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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sept. 4, 2020

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Film Schools Across New Mexico Receive Funding Through New Mexico Film Office's Giveback Program

\$330,000 awarded to colleges and universities as part of a film workforce development program

SANTA FE, N.M. –The New Mexico Film Office (NMFO) announced 20 film programs at higher education institutions throughout New Mexico have received a total of \$330,000 in funding from the Non-Resident Below-the-Line Crew Credit Program. Funds will be utilized to purchase equipment, software, materials, supplies, and can be applied to student scholarship programs and other student opportunities.

The Giveback funds come from film and television production companies that have taken part in the state's film incentive program. The purpose of the program is to strengthen New Mexico's educational programs that teach film/television production and related fields, thereby supporting growth of the film industry workforce in New Mexico.

"The Giveback Program was established to ensure production companies that come to New Mexico, also make an investment in New Mexico's future workforce," New Mexico Economic Development Department Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes said. "The 20 schools that collectively received the \$330,000 in funding this year are located all across New Mexico, in both urban and rural regions, including schools on tribal land. We are working to create opportunities and career paths in the film industry for every New Mexican."

Schools receiving Giveback funds:

- Central New Mexico Community College - Albuquerque
- Eastern New Mexico University - Roswell
- Eastern New Mexico University - Portales
- Highlands University - Las Vegas
- Institute of American Indian Arts - Santa Fe
- Luna Community College - Las Vegas
- Media Arts Collaborative Charter School - Albuquerque
- Navajo Tech University - Crownpoint
- New Mexico State University - Alamogordo
- New Mexico State University - Carlsbad
- New Mexico State University Doña Ana Community College - Las Cruces
- New Mexico State University - Las Cruces
- Northern New Mexico College - Española
- San Juan College - Farmington
- Santa Fe Community College - Santa Fe
- Southwest University of Visual Arts - Albuquerque
- University of New Mexico Film and Digital Arts - Albuquerque
- University of New Mexico Taos Campus - Taos
- University of New Mexico Grants Campus - Grants
- University of New Mexico Valencia Campus - Los Lunas

“These awards are another example of the positive and wide-reaching impact film and TV production has on a community, beyond just the cast and crew, or even shooting location. Students in Alamogordo and Portales benefit from productions that are shot in Albuquerque and Las Cruces,” NMFO Director Amber Dodson said. “The funds from the studios and production companies are an important contribution to, and a long-term investment in, New Mexico’s film industry, and are key to continuing to support and expand our world-class workforce.”

New Mexico productions that contributed to the fund include: "Those Who Wish Me Dead," "Midnight Texas Season 2," "Briarpatch," "Daybreak," "El Camino: A Breaking Bad Movie," "UFO Road Trip," "Chambers," "The Biggest Loser," and "Deputy."

James Lujan, Department Chair of Cinematic Arts and Technology at the Institute of American Indian Arts, said that the money will help them with a much needed contingency plan should productions shut down again this fall due to the COVID-19 health emergency.

Eastern New Mexico University will purchase five mirrorless DSLR cameras to replace mid-tier cameras, five LED light sets to augment advanced lighting capabilities, and a new wireless lavalier system. The remaining amount will be placed in their Student Filmmaker Scholarship Fund.

“Although we are happy to receive funding at any time, the timing of this giveback is especially perfect for us,” Jonathan Barr, Chair of the Department of Theatre & Digital Filmmaking at Eastern New Mexico University, said. “This giveback money will be used to purchase much needed equipment updates that we would not otherwise be able to obtain, due to budget restraints and our current economic crisis.”

"The timing is great for the donation. We will upgrade the cinematography equipment, purchase specialized lighting, and provide students with a one-ton grip kit to use on filmmaking projects and the on campus green screen studio," Luke Renner, Professor Digital Media Arts & Design at San Juan College, said. "Funds will also allow us to provide internships opportunities, especially for students in rural areas, assist students financially with fees associated with industry conferences, and cover costs to bring in outside industry professionals for on-campus workshops for both San Juan College students and high school students in San Juan County Film and Digital Media Program."

The Giveback program was initiated to support the growth of the New Mexico film industry’s future workforce. Productions filmed in New Mexico that participate in the Non-Resident Below-the-Line Crew Credit Program are required to provide 2.5% of direct production expenditures for the payment of wages, fringe benefits, and per diem for non-resident industry crew to support educational or workforce development efforts in New Mexico.

The Giveback program is administered by the New Mexico Film Office.

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San Juan College student Armando Gonzales

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