TRANSCRIPT:

BEEKEEPER



Directed by Keith Griffith III (USA)

a BYkids film
THEIR WORLD THEIR FILMS

Keith: This is intro take one.

[clapperboard]

Keith: My name is Keith Griffith III, but most people know me as The Beekeeper. And this is my Uncle Sean — he got me into beekeeping.

[music]

Keith: Uncle Sean is, uh, number one mentor for me doing beekeeping.

[music, chatting]

Keith: This is the– this is our escape plan right here, this is our sugar water spray. What do we use this for? We, like, spray it on the hives and the bees. Boom—the bees are distracted by it, they like be– you know, bees like sugar. Anything sweet. And they would just go all over the, uh, sugar water that's on the hive, and sometimes when we open up the hive we, like, spray it on them. So they can, like– so they don't fly around at us.

(?): Try and get our first (?) for today?

Keith: So, whenever we open it, I see all the bees, I just watch it, and I'm just mesmerized how there's so many and they all have– and they all know what they're doing, and it's just crazy 'cause they're, like, little bugs, like this size, and they just intelligent.

Keith: Personally, whenever I do beekeeping, I feel like I'm with nature and stuff, like–

Uncle Sean: Feel like you're one with nature?

Keith: Yeah, something like– I guess you can say something like that.

[music]

Keith: Working with the bees takes my mind off of all my other challenges.

[music]

Keith: I want to make this film because my family and I have a story to tell. When I was born

on February 18th, 2007, my dad gave me the nickname "Muddies."

[music]

Keith: I was born and raised in Kentucky, and I've always been interested in nature at a really young age.

[music]

Bessa: You were very, very thoughtful and compassionate as a child, you– very caring, even now. Remember we went to the grocery store one time and– and the sheriff was out there collecting groceries for some– something, and you said, "Let's go back in there and get them some groceries." So we went back in the store and got groceries.

Uncle Sean: You said you always was caring—that's one thing that we all probably have stories of you asking to give somebody– help somebody buy some food, you know, can you pull over, can I pet your dog, you know, you wanna meet somebody's dog when we go to the park. If it's a stray cat or a stray dog, you wanna take the dog or the cat home to make sure it's fed. And it don't matter what it was, okay, you always wanted to help people.

Bessa: Was amazing to me, the similarities between you and your dad. He loves animals, and you just kind of grew up, you know, with the same– the same interest that he had.

Keith: Everyone always tells me how much I remind them of my dad, but it's hard for me to hear that because my dad's been incarcerated since I was 2 years old.

Bessa: When you would visit your dad as a young child probably until you was four, you thought you were visiting him at work– at school, because he was taking classes and, you know, he worked in the prison. You would take your homework and the papers and he would help you, you know, do homework. But one day, you decided– I think one of your friends, his dad came home, and you said, "I want a take-home Dad!" and– and, "home come my dad can't come home? I want a take-home Dad!" And so then, I think that was the time they finally tried to explain to you that he had made some mistakes, and that he was, you know, in prison, and he couldn't come home yet. So you didn't really feel that loss until 2017.

Keith: In 2017, everything changed for me. I was 10 years old and my mom was incarcerated as well. I didn't know if I'd ever see my mom and dad ever again.

Bessa: When you came [..] to stay with me, I really didn't talk to you about what was going on because we really didn't want to have you worried or stressed out because you would– you– you were a feeler, you would be worried and concerned about everybody's feelings.

Keith: I stopped doing well in school—uh, I was having therapy sessions to help me get my mind off what was going on, and I was moving between my grandmother's homes and uncle's homes. I just wasn't feeling the same and, you know, I was sad, I was– something– I thought I did something, but, personally I didn't really know what to expect, and I just kept on living, looking forward to the next day, hoping something happens—oh, my dad gets– come– gets to come home the next day, or my mom– both of them gets to come out the next day, so…

Uncle Sean: When both of your parents, you know, got incarcerated and went through what they went through, and then I gotta– uh, to be in a– more of a role in your life. You know, I can't, uh, get out here, throw the football, or we can't fly the dro– you know, do the– some of the things that I felt like, uh, as a little boy you needed to, you know, you needed to be able to do.

Keith: And then my uncle told me about beekeeping.

[music]

Uncle Sean: Then you asking questions about bees, and the queen bees—I think it was your favorite bee. The queen bee, it was so much– and just learning, and going through the process, man, and I remember telling your mom and your [...] that it was like something clicked.

Newscaster #1: He is a teenager and already a business owner—Keith Griffith is taking his future into his own hands and succeeding.

Newscaster #2: Keith Griffith is a normal teenage boy—

[Keith chatting]

Newscaster #2: —who loves basketball and does well in school. But there's one thing that makes him even more special: his love for bees that's blossomed into Beeing2Together LLC. For Keith, beekeeping is a way to not only help his community through learning about the importance of bees, but also mental health.

Keith: In 2018, beekeeping was a big gamechanger for me. It helped me do better in school and it helped me think about how to start a new business. It kept me very focused, until my mom got home.

[someone behind the scenes]: You can just write "Mom."

Keith: Okay.

Stephanie: Yay!

Stephanie: God… [laughs] the bees! I was just like, "Oh my god, he's gonna get stung and I ain't gonna have no kid no more!" And it turned out to be a really good thing, and I'm very thankful, um, for your Uncle Sean that has paved the way for that. I don't know where– where you would be at, you know, if it wasn't for my family and your dad's side.

Bessa: We would deliver orders to people, like, we'd meet 'em at Jefferson Mall or something and they'd be like, "It's Keith, it's Keith! The Beekeeper, The Beekeeper—it's Keith!" and– and, like you were just a celebrity.

Uncle Sean: At the time too, I was really trying to find a way to make being healthy cool, and it was like, once it sparked inside of you, and then, stuff took off the way that it did, it just made sense. You know, like, this is how we can make being healthy cool again.

Bessa: It's just– it's just become a family affair.

[Keith and Stephanie(?) chatting]

Keith: Is it cold in there?

Uncle Sean: Ready?

Keith: Yeah. I'm trying to move as slow as I can so this thing won't hit the mic.

Stephanie(?): [inaudible]

Keith: Huh– no—

Uncle Sean: What'd you say?

Keith: I just don't want this hitting the mic.

Keith: Hello, uh, my name is Keith Griffith III and I'm 15 years old, and I've been doing beekeeping for about 14 years– oh, not 14– 4 years now [chuckles], um, I've been doing it for 4 years now– my uncle right here has gotten me into it, and, you know, I've been enjoying it so far, and I'm glad to tell you guys about what I've learned.

Keith: Who else I have here too is my, uh, mom.

Stephanie: Hello everybody– I'm Stephanie, I'm Keith's mom, um, I do the back end of Beeing2Together. We focus on honey bee preservation and mental health awareness. Keith went through a tough time in his life— he used that as a coping mechanism with mental health, okay? So, he's– he's got stuff in the stores now [chuckles], he's been on Good Morning America, and he's won, uh, lots of awards and achievements that he has received. So, throughout this presentation, you will see what, um, Keith does, um, with the bees, um, how he basically opens up more, uh, while he's out there with the bees and being able to teach people about the importance of, um, the honeybees.

Keith: Not only was I beekeeper, but I went around giving talks to people about how important bees are to our planet.

Keith: A balanced ecosystem is where things work together— bees depend on each other, and so do we!

Stephanie: Yeah, come– come hold this!

Keith: Alright—

Stephanie: I'm trying—

Keith: I got it, I got it. I got homework.

Stephanie: What?

Keith: The other teacher assigned us a three-page paper today. Get math homework every day of his class. It sucks.

Uncle Sean: Right, yeah, that was– that was probably one of the main things to really help just knowing, okay, this is what we're gonna talk about first, this is what we're gonna next.

Keith: [sighs]

Uncle Sean: … in the groove, alright! [inaudible] … real personal, you know how it goes when– when people can relate, you know, the more it is… it was cool!

Griff: (on phone) Yeah, yes– I'm good, man– what's up, man!

Keith: What's up?

Griff: What dey do?

Keith: What dey do?

Griff: You know what dey do, man, how you feel!

Keith: Good!

Griff: Feel good?

Keith: Yeah, I'm just– I got– I gotta go home and do homework now.

Griff: Yeah, I know it, man, tell me about it. There you go. My man. My man! That's all I'm talking– you gave it your best effort—that's it. How your mama do?

Keith: Uh, she's doing good.

Griff: All she be doing is laughing at them. When she get to talking, she just start laughing.

Keith: Yup.

Uncle Keith(?): [inaudible] did aiight, she did aiight.

[chuckles]

Griff: She did "aiiight."

Keith: Mmhmm. Alright, I'm gonna go help Uncle Sean out with this chair. Hold up, you gonna look at the sky for a moment.

[music]

Keith: During those times when I first did it, going through that tough stuff that was happening, and, you know, it's helped me take my mind off it because I was having fun doing it. I just wanted to keep on doing because I can't just ask my uncle to drive to the park so I can go play some basketball real quick.

[music]

Keith: I feel like I'm moving forward in life and I have everything I need right now, except for my

dad.

[music]

(this is when Keith and his mom are selling honey. Is their dialogue needed?)

Phone: You have an incoming call. You will not be charged for this call. This call is from–

Griff: Griff.

Phone: –an inmate at a federal prison.

Keith: We got here late, but we got here.

Griff: You got there late? Okay. Y'all setting up and stuff like that?

Keith: [inaudible] (12:22)

Griff: I'll be checkin' back with you, man. I love you, you hear me? I'm proud of you, man. You just keep doing what you doing, man. We gonna get everything figured out, everything's gonna be alright, man. Like I said, I love you so much, man, I'm just– I'm grateful for you. You hear me?

Keith: Yeah.

Griff: Definitely a lot of catching up to do, man. I want to actually get to know you, you know what I'm saying? Actually meet you and learn you and see– you know, and– you know, and allow you to see who I am, you know what I'm saying, in person and stuff like that, you know what I'm saying? Outside of this, um, this prison life, actually, man. And also—probably never told you this, you know what I'm saying—but I apologize, you know what I'm saying? I apologize for a lot of … [sighs] mistakes. You know what I'm saying? A lot of bad decisions–

Phone: This call is from a federal prison.

Griff: –that I've made that ultimately affect you and your mom, you know? So, we'll get to all that, man, you know? Words can't express, you know? Words can't express it all, man, but I just want you to know that. We got about 80-something days, man. You hear me?

Keith: Mmhm.

Griff: Alright. I love you. Tell your mom I'll talk to her after. I gotta, uh, I gotta check this monitor and all that. I'll definitely be in touch, and definitely be checking the email and all of that, alright?

Keith: Alright.

Griff: Alright, I love you.

Keith: I love you too.

[phone disconnects]

[music]

Stephanie: It's definitely been, uh, pretty tough for us, you know? So … pretty tough. You know, I tried to make it as normal as possible for you. I hope I did a good job.

[music]

Phone: You have a prepaid call. This call is from a federal prison.

Griff: Two weeks til old daddy touch down, man. I can't wait, man. I'm excited, man. Getting a little anxiety, a little nervous but, uh, they say that's to be expected. Everything has been leading up to this, man, you know. Just getting there, and just making the transition, and then just starting life, man. Starting life with y'all, with my family. Let me talk to your momma real quick—is she right there, or is she gone? Well, you need to, uh, step away 'cause I need to holler at you real quick. I ain't got nothing like two minutes left, at least.

Griff: Look, man. I told you I get out on December the 19th, right?

Stephanie: Mmhm.

Griff: Right, well, it's really December the 9th. But I was so happy when she told me it was the 9th! She said the 19th– I was so happy that I thought it was the 9th! I'm going to just try to figure out how I want to surprise, you know what I'm saying? Who I want to surprise.

Keith: My mom was telling me that we're gonna go do something? Then we were thinking that that was gonna happen earlier, so I'm just very confused. 'Cause I thought what we're doing right now was gonna be at the conference.

Griff: We 'bout to go over here and meet my boy. We 'bout to– we 'bout to surprise my son. Keith Griffith III. I waited for this day for a long time, man, yeah. A real long time, man.

Stephanie: Put your mask in your, uh– put your mask in–

Keith: Maybe I'm gonna call her and see, 'cause I've been confused.

[music]

Griff: Go all the way to the light? 'Kay.

Stephanie: [on the phone with Keith] We're on our– we're walking up.

Keith: [on the phone with Stephanie] Oh, are you here? Are you here? You're at the Walmart? Where are you at?

[music]

Stephanie: [on the phone with Keith] Where are y'all– are y'all behind the– are y'all behind the Walmart? I mean, behind the McDonald's?

Keith: [on the phone with Stephanie] Alright. Alright. [hang up phone] 'Kay… she completely did not answer my question, so I'm more confused. She said she's across the street… I don't– I

don't know. I've been confused this whole day.

Stephanie: Oh my gosh, this is happening! [laughs]

Griff: If he looks around and sees me, I'm talking 'bout–

Stephanie: [on the phone] Make sure you do not have K face him, you know, just distract him.

Griff: Is that him over there? I think he's over here right now.

Keith: Oh, there she is! Where'd she come from?

Stephanie: Hi!

Keith: Where'd you come from?

Stephanie: Hey! What's goin' on? How are you?

Keith: Good.

[music]

Stephanie: Come here!

Keith: What? What?

[Stephanie and Keith laugh]

Keith: What? No way!

[Griff laughs]

[music]

Griff: How you doin', man? I love you.

Keith: I love you too–

Griff: I love you, man.

Keith: I was not expecting that. That was the last thing I expected.

Griff: Man, it was so hard to keep a secret from you, man.

Stephanie: Finally?

Keith & Griff: Yes!

Stephanie: Huh? Give me my hugs, give me my big hugs, mommy hugs. Mwah! I love you. Mwah! I love you. I'm super excited! [laughs] You excited?

Keith: Yeah!

[Stephanie laughs]

Stephanie: C'mere, K, you get right here.

[music]

Griff: You know something about directing and producing, huh?

Keith: I guess…

Griff: Yeah, I'm daddy, I can do that.

[Keith laughs]

Keith: What is it called?

Person behind-the-scenes: Interview, take three.

Keith: Alright, uh, interview, take three.

[clapperboard]

[Keith & Griff laugh]

Keith: What're we doin', what're we doin'...

[Griff laughs]

Keith: Well, I always knew, like– I was like– I was like, I always knew I have a daddy, I been getting calls from him and stuff, I'm talking to him, having a great time talking to him, I know he was gonna come home at some point, so I'll just wait and just make the best times out of it I can until he gets back, and just be able to get new, better memories and stuff. Um, I mean, you know– always– always knew that she was there, um, I always got stories told, people always saying, "Aw, dang, you look just like him!" or, "You look like your momma!" or something–

[Griff chuckles]

Griff: She really did, man, like– she really kept you in my life. You know what I'm saying? Like, every visit, this woman would drive five or six hours, with you in diapers. I'm talking 'bout in the snow, I'm talking 'bout in the ice, in the blizzards and tsunamis, to come visit me and deal with whatever she had to deal with– financially, dealing with work, taking out– putting in vacation days, or missing work, or getting rental cars, or whatever it was, you know. Because she understood the importance of being together. But I know that that was the key, you know what I'm saying, to us having the relationship that we have right now. You know, she's gonna make the best decisions for the family and stuff like that, but she still let you know too that, you know what I'm saying, like, there is a man, there is somebody called "Dad," there is a father. None of that would've been possible without your mom keeping you in my life.

Uncle Sean: I don't never want you to not realize how– what type of mother you have. You do– you got a special mom.

[music]

Griff: Everybody goes through challenges. Everybody has a story, you know what I'm saying. But we can only speak on our story.

[music]

[Stephanie & Keith chatting]

Griff: Alright, I feel like a beekeeper now, y'all.

[Stephanie laughs]

Griff: Imma be like you, you know what I'm saying? You the son and I'm the dad, but, you know, sometimes we can reverse roles, you know what I'm saying? Not as far as son and dad but, you know, as far as how most people look at it. Like, the son wanna be like the dad, you know what I'm saying? You know, uh, you inspire me, you encourage me, you motivate me, so, you know, I wanna be like you too. Anybody that know me knows [Lil something?], you know what I'm saying? They know Keith III. They know about these bees. They know about our family. They know about being together. And they know that it's bigger than being together.

[music]

Bessa: I love it, I love it! I love it, my sons, my grandson, soon enough…

[music]

Keith: Alright, so, how do you feel that my dad is home?

Bessa: I am so grateful and so happy that your dad is home. And just seeing you– you– all three of you all together—you, your uncle, and your dad—together, and it's like, yeah, being together, that's what we about, that's what we do!

[music]

Keith: My dad proposed to my mom as soon as he got home! And now, I have a baby brother on the way. You know, bees have to rely on each other, just like us. Bees also have to depend on each other, just like us. Bees thrive together when they are together, and I feel like that's what happens when families are together too.

Stephanie: Is that a wrap?

[clapperboard]

[Stephanie laughs]

Stephanie: I love it, I love it, I love it!

[music]