



Reader View: Film matters to New Mexico's economy

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By Marisa X. Jimenez and Wayne Rauschenberger

The film and television production industry has become a mainstay of new job growth in New Mexico. In any discussion of this remarkably vibrant industry, it's crucial to remind folks that, in contrast to many "build it and they will come" incentives the state offers other businesses, a production incentive is paid only after a production has spent its money and the budget has been professionally audited. In other words, this is an earned incentive, not a granted one.

Every incentive dollar earned represents more than \$4 paid to New Mexico resident vendors and crew, who in turn drive corporate and personal income taxes, as well as gross receipts taxes to the state treasury.

As a result, this industry has created more than 17,000 verified jobs for New Mexico residents, supports over 350 vendor and service businesses and their employees, and has brought positive economic impact to every corner of the state. In one area alone, the hotel industry, film production companies are responsible for more than 40,000 room night bookings each year.

Further, due to the outstanding growth of job opportunities, there are now numerous training programs, skills development and educational opportunities at every level of the educational system, from high school to college — with graduation rates of over 96 percent in media-focused high school programs and thousands of New Mexicans successfully completing other diverse media training programs.

And the creation of popular programs and films in New Mexico brings thousands of visitors every year, creating millions of potential tourism impressions around the world.

In the short span of 12 years, the industry has forged our economy into a creative force, driving allied jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities in digital media, e-commerce and other advanced technologies. It has done this while nurturing New Mexico's indigenous creative talent, delivering resources and opportunities and a potential global audience to filmmakers and other artists in communities all across our great state.

We would like to thank the administration and Legislature of New Mexico for their strong support of the film and television production: Through thoughtful, fiscally responsible legislation, the industry is now stronger than ever, with thousands of New Mexico residents working every week in the state's world-class studio facilities and thousands more working at affiliated businesses that provide the extraordinarily broad range of goods and services that make these productions possible.

Thank you for your support. This industry would not have happened here without you.

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