

## Bottom Dollars

Documentary

TRT: 56 mins

USA; 2016

Trailer available at: [www.BottomDollarsMovie.com](http://www.BottomDollarsMovie.com)

## Synopses

### Short Synopsis

“How would you like to work for two weeks, and come out with a \$6 check?” That’s a reality for almost 250,000 Americans with disabilities who are legally paid below the minimum wage. Many work in segregated workplaces called sheltered workshops, hidden from the rest of the public. In Bottom Dollars, stories from across the country point to the need to end this antiquated system and embrace better alternatives that promote inclusive workplaces and fair wages.

### Long Synopsis

When the Fair Labor Standards Act passed in 1938, it included a revolutionary civil rights protection: a minimum wage. American workers could no longer be exploited for their hard work – with one huge exception. Section 14(c) of the Act included an exemption allowing some workers, people with disabilities, to be paid less than minimum wage.

This provision was originally designed to persuade employers to hire people with disabilities and open up opportunities. Instead, people with disabilities were often employed in “sheltered workshops,” segregated workplaces away from their communities, earning sub-minimum wage. 78 years later, 14(c) remains in effect.

In 2016, nearly 250,000 people are legally paid less than the minimum wage, on average, less than \$2 an hour. “Bottom Dollars” is an hour long documentary that exposes the exploitation of people with disabilities through personal stories and expert interviews. It also presents clear employment alternatives with competitive wages and community inclusion.

Do we want all people to have a shot at a job for fair pay in their own communities, or do we want some people to be separated, exploited and robbed of their chance to seize the American dream for themselves?

## Filmmaker Bios

Jordan Melograna

Director, Producer

Jordan Melograna has been producing, shooting, and editing documentaries for the last decade, with a focus on projects that connect to real world advocacy. Currently, Jordan serves as the Creative Director at Rooted in Rights, a non-profit creative production project based at Disability Rights Washington. Rooted in Rights focuses exclusively on disability rights issues through producing original content and training community members to create their own stories through digital storytelling. Jordan's work was awarded the NCCD Media for a Just Society video award twice (2013 and 2014), been screened at film festivals across the country and featured in The Nation, The Lead with Jake Tapper, and Last Week Tonight with John Oliver.

David Carlson

Executive Producer

David Carlson is a passionate disability rights advocate, attorney, and serves as the Director of Legal Advocacy at Disability Rights Washington in Seattle. David is a founder of the innovative AVID project – Amplifying Voices of Inmates with Disabilities. AVID combines legal advocacy with digital storytelling, bringing the issues of disability and the criminal justice system to light through creative media. AVID's advocacy work was recently recognized in international media and he was also awarded the TASC Excellence in Advocacy Award from the National Disability Rights Network.

Mark Stroh

Executive Producer

Mark Stroh has been a strong disability rights advocate for decades, and currently serves as the Executive Director of Disability Rights Washington in Seattle. In addition to overseeing a diverse range of advocacy projects in law and policy, Mark promoted the use of the creative tools of video and photography to advance and enhance existing initiatives. Under his leadership, Disability Rights Washington successfully launched the AVID project, the Rooted in Rights project, and several other creative initiatives that support the advocacy priorities of Washingtonians with disabilities.

Tina Pinedo

Associate Producer

Tina Pinedo serves as the Digital Communications Manager for the award-winning Rooted in Rights project at Disability Rights Washington. Tina curates the Rooted in Rights social media platforms, organizes video distribution and online events, and supports the Rooted in Rights Storytellers project

that recruits, trains, equips and employs people with disabilities across the globe to tell their own stories through video. Tina leads the effort at Rooted in Rights to ensure its creative content is as accessible as possible to everyone.

## Filming Locations

Baltimore, MD  
Boston, MA  
Columbus, OH  
Concord, NH  
Gallup, NM  
Jackson, MS  
Louisburg, KS  
Olympia, WA  
Portland, OR  
Rochester, NY  
Seattle, WA  
South Hampton, NH  
Tiffin, OH  
Vicksburg, MS  
Washington, DC