



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2010

No. 95

www.nyc.gov

MAYOR BLOOMBERG, SPEAKER QUINN AND ANTHONY ANDERSON OF “LAW & ORDER” LAUNCH PILOT PROGRAM TO TRAIN WOMEN, MINORITIES AND STRUGGLING NEW YORKERS FOR JOBS IN FILM AND TV PRODUCTION

Participants Will Learn Production Basics and Technical Skills – Like Rigging and Dolly Operation – and Receive Placement Services for Mid-Level Production Jobs

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn, Mayor’s Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting Commissioner Katherine Oliver, and “Law & Order” actor Anthony Anderson today launched the “Made in NY” Production Crafts Training Program to help women, minority and struggling New Yorkers prepare for and get jobs in film and television production. The City selected Brooklyn Workforce Innovations to administer the pilot program. Classes, which will begin in the spring, will take place at Brooklyn Workforce Innovations on Degraw Street in Brooklyn and Silvercup Studios in Long Island City, Queens. The announcement, which took place on the set of “Law & Order” at Silver Screen Studios at Chelsea Piers, was also attended by Production Director for the new program Katy Finch, Studio Mechanics Local 52 President John Ford, International Cinematographers Guild Local 600 Eastern Regional Director Chaim Kantor and representatives from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts.

“In New York City’s growing film and television production industry, there are two separate, yet equally important groups,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “The production companies that spend money in the City and the New Yorkers they hire. These are their stories.”

“Fighting unemployment doesn’t just mean creating new jobs – it also means helping more people access the jobs that are available,” said Speaker Quinn. “Since 2006, the City Council has been working with Mayor Bloomberg to promote diversity in film and television, and make sure all New Yorkers have the chance to get good jobs in that industry. The ‘Made in NY’ Production Crafts Training Program will build on those efforts, providing New Yorkers with the necessary training and connecting them with job opportunities.”

“The ‘Made in NY’ Production Crafts Training Program is a key component of our ongoing efforts to encourage diversity in the local entertainment workforce,” said Film, Theatre and Broadcasting Commissioner Oliver. “The program will put persons of color, women, veterans and economically struggling New Yorkers on the path to careers in the entertainment industry by providing top-of-the-line training from NYC labor representatives, and connecting them with new opportunities.”

(more)

Participants of the “Made in NY” Production Crafts Training Program – roughly two dozen in its pilot year – will be taught technical skills by members of the International Alliance of Theatrical & Stage Employees, including industry veterans William Miller and Michael Barrow, and taught production basics and job readiness skills by Program Director Katy Finch. Guest instructors will teach other skills such as rigging and dolly operation in the grip department. All participating trainees will be provided with a year of job placement assistance.

The program’s pilot year is supported with \$120,000 in City Council allocated funds and grant funding from the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City. The Mayor’s Fund is a non-profit organization dedicated to aiding innovative public programs throughout the five boroughs. The program is currently funded for its first year.

A recruitment event for the program will take place this spring at New York City College of Technology. Ideal candidates are individuals who have shown their commitment to working in TV and film production, as well as display an active interest for the grip department, but who now lack the opportunity to enter and advance in union positions. For more details about the recruitment event, visit www.nyc.gov.

“This education and employment opportunity is exceptional,” said Council Member James. “The ‘Made in NY’ Production Crafts Training Program initiative opens doors for diverse individuals who want careers within the entertainment industry, but have not had direction about how to become involved. I am excited to recommend this program to my constituents interested in film and television that may be caught in-between attending school and joining the workforce.”

“We are proud to be a part of this initiative and to host the unveiling at the “Law & Order” set today,” said NBC Universal President and CEO Jeff Zucker. “Fundamentally changing the way we bring more diversity into our business is a priority for me, and for NBC Universal. It requires change from top to bottom, and that is exactly why this program is unique and I think will go a long way to making a difference.”

“I’m thrilled with the City’s efforts to work toward diversifying our local entertainment industry,” said Anthony Anderson. “NBC’s ‘Law & Order’ has long been a supporter of the City’s other diversity initiatives like the ‘Made in NY’ PA Training Program, and I’m proud to be here today as the City launches its latest effort.”

“Brooklyn Workforce Innovations is proud to be developing this groundbreaking program to diversify the local entertainment industry,” said Program Director Katy Finch. “We look forward to working closely with labor and the City’s employers to find better jobs for the program’s graduates.”

“We look forward to working with the City and Brooklyn Workforce Innovations to train the next generation of union members,” said John Ford, president of Studio Mechanics Local 52. “This is an important initiative that will help grow our local entertainment industry.”

The “Made in NY” Production Crafts Training Program is the latest initiative to promote diversity in the City’s entertainment industry that grew out of the recommendations of the Mayor’s Task Force on Diversity in Film, Television and Commercial Production. Launched in

October 2006, the Task Force was charged with exploring initiatives and opportunities that would help to diversify employment in the City's production industry. The Task Force was comprised of representatives from the Mayor's Office, City agencies, the City Council, the production industry, labor groups and industry associations, all of whom are committed to ensuring a diverse group of New Yorkers has access to job opportunities created by the film and television industry.

The new program builds on the success of the "Made in NY" Production Assistant Training Program, which prepares disadvantaged and unemployed New Yorkers for entry-level jobs in TV and film production. There are now 211 graduations from the program, many of whom have advanced to higher level positions. Participants learn set and office production assistant skills and are placed in jobs on feature films, episodic and reality TV, commercials, music videos and other productions. More than 1,000 productions have hired "Made in NY" PAs, including "Law & Order," "30 Rock," *Julia & Julia* and *Brooklyn's Finest*. Other initiatives include the "Made in NY" Mentorship program which promotes the recruitment of persons of color, women, veterans and economically disadvantaged New Yorkers to the film and television industry by increasing access through mentor relationships. Now in its first year, 15 individuals are currently meeting with industry experts who serve as mentors and provide career advice. The program is operated by the Independent Feature Project.

Filmed in New York City Now and now in its twentieth season, "Law & Order" is tied with "Gunsmoke" as the longest-running drama series in the history of television. Starring NAACP Award winner S. Epatha Merkerson, Jeremy Sisto, Anthony Anderson, Sam Waterston, Alana de la Garza and Linus Roache, "Law & Order" is a Wolf Films production in association with Universal Media Studios. Dick Wolf is creator and executive producer; Rene Balcer, Fred Berner and Peter Jankowski are executive producers. The series, which airs on NBC on Mondays at 10pm, employs thousands of individuals each season and is based at Silver Screen Studios in Chelsea Piers, Manhattan.

-30-

Contact: Stu Loeser / Andrew Brent (212) 788-2958
Marybeth Ihle (Film, Theater and Broadcasting) (212) 669-7742