

MEDIA RELEASE

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NIC TV and Film Crew Training Ready for Registration

New courses offered at North Island College's Campbell River and Port Alberni campuses aim to feed a booming Vancouver Island film industry hungry for off-screen talent.

NIC is accepting applications for the new television and film crew training program, which starts in October.

It launches as Vancouver Island and BC's local film industries are roaring. An estimated \$2 billion was spent on film production in 2015 alone, creating 25,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum Beach and Nanoose residents have seen their communities buzzing with activity during filming of Hallmark Channel's TV series *Chesapeake Shores* for the past two years.



NIC's new television and film crew training program will prepare students to work in Vancouver Island's booming film industry.

Joan Miller, commissioner of the Vancouver Island North Film Commission (INfilm), said NIC's decision to offer the courses comes at a time when the local film industry needs qualified crew to attract productions like *Chesapeake Shores*.

"We have so many productions that want to film here," Miller said.

But a shortage of local, trained crew "has been a barrier for years" to bringing more film and television production to the north island, due to the additional costs of bringing crew from elsewhere to local sets, Miller said.

The pilot program includes four separate training courses, including training to set up lighting and camera equipment, build and design sets and work as a production assistant.

The province announced almost \$500,000 in funding to develop the courses in March. NIC also relied on help and expertise from INfilm, which provides liaison and location services to film, television, commercial and media companies filming in communities from Nanaimo northwards.

INfilm consulted with industry partners and urged the province to provide funding for the courses, pitching the idea as a way to invest in local tradespeople.

"This opens up a whole new avenue to find work," Miller said.

"It's also going to supply students with a few key certifications they need to get on set including the Motion Picture Industry Orientation ticket," Miller added.

"NIC is very pleased to be working with our regional film commissioner and industry to develop customized, applied short term training aligned with film and television productions," said Cheryl O'Connell, NIC's dean of trades and technical programs. "The fact that these courses are being offered in response to industry demand is very significant to the region."

There are still vacancies in the program, but prospective students are urged to get their applications in before Sept. 15.

Anyone interested in applying for a course in the training program can request an application package at filmtraining@nic.bc.ca.

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