

Film Examines Newark Prep School's "Recipe for Success"

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Six years ago, Newark filmmakers Jerome and Marylou Bongiorno made a splash with *Revolution '67*, their film documenting the Newark race riots of the summer of 1967. The critically acclaimed film, which [aired on PBS'P.O.V.](#), received wide critical acclaim and won two national awards for outstanding film of American history from the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians.

Now, [the Bongornos](#) will be previewing the sequel to that movie, *The Rule*, at the Montclair Public Library. The film follows a highly successful inner city school in Newark, [St. Benedict's Prep](#), that the Teachers College at Columbia has deemed a "model for urban school reform." An all boys school serving 7th – 12th graders, the school was established in the 1800s by the Benedictine Monks of Newark Abbey. The school closed in 1972, as the fall out from the '67 riots drove more and more people from the city. The next year, thanks to the dedication of a few monks, the school reopened with an aim to educate young African American and Latino males. (For more on the school's history, read [Miracle on High Street: The](#)

Rise, Fall and Resurrection of St. Benedict's Prep in Newark, N.J., by South Orange resident Thomas A. McCabe.)

Forty years later it is what Columbia University calls “a beacon of hope for countless inner-city students seeking to achieve educational excellence and the American Dream.” While Newark, with a poverty rate of 28%, has a high school graduation rate of only 22%, St. Benedict’s has a near 100% college acceptance rate. *The Rule* presents the school’s “recipe for success” as a model for whole cities nationwide.

The film shows at the library on Weds., Sept. 18 at 6:30 pm.

Christina Gillham, a former editor at *Newsweek*, is a writer, editor and mom of two.