

Longtime New Mexico Film Industry Veteran Hired to Lead Las Cruces Film Office

March 19, 2020



Don Gray was named as the new director of the Las Cruces Film Office.

Film Las Cruces has announced the hiring of Don Gray, a longtime New Mexico film industry professional, as the Director of the Las Cruces Film Office. Here is a statement from Film Las Cruces:

Gray has been a fixture in the New Mexico film industry for nearly twenty years and is considered one of the most knowledgeable and experienced film professionals in the state. Gray began his film career as a Location Manager and Scout in New Mexico. In 2006 he joined the New Mexico State Film Office and served for fourteen years as the Locations Coordinator for the office. Gray was instrumental in the branding, marketing and public outreach for the state film office and represented the state at conferences and local communities. He is a former contributing faculty member at the Santa Fe University of Art and Design film school and taught for the Association of Film Commissioners International.

Gray has worked with some of the biggest film and television

productions made in New Mexico including Breaking Bad, Terminator Salvation, Logan, Jumanji, True Grit and hundreds more. He joined the film industry in the first years of the state's robust film incentive program and is credited with being one of the key drivers in helping the industry to become a thriving economic sector in the state.

"I'm excited to join Film Las Cruces and help make Las Cruces a robust film production center in the country. Las Cruces and Doña Ana County are well positioned to create good film jobs having beautiful and unique film locations, experienced crew, a 75,000 square foot studio facility, and robust business community to support film productions. We are also home to two very good film schools at New Mexico State University and Doña Ana Community College."

State Senator Jeff Steinborn, the President of Las Cruces Board of Directors, said Gray's experience will help Las Cruces build its brand as a film town. "While we are all going through a challenging time with the COVID 19 virus we are working hard to ensure that we continue to be in a strong position to create good jobs within the \$500 million New Mexico film industry."

Both Gray and Steinborn expressed optimism that the future of the film industry in Las Cruces and New Mexico is bright. The state recently enacted the "rural film tax credit" giving film productions an extra 5% rebate for filming in Las Cruces and other areas outside of Albuquerque and Santa Fe on top of the existing 25-30% rebate. In addition, Las Cruces has the full range of resources valued by film productions including great weather and a nearby airport with direct flights to Los Angeles.

Gray joins an experienced team at Film Las Cruces including Film Liaison Jon Foley, Operations Coordinator Chris Sheppard, and Studio Coordinator Guillermo Portillo. More information on Film Las Cruces can be found at www.filmlascruces.com. ■