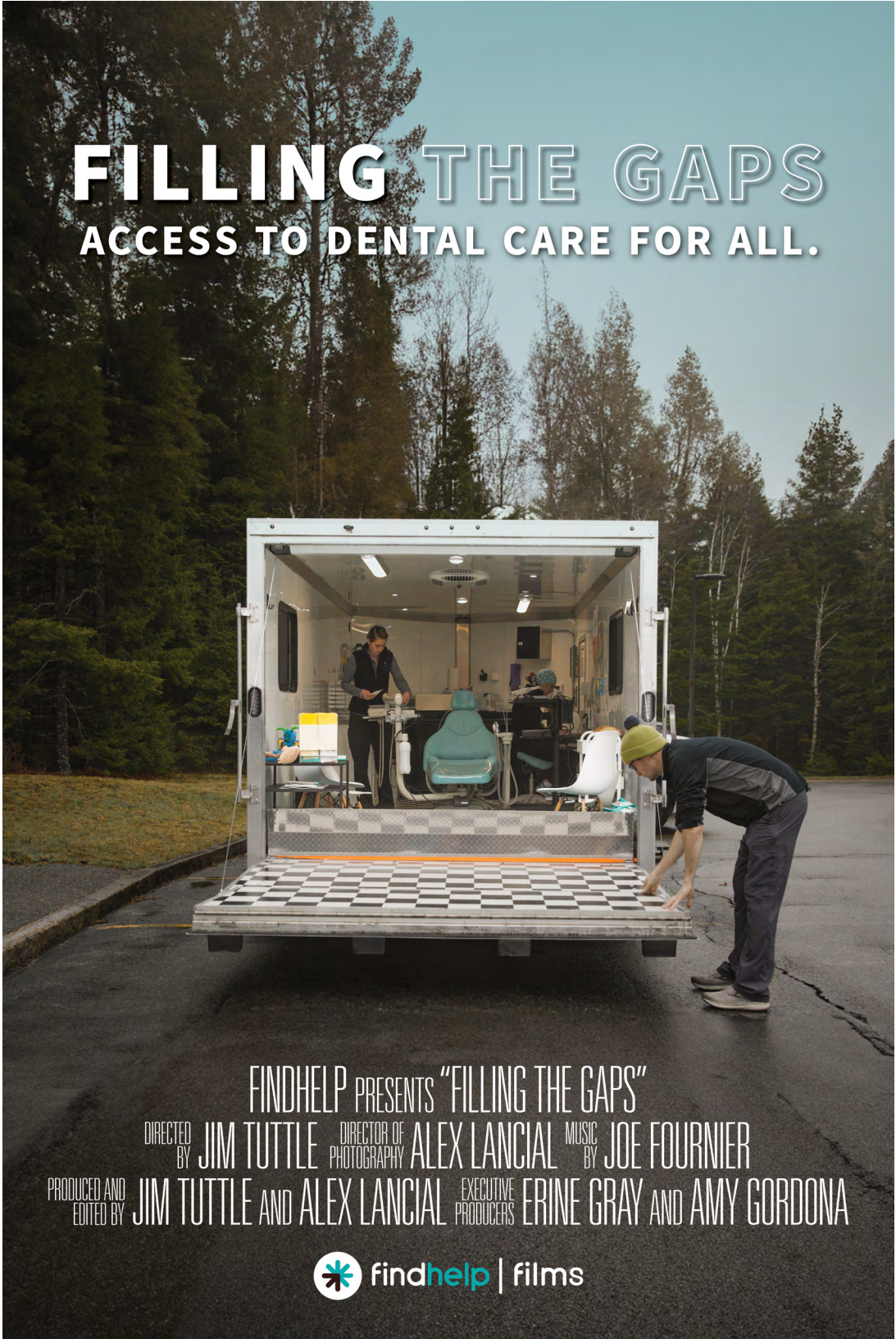
How can I host a screening event?

Please email films@findhelp.com to request a screening kit that includes best practices, discussion questions, poster and image files, and a social sharing guide.

STILLS FROM THE FILM



FILM POSTER



SOCIAL MEDIA DOWNLOADS & GUIDELINES

Thank you for sharing “Filling the Gaps” on social media. If possible, we do prefer that you reshare from Findhelp’s accounts. We have shared the theatrical trailer on [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#), and we have shared the teasers on [YouTube Shorts](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram Reels](#). If you do upload to your own channels natively, at minimum we require you to tag Findhelp. The featured organization will be invited to collaborate on all Instagram Reels.

- Language**
- Please pull any descriptive text from this document or posts we have made
 - Please refer to the film as “a short documentary made by Findhelp” or “a short documentary from Findhelp Films” or “a documentary from Findhelp Films featuring [organization]”
 - Never refer to the film as a promotion or advertisement for the featured organization

Landing Page
FillingTheGapsFilm.com

THEATRICAL TRAILER (2:48)
[Horizontal 3840x2160 \(No closed captioning\)](#)
[Square 1080x1080 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Thumbnail](#)
[Cover photo](#)

TEASER 1 (:54)
[Horizontal 1920x1080 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Vertical 1080x1920 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Thumbnail](#)
[Cover photo](#)

TEASER 2 (:59)
[Horizontal 1920x1080 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Vertical 1080x1920 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Thumbnail](#)
[Cover photo](#)

TEASER 3 (:54)
[Horizontal 1920x1080 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Vertical 1080x1920 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Thumbnail](#)
[Cover photo](#)

SHORT TEASER (:36)
[Horizontal 1920x1080 \(Closed captioning\)](#)
[Vertical 1080x1920 \(Closed captioning\)](#)

POSTER
[High Resolution](#)
[Web Resolution](#)

STILL FRAMES
Click an image to download.

