

NY FILM NEWSLETTER

NYS Governor's Office for Motion Picture & Television Development

JULY 2013

MOVIE MAGIC IS COMING TO BUFFALO, BRINGING 150 NEW JOBS... AND THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNING

At a press conference attended by local officials, business leaders, visual effects executives and education officials, Lieutenant Governor Robert Duffy announced that, thanks to a New York State capital grant of \$4.5 million, a new high tech visual effects company, **Empire Visual Effects**, will open in Buffalo in partnership with **Daemen College** at its Tri-Main Center campus on Main Street. Empire Visual Effects will take advantage of the innovative tax credits championed by Governor Cuomo that are already boosting film and television production and post-production across the state. Included in these credits are benefits targeted specifically to companies that bring their business and jobs to Upstate New York.



From Left to Right: Gary A. Olson President of Daemen College, Lieutenant Governor Robert J. Duffy, Marcelo Gandola, Co-chair Post New York Alliance, advisor to Empire State Visual Effects, Pete Conlin, Managing Partner at Empire Visual Effects and Sixteen19, Jonathan Hoffman Managing Partner at Empire Visual Effects and Sixteen19 and Ben Porcari Managing Partner at Empire Visual Effects



Lieutenant Governor Robert J. Duffy addresses the media at Daemen College

Signed into law in April 2013, these credits further expanded and strengthened the film tax program, including extending funding through 2019, and lowering the thresholds for visual effects (VFX) and animation from 75% to 20% of the total VFX /Animation budget or \$3 million (whichever is less). Also added was an additional 10% credit on

qualified labor starting in 2015 for productions shooting or posting in certain Upstate counties, which means productions will be able to get up to 45% tax credit on labor expenses incurred in those areas of the state. [Read more here.](#)

POST PRODUCTION GROWTH ON FAST TRACK IN NEW YORK STATE

Applications to post credit program more than TRIPLE since last year

As a recent Crain's article reports, "post-production work is booming in New York" since legislation championed by Governor Cuomo enhanced and expanded the state's tax credit for post-production last July. Applications to the state post-production program have more

UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS IN NEW YORK STATE



There is always plenty to do in New York State. Here is a list of some upcoming industry events throughout the State.

[Full a list of events here.](#)

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than tripled in one year; post-production companies have been adding staff, expanding services and capabilities, leasing or building out more space. Even more significantly, established companies from Los Angeles and other cities are opening new offices in New York State to take advantage of the New York post boom.

Crain's quotes Eric Robertson, president of Mr. X Gotham, which specializes in visual effects; "It's been crazy; the phones just don't stop ringing." He opened the company last August, and staffing has increased to 36 people from the original two persons in less than a year. To read more about this remarkable growth in Crain's article "*Tax Credit Stars in Postproduction Film Boom*" [click here](#).

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION! BUSINESS IS BOOMING IN BUFFALO/NIAGARA

The western region of the Empire State is experiencing a robust increase in film business and local crews have been busy with a broad spectrum of projects including commercials, television shows, low budget independent films, documentaries and major motion pictures. The Food Network, Travel Channel, National Geographic and other major networks are frequent visitors to the Buffalo Niagara Region, and they often augment their traveling crew with local production assistants, camera operators and lighting technicians, providing jobs for locals and dollars for the economy.



Melissa McCarthy at Niagara Falls



Ralph Wilson Stadium

The availability of a seasoned crew base, singular and fantastic locations, and the New York State Film Production Credit Program have made filming in Western New York extremely attractive to filmmakers from around the country and world. [Read more here](#).

MEET THE TEAM: FilmAlbany



Debby Goedeke, Albany Film Commissioner

Throughout New York State, we have a network of regional and local film offices which are fully equipped with the resources and support you will need when filming in their area. Cut to: Debby Goedeke, Albany Film Commissioner, who for the last eight years has been the go-to person for filmmakers looking to shoot in Albany.

In her dual-capacity as Conventions Services Manager with the Albany County Conventions & Visitors Bureau, Debby has developed an impressive set of contacts over the years to assist producers and considers herself the Albany help button for location managers and filmmakers. She provides the resources,

contacts and coordination when they need locations for a film shoot, and she does it quickly. [Read more here](#).

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ANOTHER STAR RISES IN NEW YORK

Hailing from Long Island, New York, Amy Schumer has been a regular on the stand-up circuit for eight years, and in 2007, she finished fourth on the reality series, *The Last Comic Standing*. Aside from gracing the stand-up stage, Amy Schumer appeared on two hilarious shows, both helmed by women and both filmed in New York - *30 Rock* (created by its star, Tina Fey) and Lena Dunham's creation, *Girls*.



Intent on growing Comedy Central's female audience, Schumer delivers astute observations about what it's like to be a woman. She feels strongly when she says, "Women, especially, want to feel nurtured. I feel like I have the capability to help some women feel empowered and a little more liberated." Schumer's unique brand of humor that wrestles with inclusion is not only attractive to women, but is appealing to both genders. The first season of the show produced a wide range of fans of Schumer, including Mia Farrow and Louis C.K., whose comedy series *Louie* also filmed in New York and was part of the New York Film Production Credit Program. [Read more here.](#)

BIG STATE-BIG STUFF: ADIRONDACK PARK



Mount Marcy is the highest point in New York State

New York State is a filmmaker's dream! Not only is it widely known for its bustling metropolis with a fabulous urban skyline, but the state also offers a multitude of impressive, diverse, expansive and historic sites that are perfect backdrops for filming. One such site is nestled in Upstate New York.

Adirondack Park was created in 1892 by the State of New York. It is a constitutionally protected "Forever Wild" area and spans six million acres, covering one fifth of New York. It is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States and the largest National Historic Landmark. To give you an idea of the scope of the six million acre park, it would take a combination of five national parks (Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Everglades and Great Smoky) to equal the size of the Adirondack Park, and it is larger than any of the seven smallest states in the United States (Hawaii, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Delaware, Rhode Island, and New Jersey). [Read more here.](#)



A view of Mount Colden from the Marcy Dam

STUDIO SPOTLIGHT: KAUFMAN ASTORIA STUDIOS

The historical heart of the Kaufman Astoria campus is an enormous studio building that opened as Astoria Studios in 1920 by the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, the predecessor to Paramount Pictures. In those early days, over 100 silent films and "talkies" were produced with stars such as Rudolph Valentino, Gloria Swanson, the Gish sisters, W.C. Fields and the Marx Brothers. The studio was taken over by the U.S. Army Signal Corps in 1940 for World War II, where they made films until 1970. In 1977, though the studio had fallen into disrepair, it was declared a landmark by the state, thus staving off destruction that would have been necessary to make way for affordable housing.



Kaufman Astoria Studios, 34-12 36 Street, Astoria, NY 11106

In 1980, real estate developer, George S. Kaufman, took over the property and transformed it

into a vibrant, full-service production center that rivaled studios on the West Coast. Since that time, [Kaufman Astoria Studios](#) has become the catalyst in its Queens community for neighborhood economic and residential growth with the creation of a studio campus that includes national retail and restaurant chains, a 14-screen movie theatre, The Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, the Museum of the Moving Image, TDF Costume Collection, Queens Council on the Arts, and The Astor Room, a supper club-style restaurant located in the former commissary of the studio. [Read more here.](#)

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New York State Governor's Office for Motion Picture and Television Development

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