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Spring 2021

ROARING BACK!

Governor Newsom Goes On-Set as California Production Returns to Pre-Pandemic Levels



Governor Newsom (right) recently visited the set of NETFLIX's "The Gray Man" where he met with Joe and Anthony Russo (the Russo Brothers) along with members of the cast and crew. The feature film stars Ryan Gosling and Chris Evans. It qualified last year for California's tax credit program and is on track to generate nearly \$102 million in qualified in-state spending (i.e., wages to below-the-line crew members and payments to in-state vendors).

Production is roaring back in California and returning to pre-pandemic levels as the state emerges from COVID-19. The CFC has been busy, with permits for filming on state-owned property rising steadily and interest remaining exceptionally strong for our tax credit program. We're seeing rapid growth across all types of projects (features, TV, commercials, stills, etc.). It's great to see the industry getting back to work creating jobs and opportunity across the Golden State.

WELCOME NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR LEIGH FLORES

Ready to Hit the Ground Running! Leigh Brings Many Years of Experience Leading Organizations in Government, Politics and Global Entertainment Marketing

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Leigh Flores as the California Film Commission's new Deputy Director.

Before joining the CFC, Leigh served as Chief Operating Officer for the 59th Presidential Inaugural Committee and Director for Scheduling and Advance at Biden for President. Before that, she was Senior Advance Lead at Biden for President – a position she also held at Obama for America during the 2012 campaign. Other government and campaign-related roles include Advance Lead at The White House

(2014-16), Senior Advisor for Jerry Brown for Governor in 2010 and Trip Director for the Democratic National Committee in 2004.

Outside of the political arena, Leigh has held senior positions at Civic Nation, the LA 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Bid Committee, Promax and the L.A. City Attorney's Office.

"Leigh is a terrific addition to our team," said California Film Commission Executive Director Colleen Bell. "She knows how to get things done and will help keep California film-friendly."



WELCOME NEW CFC BOARD MEMBERS



Barquet



Davis



Jahangiri



Kaufman



Nazarian



Nguyen

ARTURO BARQUET is Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Global Production Operations at Universal Pictures Group. He oversees finance and production operations for all films produced by Universal Pictures, Focus Features and 1440 Productions, along with Universal production partners including Illumination, Working Title and Blumhouse. He is also responsible for financial oversight of Universal Theatrical Group.

ANDREW Z. DAVIS is President of Production Administration at Sony Studio's Columbia and TriStar Pictures. Before joining Sony in 2013, he executive produced films including 'In Time,' and 'Rush Hour 2.' He also served as Head of Production for Stuber Pictures at Universal Studios and as Executive Vice President of Production for MGM. Andrew is a member of AMPAS, DGA and the Producers Guild of America.

ALI JAHANGIRI began his career practicing corporate law but shifted to online publishing and digital portals. He is currently focused on promoting economic development across a range of industries, connecting projects with needed capital. Ali is the Founder of Opportunity Zone Expo and Opportunity Zone Magazine, as well as Eb5investors and Uglobal -- which help international investors navigate the EB-5 visa program.

PETER KAUFMAN is a San Francisco-based independent film and documentary writer, director and producer. He began working with his father, award-winning filmmaker Philip Kaufman, on films such as 'The Right Stuff' and 'The Unbearable Lightness of Being.' In 1990, he produced the Oscar-nominated 'Henry & June,' followed by a string of other

producing credits including 'Rising Sun,' 'Quills' (nominated for three Oscars), 'Hemingway & Gellhorn' (nominated for 15 Emmy Awards) and the documentary 'China: The Wild East.'

ADRIN NAZARIAN was elected in November 2012 to represent California's 46th Assembly District, which includes the Hollywood Hills and a large section of the San Fernando Valley. He chairs the Aging and Long-Term Care Committee and sits on multiple committees including Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism & Internet Media, as well as Budget Subcommittee No. 4 on State Administration and Transportation. He previously served as Chief of Staff to Paul Krekorian (State Legislature and L.A. City Council) and as an aide to Congressman Brad Sherman.

KIM BERNICE NGUYEN was elected to the Garden Grove City Council in 2016. In addition to serving on the Council, she works as a medical policy specialist and trainer at Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan. Previously, she was an intern and volunteer for California State Senator Lou Correa. Kim is the first member of her family to graduate high school and earn a college degree.

TAX CREDIT PROGRAM UPDATE

On May 14th, Governor Newsom announced a budget proposal adding \$30 million to California's film/TV tax credit program and growing total funding for fiscal 2021-22 to \$360 million.

The additional funding will be allocated to relocating TV series, which bring long-term jobs and production spending. To date, the tax credit program has welcomed 23 relocating TV series from other states and nations.



The increased funding is part of the Governor's comprehensive "California Roars Back" plan made possible by the state's \$76 billion budget surplus. The plan also includes expanding the CalCompetes Tax Credit by \$180 million and a one-time \$250 million CalCompetes grant program for businesses that relocate or expand in California.

Latest Progress Report

In case you missed it, the latest edition of our annual Film & Television Tax Credit Program Progress Report provides updated data through the fifth and final year of Program 2.0, along with a review of the new provisions that went into effect last July with the launch of Program 3.0.

Notwithstanding the impact of COVID-19, the report affirms that California's tax credit program continues to achieve a significant return-on-investment.

Highlights include:

- Jobs and In-State Spending -- Program 2.0 is on track to generate nearly \$11.2 billion in direct production spending in California based on an investment of \$1.55 billion in tax credit reservations.
- Relocating TV Series -- Program 2.0 welcomed a total of 18 relocating TV series from other states and nations, and this success continues with Program 3.0 (which has already welcomed five additional series in its first year).
- Big-Budget Films -- With its expanded project eligibility, Program 2.0 welcomed a total of 13 big-budget feature films to the Golden State.

- Statewide Production -- Year-five of Program 2.0 continued to bring significant production spending and employment to regions outside the Los Angeles 30-Mile Zone.

The report concludes with an overview of major changes for Program 3.0, including more tax credits for independent productions, a new pilot skills training program targeting underserved communities, and a requirement that productions provide diversity initiatives and anti-harassment policies.

The full Progress Report is available on the [California Film Commission website](#).

DEE DEE MYERS MARKS SIX MONTHS AT GO-Biz **Former Entertainment Industry Executive and White House Communications Director Leads CFC's Parent Agency in Sacramento**

Last December, Governor Newsom appointed Dee Dee Myers to serve as Director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) -- the California Film Commission's parent agency in Sacramento.

Previously, Dee Dee was EVP of Worldwide Corporate Communications and Public Affairs at Warner Bros. Prior to that, she was a Managing Director of the Glover Park Group, where she counseled corporate and non-profit clients on strategy, crisis communications and reputation. Notably, she also served as White House Press Secretary during President Bill Clinton's first term, and was the first woman to hold that position.



Since taking the helm at GO-Biz, Dee Dee has worked on a range of issues involving the California Film Commission and the state's Film/TV Tax Credit Program.

"I am thrilled to work with Dee Dee at GO-Biz," said California Film Commission Executive Director Colleen Bell. "She understands the entertainment production industry and is working hard to maintain California's status as the world's production capital."

CFC's NEW 'SPOTLIGHT CALIFORNIA' INTERVIEW SERIES **Top Content Creators, Policymakers, Business Leaders and Others Discuss What's Special About Working in the Golden State**



Colleen Bell interviews Chris O'Donnell in the latest episode of "Spotlight California" -- the California Film Commission's new YouTube series focused on the people who make California the world's film and TV production capital.

The California Film Commission is pleased to announce the launch of "Spotlight California" -- a video series that features interviews with the people who are helping shape film and TV production across the Golden State.

Hosted by CFC Executive Director Colleen Bell, each episode examines what it's like to work in California's signature industry. The format is fast paced (each video is under 10 minutes), with topics covering life in front of and behind the camera.

"We're shining a spotlight on the people who make California the world's entertainment production capital," said Ms. Bell. "Our goal is to examine what makes the industry tick, and to have some fun in the process."

Three episodes are available online via [YouTube](#) and the [CFC's homepage](#), with more on the way. The latest video features actor [Chris O'Donnell](#). The two prior videos feature actor/producer/director [Don Johnson](#) (currently more than 1k views) and documentary filmmaker [Rory Kennedy](#). Each includes a lightning-round Q&A on topics ranging from their guilty pleasures to keys for finding happiness.

Please make sure to subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#), and stay tuned!

Say Hello to Our New Logo!

We recently introduced an entirely new CFC logo designed to stand the test of time. It is contemporary, without any outdated icons (recall our prior logos were based on film reels and old-time movie ticket stubs). The goal was to come up with a design that would evoke California and be recognized internationally. Based on research, we found that the outline of our beautiful state is such an image. A gold palette was selected to remind everyone that California is the Golden State.



The new CFC logo has been very well received and is now included in all our publications and correspondence. Special thanks to Colleen Bell, Jerram Swartz and Laura Baptista for their help through the design process.

FEATURED LOCATION

Shasta Region's Natural and Man-Made Wonders



Shasta County locations: (top) Lassen Volcanic National Park; (below from left) Lake Shasta Caverns and the Sundial Bridge.

Northern California County Offers a Bounty of Extraordinary Locations

Need a volcano for your next production? How about an underground cavern or an asymmetrical bridge that looks like a work of art? Shasta County has you covered.

There are more than 550 film-friendly locations on the FilmShasta.com website – ranging from 200-million-year-old natural wonders to feats of modern engineering. Shasta County is easily accessible via Interstate 5, and the Redding Municipal Airport (RDD) has direct daily flights from San Francisco, Los Angeles, Burbank and Seattle. The region also has a growing crew base and a local incentive that provides up to \$50,000 for qualifying productions, plus lodging rebates and no-fee permits.

Volcanos, caverns and bridges, oh my!

Lassen Volcanic National Park is home to steaming fumaroles (vents through which hot sulfurous gases emerge), wildflower-freckled meadows, clear mountain lakes and numerous volcanoes. Its dominant feature is Lassen Peak (see image above), the largest plug dome volcano in the world. The park's main entrance is less than an hour from downtown Redding via State Route 44, and there's plenty of nearby lodging.



Located in the foothills of Mt. Shasta is **Lake Shasta Caverns** – the West's newest National Natural Landmark. Formed at least 200 million years ago, the network of limestone caves attracts thousands of visitors each year who are drawn to multiple "rooms" with dramatic rock formations. A real-life U.S. military landing craft is available to transport grip trucks and other production vehicles across Lake Shasta directly to the entrance of the caverns. The Landmark is about 15 minutes from Redding, so lodging and supplies are readily available.



Designed by renowned Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, the 700-foot **Sundial Bridge** in downtown Redding has an asymmetrical design that makes a dramatic statement. It crosses the Sacramento River with a deck surface made of translucent structural glass that is illuminated from beneath and glows aquamarine at night. The bridge is also one of the world's largest working sundials. It is a popular location for commercials, appearing recently in spots for Prudential and Nautica.



For more information on these and other locations in Shasta County, contact **Sabrina Jurisich, [Film Shasta](mailto:sabrina@visitredding.com)** at (530) 710-7784 / sabrina@visitredding.com.



CFC in the Community

As part of its effort to promote in-state production, the California Film Commission lends its time, resources and support to a wide range of industry/civic events and organizations. CFC team members are active in the community bringing stakeholders up-to-speed on issues ranging from tax credits to expanding career opportunities.



CFC Executive Director Colleen Bell (top left) moderated the “Women on the Frontlines” global panel commemorating International Women’s Day on March 8th and the release of “Francesco” – the Pope Francis documentary from Oscar nominated director and producer Evgeny Afineevsky.

Recent CFC appearances and community outreach efforts include:

- Sacramento Business Council (Speaker)
- Academy of Arts and Sciences Governor’s Retreat (Keynote Speaker)
- Starz #TakeTheLead Initiative (Moderator and Panelist)
- Future of Creative Talent Summit-Steering Committee (Member)

CFC In the News

Visit our [online news digest](#) for recent news stories featuring the California Film Commission and/or the state's Film & TV Tax Credit Program.



No Permit Fees on State-Owned Property!

The California Film Commission offers FREE permits for filming on state property. Charges are assessed to recover out-of-pocket costs such as review and monitor fees, as well as parking. There are many state-owned locations to choose from, so keep us in mind when you're looking for a low-cost location option.

Visit [CFC's website](#) for more info.

Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter & LinkedIn!

Give us a like/follow to get the latest news plus spectacular California location photos!



Masthead Image: Still from the film "Palm Springs" starring Andy Samberg and Cristin Milioti. The critically acclaimed project participated in California's tax credit program.

About the California Film Commission

The California Film Commission enhances California's status as the world's leading center for entertainment and media production.

A one-stop office for filmmakers, the Commission supports productions of all sizes and budgets. In addition to managing the state's Film & Television Tax Credit Program, services include an extensive digital location library, free online permitting, low cost use of state properties as shooting locations, and production assistance.

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