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Applications Open For Sen. John Pinto Memorial Filmmakers Fund

Legislature established fund to support Native American filmmakers

SANTA FE, N.M. – The New Mexico State Film Office (NMFO) is now accepting grant applications for projects for the newly established Senator John Pinto Filmmakers Fund, NMFO Director Todd Christensen announced today.

The Native American filmmakers grant fund was spearheaded by the late Sen. John Pinto during his work at the 2019 Legislature. Sen. Pinto worked with the Indian Affairs Committee and other lawmakers for several months to establish the grants. The \$100,000 in funding is made available through Senate Bill 536, which became law two months after Sen. Pinto's death.

"I am absolutely thrilled, that with this new fund, we are able to both honor the indelible legacy of Sen. John Pinto and his contributions to increased opportunities for Native American communities in our state and provide a pathway to an exciting career for talented Native Americans all across New Mexico," Gov. Michelle Lujan Grusham said. "The senator would be proud to see the funding put to work, and I know New Mexico will be made proud by the writing, acting, and directorial talents of the recipients of these awards."

Applicants must be a registered member of one of the tribes or pueblos of New Mexico which include – Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris, Pojoaque, Sandia, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Taos, Tesuque, Zia, Zuni, Jicarilla Apache, Mescalero Apache, and the Navajo Nation.

The grants can go to individual Native filmmakers, who can use funds toward any aspect of production. This can include, film, TV, video games, or audio visual projects.

"We want this grant to be an ongoing partnership with tribal communities," Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes of the Economic Development Department said. "We hope to develop the talent of native filmmakers so they can work in a growing industry and tell their own stories."

The grant program is a lasting legacy to Pinto, who strongly believed in the importance of supporting the local Native American film community. Pinto understood that in order to change stereotypes of Native Americans, it is necessary to support students interested in filmmaking as well as educational institutions working with Native students in New Mexico.

“The late Senator John Pinto understood that as the film industry in New Mexico makes headway, it must be inclusive of our Native American communities,” said Cabinet Secretary Lynn Trujillo of the Department of Indian Affairs. “The Senator John Pinto Memorial Filmmakers Fund will provide Native Americans with the resources they need to develop and engage with the media industry and educate others as to who we are - to move our communities and people forward.”

“The passing of my grandfather, Senator John Pinto, left a hole in the collective hearts of our communities. His legacy will be felt for generations to come,” Sen. Shannon D. Pinto, Sen. John Pinto’s granddaughter, said. “This Memorial Fund program will help to guarantee that our Native American filmmakers are supported and receiving the tools they need in order to prepare our nations, tribes, and pueblos for jobs within the film industry.”

All grants will initially be awarded in \$5,000 increments. Applicants should include a project description and budget explaining how the money would be used as well as any supporting material, such as a film outline, a list of support/grants received to date, and letters of support.

All projects must be completed within two years of funding. A board of scholars and film professionals will make the grant decisions. Board members include Ramona Emerson, Beverly Morris, Chris Eyre, Nanobah Becker, and Beverly Singer.

Films created through the program will be screened or highlighted through the New Mexico Filmmakers Conference or Showcase.

To learn how to apply for the Senator John Pinto Memorial Filmmakers Fund, go to nmfilm.com click on "education," and choose "Senator John Pinto Memorial Filmmakers Fund," [or click here](#). If you need assistance, call NMFO 505-476-5600.

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Visit the New Mexico Film Office at nmfilm.com

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