

## **2018 Mentor Meeting: J.B. Abajian & Pam Dixon**

Easterseals Disability Film Challenge 2018 participant J.B. Abajian won the 2018 “Best Actor” Award for his role as “The Hawk” in *Visibility*. Earlier this summer, J.B. received one of the key aspects of his prize package when he met with Pam Dixon, one of Hollywood’s leading casting directors (*Angels in the Outfield*, *The Mask of Zorro*) for a mentoring conversation.

J.B. graciously shared his response to the question,

*“What has winning the Easterseals Disability Film Challenge meant to you?”*

Check out his response below!

"Other than the international recognition, and online access to a global audience that each film receives, my mentor meeting with the very kind and insightful Pam Dixon was definitely a highlight of winning the Best Actor Award in the 2018 Easterseals Disability Film Challenge (EDFC).

Unlike any opportunity one can dream of having at an audition, spending the afternoon getting to know legendary Casting Director and past President of the Casting Society of America, Pam Dixon, over a cup of cappuccino, at a quaint neighborhood specialty bakery, was truly a rare privilege that I will forever remember fondly. Because I felt it could only help her to better know what makes me tick, I chose to open up and share a few things about myself which can't be found online. It was a pleasure getting to know each other. She's offered to answer my questions and advise me with future concerns regarding my career, and I'm very fortunate to have access to that professional feedback.

EDFC judges made their choices fairly, based solely on one's talent and performance in a completed work. Nobody took into account who I am or what I believe in, but, rather, only what I brought to the project. The value of such recognition cannot be understated.

No one, or nothing, can take away that 'top of the world' feeling of having your name called as an EDFC Finalist, let alone feeling a great amount of gratitude, which is heightened, beyond compare, when you hear your name being called as a Winner! Having my Award presented by film creator, Emily Hopper, and Oscar Award Winning Actress, Marcia Gay Harden was a really fun treat.

Whether you enter the EDFC just for the fun of making a movie, or because you seriously want to do your best and wholeheartedly try to win, I highly recommend participation. Though I've been acting since age twelve, and have been a SAG-AFTRA member since 1987, this was the first film challenge I have ever done. And it was a challenge.



If I were to give any advice for future EDFC actor participants, I guess it would be:

“Come to set prepared. Creating a character and figuring out how to make it your own is everything; surprise the audience. Never deny your abilities - share them, and continue to grow your talent.”

Thank you!"

- J.B. Abajian

