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**Five New Mexico Film Programs
Receive Funding from *Better Call Saul*
Through the New Mexico Film Office Giveback Program**

*\$80,000 awarded to New Mexico colleges and universities as part of a film
workforce development program*



SANTA FE, N.M. – The New Mexico Film Office (NMFO) announced 5 film programs at higher education institutions across New Mexico have received approximately \$80,000 in funding from *Better Call Saul* via NMFO's Giveback Program. Funds can be utilized to purchase equipment, software and, supplies, as well as to student scholarship programs and other student opportunities.

The Giveback funds come from television production *Better Call Saul* as part of the state's film incentive program. The purpose of the program is to strengthen New Mexico's film schools 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," said New Mexico Economic Development Department Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes. "The 5 schools that collectively received the \$80,000 in funding from *Better Call Saul* are located all across New Mexico. The funding supports New Mexico film schools to purchase updated equipment, software, and supplies that is necessary to provide a quality education to New Mexico's future workforce.

"*The Breaking Bad* and *Better Call Saul* productions have done so much for the New Mexico film industry and their contributions go beyond what most even talk about such as

this funding to our Giveback Program. These financial contributions have a positive and wide-reaching impact and are an important long-term investment to New Mexico's film industry. Programs like this are key to supporting continued efforts to expand our world-class crew and provide students who attend New Mexico film schools with the equipment they need to receive a quality education," said Amber Dodson, Director, New Mexico Film Office.

Schools receiving Giveback funds include:

Northern New Mexico College Film Program
New Mexico State University - Grants Campus
University of New Mexico - Taos Campus
New Mexico State University - Doña Ana Community College
New Mexico Highlands University

"Because *Better Call Saul* is so popular—and so New Mexico—it is particularly exciting for our film students to receive support from them through the New Mexico Film Office. The pandemic has created challenges to teaching the hands-on, crew-based art of filmmaking and the funding will help us regain and sustain our edge," said David Lindblom, Assistant Professor, Film and Digital Media Arts, Northern New Mexico College.

"The New Mexico Film Office's Giveback program has helped our Creative Media Program to maintain and expand our equipment to try to keep up with the dramatic changes in technology. This funding allows us to provide relevant experience for our students that will prepare them for current and emerging positions. It is difficult to overstate the impact of these funds on our small, rural college," said Karen M. Henry, Program Manager, Creative Media Program, New Mexico State University Grants Campus.

"Thank you to *Better Call Saul* and the New Mexico Film Office for these Giveback funds. This program has been an extraordinary resource for Doña Ana Community College to enhance our film education capabilities by providing additional funding for special workshops, presentations, guest lecturers, some exciting equipment, and film scholarships. This reinforces the industry's commitment to directly give back to New Mexicans, across the state, wanting to join the film industry workforce with the knowledge and skills in high demand, Matthew Byrnes, Arts Department Chair, NMSU - Doña Ana County Community College."

"The New Mexico Film Office's Giveback Program has a positive impact on film students at New Mexico Highlands University. We have been able to purchase state-of-the-art equipment that gives our students hands-on experience, and elevates the quality of their creative work," said Professor Miriam Langer, Chair, Department of Media Arts & Technology, NMHU.

The Digital Media Arts program at UNM-Taos has 5 instructors and over 100 students. "These funds from productions shot in New Mexico allow us to equip our studio with state-of-the-art gear and help us grow the next generation of media makers," said Peter Walker, Program Coordinator, Digital Media Arts Program, UNM – Taos. "Our goal is for our graduates to remain in New Mexico and utilize their skills as they become crew members for the New Mexico film and television industry."

Better Call Saul has been filming in New Mexico since 2015. The production has contributed \$177,696 to New Mexico film schools through NMFO's Giveback program. Schools that have received funding in the past include: Eastern New Mexico University – Roswell, New Mexico State University – Carlsbad, San Juan College, University of New Mexico Film and Digital Arts.

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 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.

More information on this program can be found online at nmfim.com

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