

# “Made in NY” Production Assistant Training Program Evaluation and Impact Study

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Authored by:

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Commissioned by:



**Bloomberg  
Philanthropies**



# About this study

Buro Happold was commissioned by Brooklyn Workforce Innovations (BWI) and Bloomberg Philanthropies to undertake a study evaluating the impact of the “Made in NY” Production Assistant Training Program on the lives of program graduates as well as the Film & TV industry in New York.

This study outlines the role of workforce development training programs in helping the industry become more inclusive, and provides a high-level roadmap for industry stakeholders, non-profits and government agencies that wish to create and expand similar programs in other cities throughout the country.



# Executive summary

**The “Made in NY” Production Assistant (PA) Training Program operated by Brooklyn Workforce Innovations (BWI) is extremely successful at providing a pathway for low-income New York City residents from under-represented communities to secure paid entry-level jobs in the Film & TV industry.** These

opportunities allow them to establish stable careers by moving up in the industry over time. “Made in NY” PAs have gone on to become assistant directors, grips, script supervisors, sound mixers, set dressers and location managers on some of the biggest productions in the country.

**On average, the annual income of enrollees in the year after graduating is 2.4x higher than their annual income prior to enrolling.** Subsequently, graduates experience, on average, a

128% growth in income in the first five years of employment, but this growth can vary significantly depending on how quickly PAs are able to transition into more advanced roles.

Since its launch during the Bloomberg administration in 2006, the program has trained over 1,100 New Yorkers and has a 95% satisfaction rate amongst graduates.

**As the Film & TV industry grows nationally, the need for investments in programs that create pipelines of skilled, set-ready, and diverse candidates is growing more urgent.**

Such workforce initiatives help employ local residents in high-growth careers – keeping wages local – and drive meaningful Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) opportunities, beneficial to employees and the industry.

**2.4x** increase in annual income in the first year after graduation (compared to enrollees’ average annual income prior to joining the program)

**128%** further increase in income over the first five years after graduation

**85%** of graduates are placed in a paid job within one month of graduation in the Film & TV industry

**36%** of graduates are now part of a labor union or guild (or are working as union applicants, making the same union wages)

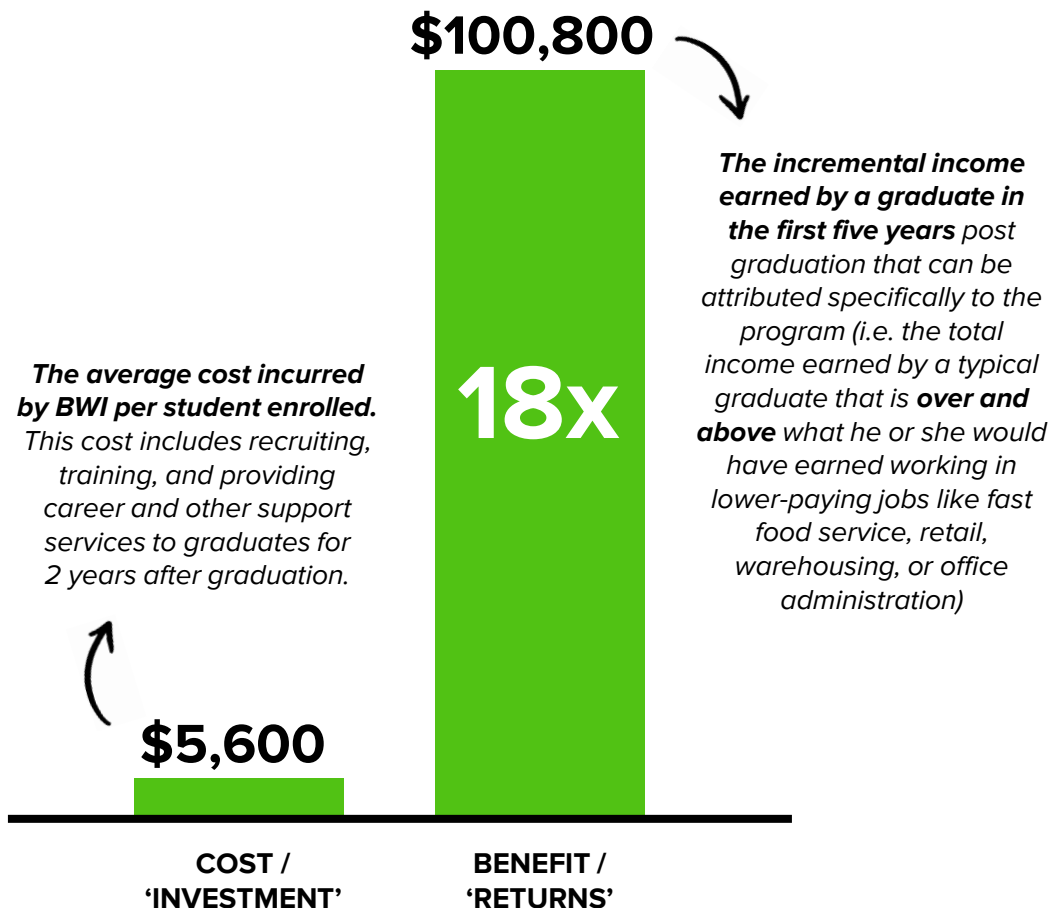
**78%** of graduates continue to work in the Film & TV industry for more than two years after graduation

**94%** of enrollees are people of color (compared to only **30%** in the Film & TV production industry in New York City)

# Executive summary

**The return on investment for this program is an astounding 18x over 5 years.** For every \$1,000 invested in BWI for this training program, the benefit incurred in terms of increased income earned by graduates is \$18,000 (over 5 years).

The chart on the right explains how this study has defined and calculated the 'return on investment\*'. This is based on income data collected from more than 240 graduates, and cost information from Brooklyn Workforce Innovations. The 'return on investment' calculation takes into account the income earned by graduates only in the first five years post graduation, although the benefits of the program continue to accrue as graduates move through their careers. The five-year period was chosen due to the robustness of data available during that period.



\*Refer to the Appendix (pg 61) for a more detailed description of the ROI calculation methodology.



“It’s a life changing program. I’m happy doing what I do, I’m able to pay my own rent, and it’s all because of the program. I’m blessed because of it.”

*- Klarissa Jackson, 2011 graduate, Key 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director, member of the Directors Guild of America*



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**01.** Program  
and Industry  
Overview



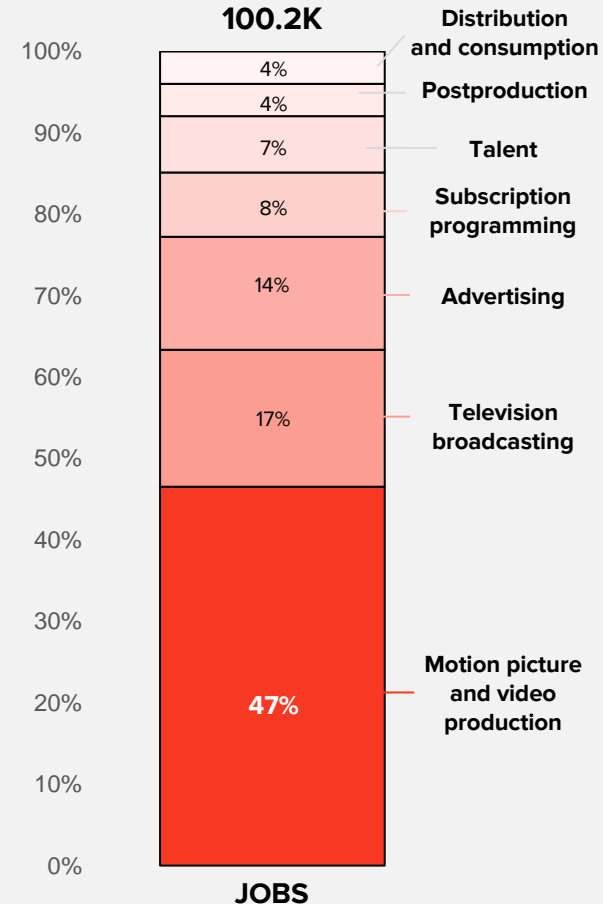
# NYC's Film & TV industry workforce

The Film & TV industry is integral to New York City's economy and directly supports \$63.2 billion in economic output and 100,200 jobs. The industry was at an all-time high when the pandemic hit, with 80 series shooting in NYC as of the 2018-2019 season (a 34% increase in episodic production since 2014). Despite COVID-19's impact and the shut down of productions in 2020, overall production rapidly rebounded to pre-pandemic levels by mid-2021.

The city's Film & TV industry jobs are very high-paying jobs, with industry professionals earning on average \$121,000 (compared to a citywide average wage of \$91,000). The production sector of the Film & TV industry maintains the greatest number of jobs and is the fastest

growing as streaming platforms and new media formats drive greater content volume. However, there is a need to create more pathways into the industry for New Yorkers to build greater equity in a sector that has historically lacked diversity.

As content is diversifying due to new streaming platforms and audience segmentation, it is important that the production workforce match this trend with more pathways for BIPOC, low-income, and women Film & TV industry workers from a range of backgrounds and education levels. Since 2006, the "Made in NY Production Assistant Training Program is excelling in its mission to deliver on these goals.



**Direct Jobs in the NYC Film & Television Industry by sector, 2019**



# “Made in NY” PA Training Program stewards



Brooklyn Workforce Innovations (BWI) is a non-profit organization that develops and operates workforce development programs that create living-wage employment opportunities and access to career paths for low-income New Yorkers who face significant barriers to employment. The “Made in NY” PA Training Program is one such program, providing skills, job placement, and career development support for New Yorkers interested in launching a career in the Film & TV industry.



The Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment (MOME) supports and strengthens New York City's creative economy and makes it accessible to all. Its Film Office issues permits and coordinates on-location production throughout the five boroughs. MOME, in partnership with BWI, created the “Made in NY” PA Training Program in 2006, and has subsequently introduced additional training and workforce programs in the creative industries under the “Made in NY” brand.



Bloomberg Philanthropies works to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people across five key areas: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation and Public Health. It encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a pro bono consultancy that works in cities around the world. Bloomberg Associates has long advised BWI's program directors, and Bloomberg Philanthropies sponsors the “Made in NY” PA Training Program.

# BWI's "Made in NY" PA Training Program overview

## MISSION

The "Made in NY" Production Assistant (PA) Training Program invests in unemployed and low-income New Yorkers to build careers in the field of film and television production, and helps increase diversity within the City's entertainment production workforce.

This free, full-time 4-week training program equips trainees with the skills necessary to work on set or in production offices, and provides them access to hundreds of employers in NYC's production industry.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**1,100** New Yorkers have been enrolled in the program since 2006.

**91%** of enrollees, on average, are placed in jobs in the film and television industry after graduation every year.

**94%** of enrollees are people of color, compared to 30% in the NYC Film & TV industry and 54% in NYC's overall workforce.

**2,000+** productions have hired program graduates since 2006.

**2 years** of job placement assistance and career counseling provided to all graduates.

**700-800** applications for approximately 80 spots in the program across four cycles each year.

# “Made in NY” PA Training Program overview

The “Made in NY” PA Training program is highly competitive. The program receives approximately 700 to 800 applications every year, for about 80 spots (across four annual cycles). The eligibility criteria and application process are outlined below.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- At least 18 years old
- Have a valid driver's license
- Current New York City residency
- Under-employed, unemployed, or low-income
- Available full-time and able to attend the four-week training program
- Available to work freelance 12-14+ hours per day in Film & TV production after graduation
- Able to make a 2-year commitment to working full-time in the Film & TV production industry after graduation

## APPLICATION PROCESS

- Information sessions available on a weekly basis for interested applicants
- Applications may be submitted at any time for one of the four training cycles per year
- A limited number of qualified applications will advance to an interview process



# “Made in NY” PA Training Program overview

The “Made in NY” PA Training Program teaches enrollees the basic duties of working on set at the entry level. Below is an outline of key activities taking place through the course of the program.

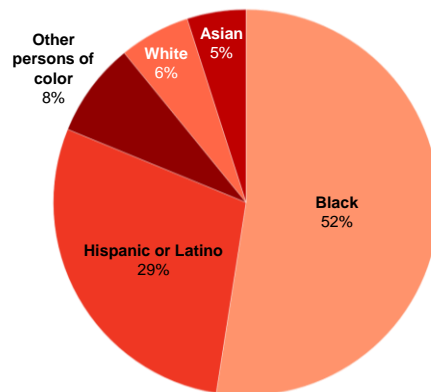
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5 to Year 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Ice breakers</li><li>● Internet basics</li><li>● Set etiquette</li><li>● Learning about the various positions on set</li><li>● Reading call sheets</li><li>● Industry professionals (including Program alumni) invited to share their career experiences</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Dive deeper into the various PA roles</li><li>● Walkie talkie training</li><li>● Field trip to a production vendor</li><li>● Soft skills training (production resume, goal setting, and networking)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● More walkie talkie training</li><li>● Mock shoot (conducted by industry professionals and alumni volunteers)</li><li>● Field trip to a major film studio</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Visit to the NYC Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment to learn about film permits</li><li>● Quiz on previous lessons</li><li>● Mock interviews with industry professionals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Job placement begins</li><li>● BWI provides on-going career support for two years (includes job placement, career counseling)</li><li>● Data collected on graduates’ career and income progression</li></ul>

# Program demographics

The “Made in NY” PA Training Program helps counter inequalities in the Film & TV industry workforce and contribute to a broader movement for economic justice. A large majority (70%) of the Film & TV production sector in New York City is white, and only 37% of it is female. The “Made in NY” PA Training Program predominantly serves people of color and has seen an increase in female enrollment in recent years, which helps make the industry more diverse, inclusive, and representative of New York City’s population overall.

The program also serves individuals that typically face a greater number of barriers to employment. This includes individuals previously convicted of a crime (9% of enrollees), veterans (4%), and residents of public housing (9%).

Program racial composition (2006 to 2022)



Program recent gender breakdown (2021 to 2022)



Program overall gender breakdown (2006 to 2022)



*\*Non-binary has been included as a recorded gender category for participants in collected data as of the 2021-2022 program cohort*

**94%** of all enrollees are people of color, compared to 30% in the Film & TV industry and 54% in New York City workforce.

**55%** of all enrollees in the last two years identify as female or non-binary.



# Program demographics

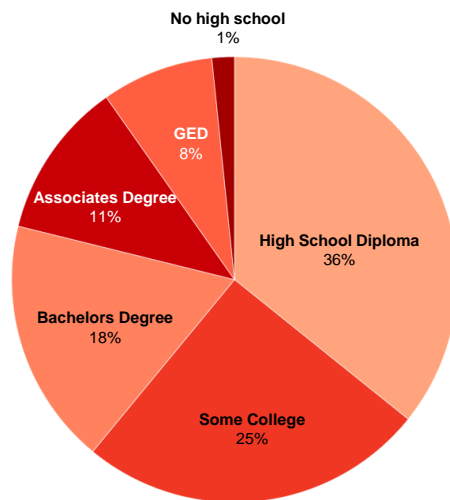
The “Made in NY” PA Training Program serves younger, low-income, and unemployed New Yorkers who typically have a harder time securing living-wage employment that can lead to future career growth.

**27** is the average age of an enrollee in the program.

**22%** of enrollees were unemployed the year prior to joining the program.

**\$15,600** was the average annual income of enrollees that had jobs prior to joining the program.

Program enrollees’ education attainment breakdown (2006 to 2022)

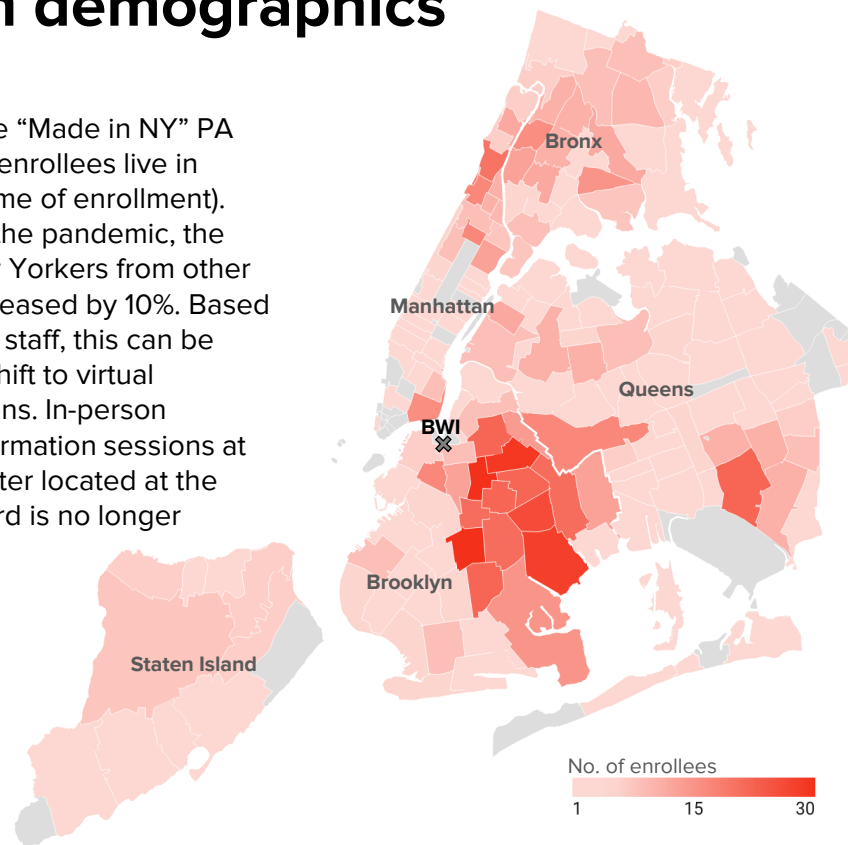


**71%** of enrollees did not have an advanced education certification (beyond a high school diploma).



# Program demographics

The majority of the “Made in NY” PA Training Program enrollees live in Brooklyn (at the time of enrollment). Since the start of the pandemic, the proportion of New Yorkers from other boroughs has increased by 10%. Based on input from BWI staff, this can be attributed to the shift to virtual information sessions. In-person attendance at information sessions at BWI’s training center located at the Brooklyn Navy Yard is no longer required.



Distribution of program enrollees by NYC zip code (2006 to 2022)

Distribution of program enrollment by NYC borough (2006 to 2022)

**40%** from Brooklyn

**22%** from Queens

**18%** from Manhattan

**16%** from the Bronx

**4%** from Staten Island

# Production Assistants in the Film & TV industry

“Production Assistant (PA)” is an entry-level position in the Film & TV industry. PAs perform a variety of tasks that are invaluable to a production and are needed to move the shoot forward. These include preparing the studio for production, building sets, cleaning up sets, securing sets, reviewing staffing tables, distributing paperwork (scripts and call sheets), labeling and distributing walkies, managing background actors, relaying messages between crew members, and more.

PAs work in all major departments on set including Production, Grip, Electric, Camera, Costumes, Locations, Sound, Art, Props, and Transportation.

PAs usually work long, non-traditional work hours, and they are typically paid a day rate. Their role on a particular production can last anywhere from a day to a couple months, depending on the nature of the job and the type of production. Some PAs are hired as part of the staff for the entire duration of the production, but most commonly they are freelance workers who are hired for specific production activities.

Many directors, producers, writers, and other senior-level staff in the entertainment industry begin their careers as PAs. Networking and building relationships are key for PAs to continue to secure work and progress into advanced roles.

## Common PA roles:

- **Key PAs** help manage other PAs and delegate tasks to keep the production running smoothly.
- **Set PAs** support the physical production, carrying out tasks for the production team (transporting equipment, cleaning the set, etc.).
- **Background PAs** work within the Assistant Director department to help organize and oversee background actors and extras.
- **Locations PAs** assist the location manager with crowd control, parking, security for sets, etc.
- **Walkie PAs** are responsible for labeling the walkie talkies, checking them in and out, charging them, etc.
- **Office PAs** provide clerical support at the production office (handling paperwork, phone call inquiries, etc.)

# “Made in NY” Production Assistants

PAs from this program are pre-screened, experienced, and easy to hire (BWI can arrange interviews or direct placements, several weeks in advance or at a moment's notice). Every “Made in NY” PA is a licensed driver who has undergone a rigorous selection process and demonstrated outstanding motivation and commitment. PAs have received over 4 weeks of full-time classroom and field training that is directly applicable to working on set or in a production office.

Productions are technically complicated and require “all hands-on deck.” “Made in NY” PAs are familiar with working on sets, know set ‘lingo’ and all the roles and departments, and are an asset from their first day on set.

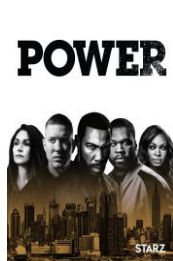
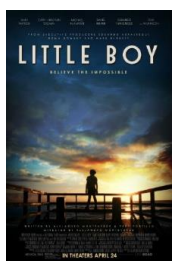
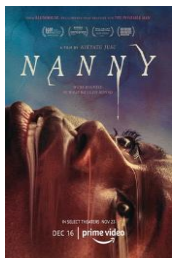
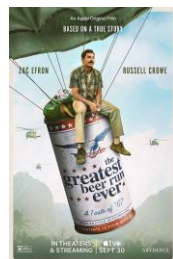
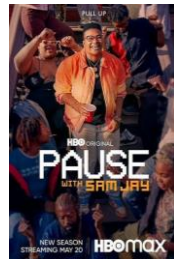
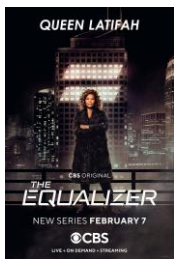
“*“Made in NY” PAs are engaged and familiar with the production world. Candidates seem to know the expectations of being on set or in the office, and how to work with producers and crew*”

*- Leslie Gyson, Unit Production Manager, has hired “Made in NY” PAs on multiple productions*





# “Made in NY” PAs work for high-profile productions...





...created by and for the biggest names in entertainment



LIONSGATE

STARZ



VIACOM

BUNIM MURRAY PRODUCTIONS

we are happy



NETFLIX

hulu

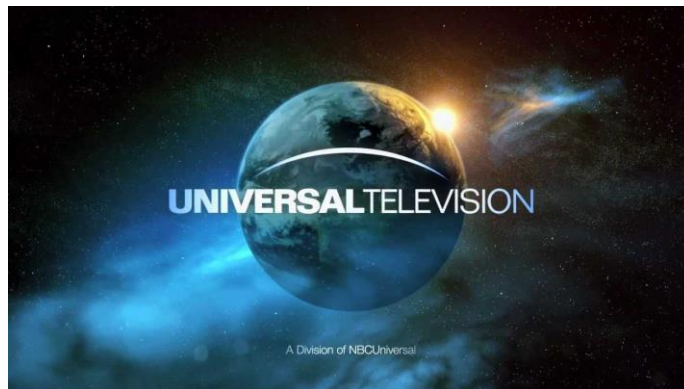


alloyentertainment



MARVEL

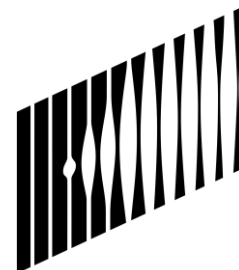
amazonstudios



AVALON



Disney



SONY  
PICTURES  
TELEVISION



## 02. Program Impacts on Graduates



# Immediate increases in PA incomes post-graduation

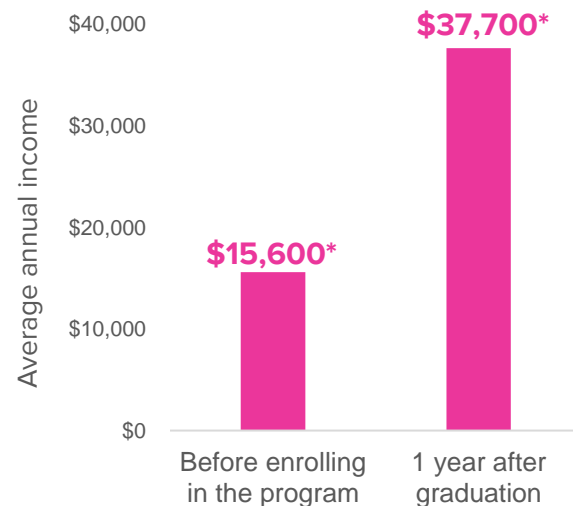
In the first months after graduation, most “Made in NY” PAs with direct assistance from BWI secure as much work as possible. They gradually build their networks within the industry, which leads to more consistent and higher-paying work.

While most PAs are freelancers within the industry, some graduates get the opportunity to staff productions for months (typically on TV shows), leading to stable income for a longer period of time.

**85%** of graduates are placed in a paid job within one month of graduation in the Film & TV industry, with around 40% being able to find work within one week.

**\$223** average daily rate paid to “Made in NY” PAs (2019 to 2022 graduates)

**2.4x** increase in annual income after graduation, compared to enrollees’ average annual income prior to joining the program (only accounting for those that were employed prior to joining)



\*Based on income of graduates from 2019 to 2022. Accounts for those who worked either full-time or part-time in the year prior to graduation, as well as the year after graduation.

“I’ve had several job opportunities since graduating just 6 months ago.”

- Jasmine Wise, 2022 graduate, Locations Assistant on *Law and Order: Organized Crime*

# A pathway to stable, union jobs

The Film & TV industry has many unions and guilds that protect and promote the rights of various trades, which Production Assistants may eventually advance into. Union membership has significant benefits, including being paid a minimum guaranteed rate, getting paid on time (as per pre-decided payment schedules), having set maximum hours per day, and predetermined overtime rates. Many unions also provide access to health insurance and retirement plans.

It is typical for “Made in NY” Production Assistants to apply to be part of a union after working in a particular department or role for a few years. Most unions require PAs to have worked in a relevant role for a minimum number of hours in order to be eligible to join.

**36%** of “Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates are now part of a labor union or guild or are working as union applicants (both make the same union wages)

**15** different unions have “Made in NY” graduates as members. Graduates most commonly join **Local 817, Local 52, Local 161 and Local 600**. These unions cover trades and roles in a number of production departments including Locations, Grip, Electric, Sound, Camera, Transportation, and Props, etc.

*“I worked 32 jobs in 2013 - the most jobs I’ve ever worked in a year. All that hard work led to opportunities that allowed me to grow and move into different departments until finally I landed in Locations. Now I’m making triple what I was making my first year in the business and the ceiling is even higher for me to make more.”*

*- Henry Giraldo, 2012 graduate, Locations Scout, member of Local 817*

# GRADUATE PROFILE: Paradise Montanez



**CURRENT ROLE:**  
Assistant Locations  
Manager

**UNION:**  
Local 817

**GRADUATION YEAR:**  
2015

*“I had been to prison prior to joining the program. I have a felony, so it was difficult at that point. But now I’m so established I don’t have to worry about that anymore. The “Made in NY” Program has changed my life immensely.”*

## **Prior to joining the program:**

Worked a few different jobs, including in fast food and solar construction, before applying to the program.

## **2017:**

Moved from being a PA to a Locations Assistant. Put in 30 days of work in this role, and then joined the Local 817.

## **2021:**

Became an Assistant Locations Manager, which brought more stability; fewer jobs, but longer durations.

## **2015:**

Graduated from the program and then worked as a Unit PA for two years.

## **2020:**

Took on Locations Scouting and Coordinating roles.

## **Future Goal:**

Aspires to become a Unit Production Manager and a Directors Guild of America member, creating a path to become a Producer.



# Increasing access to the Film & TV industry

Breaking into the Film & TV industry can be tough, especially without industry connections. The “Made in NY” PA Training Program improves access for New Yorkers launching their production careers by providing access to early-stage career work opportunities and in time more senior roles, which otherwise would be very challenging to navigate on one’s own.

Roles that “Made in NY” PAs have transitioned into include:

- Associate Producers
- Assistant Directors
- Locations Managers
- Set Dressers
- Production Coordinators
- Prop Masters
- Sound Mixers
- Camera Loaders
- Lead Muralists
- Grips and Electrics

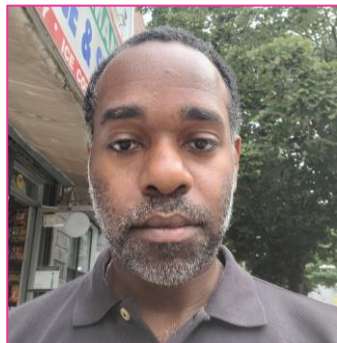
**94%** of “Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates stated that the program empowered them to break into the Film & TV industry.

**57%** of “Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates have transitioned into advanced roles in production (at the time of this survey).

*“I wanted to work in this industry, but had no idea how to break in. I heard that a PA job is the foot in the door, but I didn’t even know how to break into that door. The best part of the program was its placement assistance, and its large network with potential employers.”*

- Noelle Elaine Reed, 2021 graduate, Office PA

# GRADUATE PROFILE: Brian Joseph

**CURRENT ROLE:**

Sound Mixer

**UNION:**

Local 52

**GRADUATION YEAR:**

2010

*“It has definitely been more stable working on a union set. I’ve never been without work. I’ve not once had to pick up the phone and call for work.”*

**Prior to joining the program:**

Was working in retail, but not satisfied with the growth prospects.

**2012:**

Transitioned into the sound department and worked as a boom operator. Found a mentor to learn from and took on many jobs in sound.

**2018:**

Split from the other partners in the business.

**2019 to today:**

Has consistently been working in a number of sound roles, including sound mixer.

**2010:**

Graduated from the program and worked on a variety of PA jobs, and eventually started making good money as a Unit Driver.

**2015:**

Entered into a partnership with two others in the industry and started a business in sound production and post-production.

**2019:**

Applied and got into Local 52. First “Made in NY” PA to enter this union for Sound.

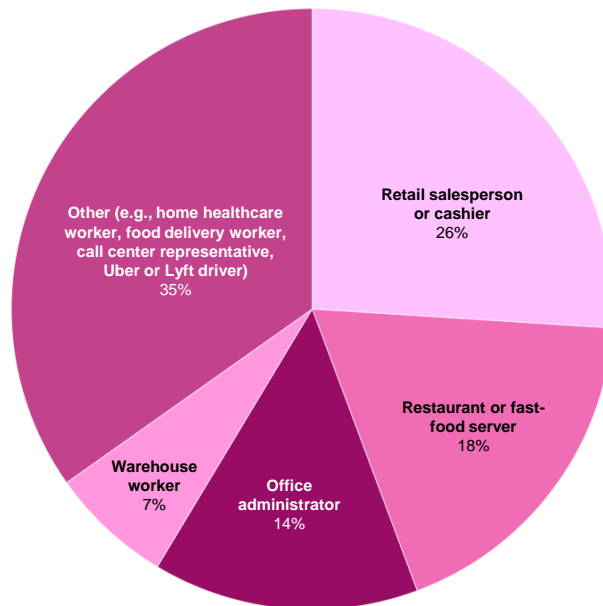
# Most graduates establish successful and stable careers

While the majority of enrollees (78%) are employed in some capacity prior to joining the program, they typically have low-wage jobs that are usually part-time or seasonal, and tend to be characterized by high turnover, low job security and unstable hours.

Working as a Production Assistant in the Film & TV industry provides an opportunity to climb the ladder and take on roles that can help establish a successful career, effectively removing many people from the persistent cycle of low-wage work.

The most common barriers graduates face prior to enrolling include the lack of opportunity, skills, and access to the Film & TV industry, all of which the program provides to them.

Distribution of jobs that “Made in NY” PA Training Program enrollees had before applying to the program.



**83%** of enrollees were not satisfied with their career prospects prior to joining the program.

**93%** of graduates said they were confident of progressing or have progressed into higher-paying roles within the Film & TV industry after working as a Production Assistant.

**78%** of graduates continue to work in the Film & TV industry for more than two years after graduation. BWI does not collect data on graduate retention in the industry beyond two years, but anecdotal evidence suggests that a large proportion of graduates continue to work in the industry for many years and establish long careers.

# Most graduates establish successful and stable careers

*“The program has led me to becoming an Assistant Director, traveling around the country for jobs. Soon I'll be traveling internationally for other job opportunities. I continue to learn, what it is that I need to become a filmmaker on my own.”*

- Jose Guerrero, 2015 graduate, 2<sup>nd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director, member of the Directors Guild of America

*“I went from being job-minded to career-minded.”*

- Myo Campbell, 2006 graduate, 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Camera, member of Local 600

*“Every new job was a new opportunity to network and move up. I went from being a Camera PA to 1st Assistant Camera.”*

- Manuel Garcia, 2015 graduate, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Camera

*“I worked with one “Made in NY” graduate who started off as an Office PA, moved on to be a Script PA, then Script Coordinator, and is now a writer in the industry.”*

- Leslie Gyson, former Production Coordinator on “The Americans”

# Provides graduates necessary life skills and lessons

In addition to providing the graduates with the necessary skills to succeed as PAs, the program helps hone “soft” skills and impart “life lessons” that help them personally and professionally throughout their careers.

The most common skills and lessons that were imparted to trainees through the course of their program have been identified on the right (based on survey responses from graduates).

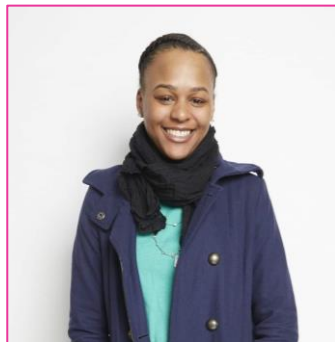
- **Punctuality**
- **Accountability** to oneself and to others
- **Communication** skills, including learning how to present and ‘market’ oneself in a professional setting
- **Networking**
- **Resume writing and interviewing**
- **Money management** and budgeting, which is especially important for freelance workers in the Film & TV industry
- **Longer-term career planning**
- **Self-care**, including taking care of one’s **mental health**, especially in high pressure work environments, like a set

“*To be on time, to keep healthy boundaries, the power of “no”, and most importantly how to hustle. I always had it in me, but the program pushed me to hustle which is why I think I’ve been in this game for 13 years! Thank you “Made In NY.”*”

- Sonia Miranda, 2009 graduate,  
Production Coordinator



# GRADUATE PROFILE: Klarissa Jackson



## CURRENT ROLE:

Key Second Assistant  
Director

## UNION:

Directors Guild of America

## GRADUATION YEAR:

2011

*“I remember there were times where I worked 18 days straight just because I didn't want to turn down work. Yes, I was tired, but I don't regret it because it got me to where I'm at now.”*

### Prior to joining the program:

Graduated from SUNY Oneonta, majoring in mass communications.

### 2012:

Was a full-time Walkie PA staffed on Gossip Girl Season 6.

### 2013 to 2015:

Consistently managed to get staff PA jobs after Gossip Girl, which provided a consistent paycheck, and had medical and dental insurance benefits.

### 2019:

Freelancing as an additional Second AD.

### 2022:

Key Second AD on The Equalizer; getting closer to her goal of being a First AD.

### 2011:

Graduated from the program. Got her first PA job through a guest speaker from the program. After that, was recommended to others in the industry and managed to consistently get PA jobs.

### 2016 to 2018:

Worked as a staff member in the “Made in NY” PA Training Program, and took on part-time roles in the AD department, when possible.

### 2020 to 2021:

Hired as a full-time Second AD (entry-level to the AD track) on The Equalizer Season 1 and 2.



**03.** Program  
Impacts on the  
Film & TV  
Industry, and  
New York City

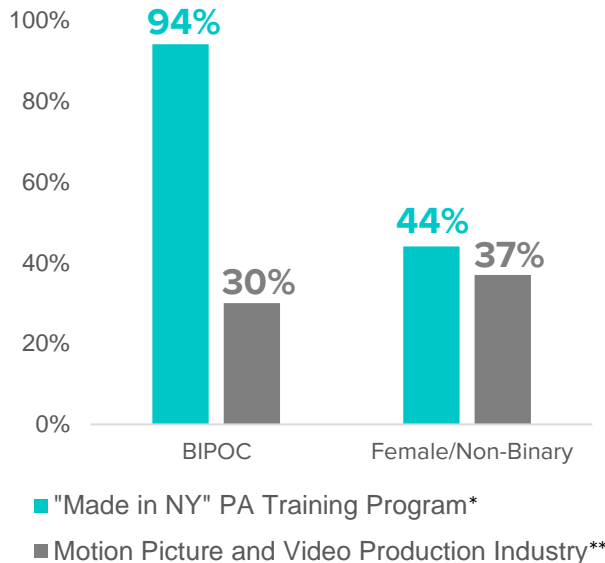


# Increases diversity in the Film & TV industry

The Film & TV production industry is plagued by systemic racial and gender inequities, which is a barrier for many graduates to establish successful careers. In New York City, the motion picture production industry severely lags on BIPOC and female representation as compared to New York City's workforce at-large.

Unlike other industries, the production industry requires on-the-ground experience. A degree will not necessarily expedite the process of advancing in the field. As a result, increasing diversity requires engagement from the initial rungs of job placement. The “Made in NY” PA Training Program offers diverse entry level talent to productions and studios that help advance a more inclusive workforce.

Comparing the program's race and gender composition with the Film & TV industry



\*Source: BWI demographic data for all enrollees (2006-2022)

\*\*Source: EMSI, 2019; Non-Binary not included as a category

*“People of color often face many barriers in this industry, including the lack of growth opportunities, and lack of mentorship.”*

- Martha Sepulveda, 2006 graduate

*“The realization of the lack of diversity on set has been an eye opener.”*

- Sasha Inoa, 2022 graduate

# Productions partner with BWI to advance their DEI goals

## “THE BLACKLIST” INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Laura Benson, the Executive Producer of the TV show, “The Blacklist” has created a 9-month internship program on her show specifically for individuals from disadvantaged communities to help them enter the Film & TV industry. Two individuals are hired every season as interns, and they rotate through every department on set and in the office. “Made in NY” graduates are very often selected to enroll in this program every year.

The program is designed to give enrollees a comprehensive understanding of all the activities involved in a production, hone in on an area of interest, and give them a chance to deepen their network that will help them land jobs in the future.

## LOCAL HIRING OPPORTUNITY ON “THE AMERICANS”

The show, “The Americans,” while filming in New York, wanted to hire a Set PA from the neighborhood in which the show was being filmed. The production team partnered with BWI to accomplish this goal.

BWI staff and the lead actors of the show presented this opportunity to the graduating class at a local high school and encouraged applications for the “Made in NY” PA program. Eventually, one applicant was picked to be part of the program, undergo the 4-week training, and then hired as a Set PA on “The Americans.”

“*The internship program is a well-intentioned endeavor to bring in an interesting and diverse mix of people on set. It is also a chance to give hard working, engaged people an opportunity to find a permanent job on the show.*”

- Laura Benson, Executive Producer on “The Blacklist,” pioneer of an internship program in partnership with “Made in NY”

# Provides skilled, set-ready talent to the Film & TV industry

The “Made in NY” PA Training Program has placed qualified Production Assistants on more than 2,000 productions to date. The 4-week training program provides graduates with the necessary skills that are directly relevant and immediately applicable to working on set or in the production office. All graduates are required to take part in ‘mock-shoots’ as part of their training (often run by the program’s alumni), giving the necessary real-world experience that allows them to hit the ground running as soon as they are hired.

The skills that graduates identified were the most valuable when they worked on set are identified on the right.

- Navigating the environment on set and a production office with ease by knowing **set etiquette and walkie lingo**
- **Punctuality**
- **Conducting a lock-up** (an order given to PAs to keep the set free of interruptions)
- **Familiarized with production-related documents** including a call sheet, ‘sides’, production time report (aka ‘Exhibit G’)
- Being aware of the various **departments and their roles** on set
- **Communicating with the other teams on set**
- Learning how to **anticipate and be resourceful**

“*The skills the program gave me helped me to be ahead of the curve on how things on set run. It gave me just enough to make my first day on set not look like my first day on set.*”

- *Brian Cardenas, 2020 graduate, currently works in Grip and Electric*



# Provides benefits to New York City at-large

## **PATHWAYS FOR NEW YORKERS WITHOUT ADVANCED DEGREES**

Given the steep decline of urban manufacturing in recent decades, there are very few city-sited industries left where workers can chart a path to middle class incomes without advanced education (and the potential debt associated with it). As such, the Film & TV industry occupies a unique space in the NYC industry landscape, offering a promising career to low-income New Yorkers with no more than a high school education, with the “Made in NY” PA Training Program enabling this to happen. Similar pathways are much rarer in the food service and retail industries, which have similar education requirements as entry-level jobs in the Film & TV industry.

## **PROVIDES TALENT FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF PRODUCTIONS**

New York City is a hub for various types of production, including TV, major films, independent films, reality TV, and commercials, created by production companies of all sizes with a wide range of budgets. This contrasts with Hollywood, where major studios dominate the production industry. Ensuring a steady supply of diverse, talented, non-union and union workers in the industry allows for New York City to remain attractive to a diverse range of productions.

“*The industry is drawn to New York City for many reasons, particularly for strong talent, and making sure the productions have a pipeline of skilled New York crew members is a critical component.*”

*- Jennifer Lenihan, Assistant Commissioner, NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment*

# Provides benefits to New York City at-large

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE PRODUCTION INDUSTRY REMAINS IN NEW YORK CITY

Many productions coming to film in New York City fly in their crews from elsewhere. In the case of productions with non-New Yorker crews, the economic impact of these productions (in terms of wages paid to workers) does not remain in New York City. The “Made in NY” PA Training Program provides a trustworthy and well-trained pipeline of Production Assistants for out-of-state productions to hire locally, preserving the economic impact of the wages paid to the PAs in the NYC economy.

## GRADUATES ARE GREAT “CUSTOMER SERVICE” REPS FOR NEW YORK CITY

Production activities such as outdoor shoots and location scouting can often inconvenience local New Yorkers and interfere with their daily routine. As New Yorkers, program graduates can sympathize with these issues, and are trained to manage and mitigate local resistance to production and ensure minimal disruption. They also serve as champions for the Film & TV industry and have inspired other New Yorkers to work in this industry.

“I don’t like it when I’m on a movie set with 150 people, and only like 10 of them are really from New York. Where are the New Yorkers? A program like “Made in NY” allows New Yorkers to get work on a New York set.”

- Jose Guerrero, 2015 graduate, 2<sup>nd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director, member of the Directors Guild of America

# New York City and industry validators

*“ Since 2006, the “Made in NY” Production Assistant Training program has continued to build a strong diverse local talent pipeline for NYC’s film and television production industry. The success of the program has set the standard and framework for other training programs in the creative sectors to increase opportunities for New Yorkers and encourage investment in the vibrant creative economy that defines New York City as a global capital. ”*

*- Anne del Castillo, Commissioner,  
NYC Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment*

*“ On location filming is hard work which requires precision and seamless coordination, and for someone to already know how to do that before their first day, use the walkie talkie, know the lingo, know what the various departments are – that’s very beneficial for employers in the industry. ”*

*- Jennifer Lenihan, Assistant Commissioner,  
NYC Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment*

*“ The “Made in NY” Program is a viable resource for moving quickly in the hiring process. All graduates come out very well trained with good resumes and interview skills. You can tell the difference based on their interview – their resumes are good, they’re on time for the interview, and well-prepped. ”*

*- Lynn Powers, Assistant Unit  
Production Manager, The Good Fight*

*“ As the executive producer, I try to build out a diverse workforce on my set. Every year I work to hire production staff from the “Made in NY” program, which often helps staff move up the ladder in film production. ”*

*- Laura Benson, Executive Producer, The Blacklist*

*“ I have interviewed and hired “Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates as Office PAs. They were wonderfully trained and extremely talented. ”*

*- Leslie Gyson, Unit Production Manager*

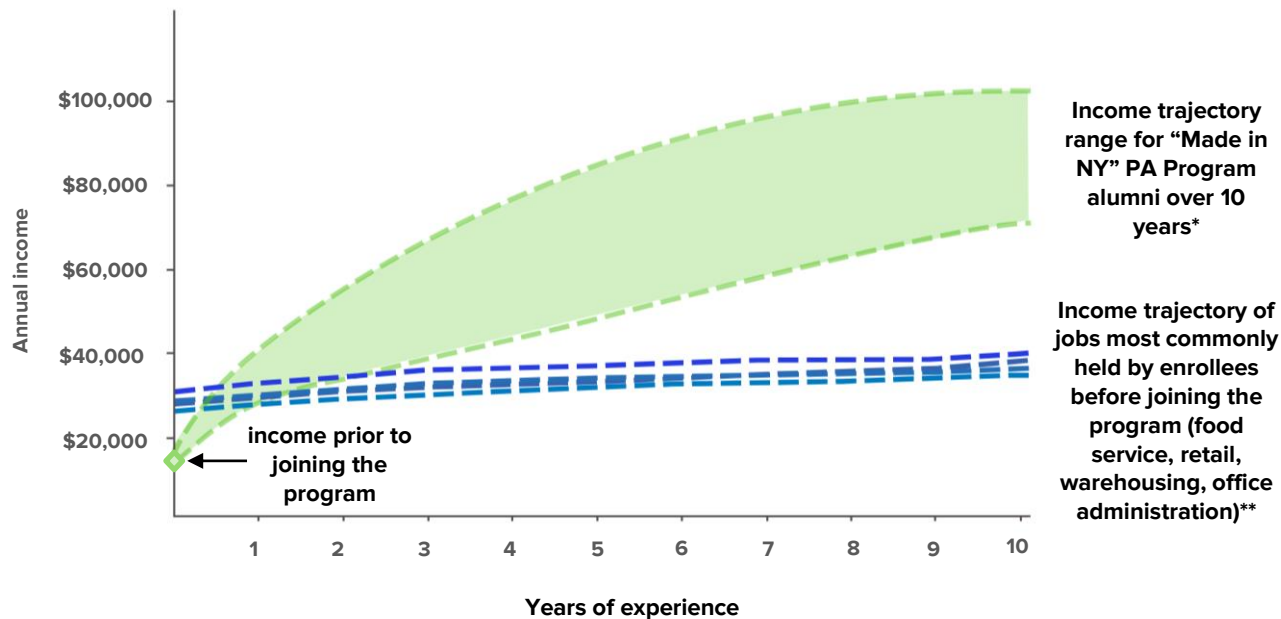
#### 04. Quantifying the value of the program



# Comparing income trajectories

Through surveys and interviews conducted with past graduates and employers, it is clear that without the opportunities provided by the “Made in NY” PA Training Program, graduates would not have access to a career in the Film & TV industry that offers substantial increases in income as they move up.

The chart on the right illustrates the income earned by “Made in NY” PAs as they progress in their career (based on income data collected through the survey), compared to income trajectories for jobs that were most commonly held by “Made in NY” PAs prior to joining the program (and do not have high education requirements).



\*Source: Brooklyn Workforce Innovations database, survey responses (see appendix for methodology notes)

\*\*Source: EMSI



# Return on investment

The average cost to BWI for one enrollee is roughly \$5,600 (this includes expenses incurred for outreach, recruitment, training and post-placement support). Based on the analysis of data collected from the surveys and interviews, on average, a graduate will earn roughly \$100,800 more (in present value terms over five years) than the same graduate would earn if he or she did not enroll in the program (and continued to work in lower-wage jobs).

Hence, the Return on Investment for the “Made in NY” PA Training Program is 18x. Interpreted differently, for every \$1,000 invested in BWI for the training program, the benefit incurred by graduates in terms of increased income earned by graduates over 5 years of their career is \$18,000 (in present value terms).

“*The training program opened doors for me in a way I never thought was possible. Coming from a low-income immigrant family I never imagined to be working in the industry I dreamt about when I was a child.*”

- Daisy Zumba, 2022 graduate, Office PA

**“Made in NY” PA  
Training Program  
Return on Investment**

**18x**

## 05. Diversifying the Industry Workforce



# Growing opportunity to diversify the Film & TV workforce

The Film & TV industry is expanding globally, spurring competition between cities to capture the benefits of a growing sector. Each locality offers unique opportunities to the industry; NY has a rich history in supporting independent films, LA has supported tentpole productions, while Atlanta, Vancouver, and Chicago offer competitive incentives and growing employment base. Incentives like tax credits, access to prime locations, ease of permitting, favorable weather, new sound stages, and cross-industry partnerships are offered but a key aspect to the competitiveness is a local and well-trained workforce.

In recent years, the industry has made a commitment to showcase more diversity on-screen but the same trend is not seen behind the camera.

As more cities and states establish Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) incentives for production, and the studios and streamers expand their own DEI programs, a localized workforce training program can offer ready-to-go partnerships that satisfy these emerging industry demands. It is also important to note that while productions can bring in workers from afar, it is far better and more cost effective to hire locally.

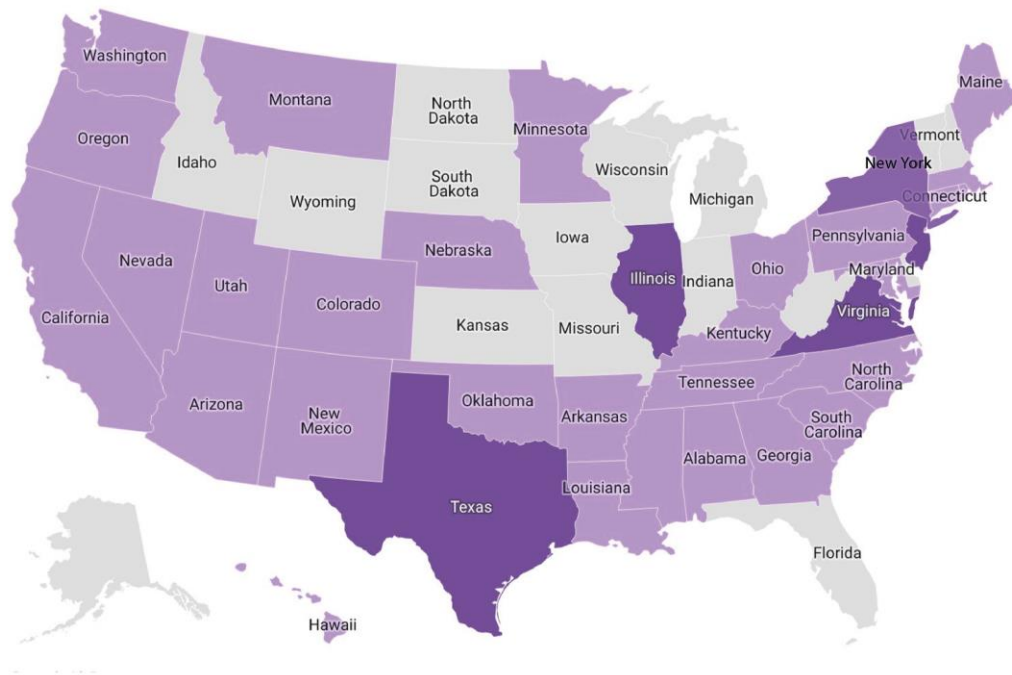
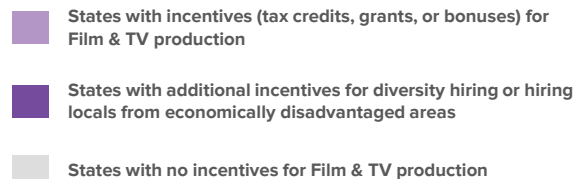
The BWI program and other peer training initiatives enable cities to achieve a robust local Film & TV workforce that directs the benefits of industry growth to residents and cities themselves, keeping the job, wage and tax benefits local.

## DEI incentive examples in the Film & TV industry across the country

- **New York State** will require NYS Film Production tax credit applicants to file workforce diversity plans.
- **New Jersey** offers an additional tax incentive (2% or 4%) to productions that meet certain diversity criteria.
- **Illinois** offers an additional 15% bonus incentive if productions hire from areas where the unemployment rate is at least 150% of the state's unemployment.
- **Virginia** and **Texas** have tax incentives for filming in economically disadvantaged areas.
- **California** plans to add diversity rules to its existing Film & TV tax incentive.

# Expanding diversity training programs across the country

The Film & TV industry has experienced robust growth across the country, and a large number of states provide financial benefits to productions that film in those states. A small number of states also specifically provide additional incentives to hire crews from minority and low-income communities. As such, there is immense potential to develop workforce training programs across the country and ensure the benefits of the industry's growth is experienced equitably.



Source: Wrapbook, Film Industry Tax Incentives: State-by-State (2022)





“We need more programs like this to get more people like me to have more opportunities. If everyone were given equal opportunity, then we wouldn't need programs like that to begin with.”

*- Brian Joseph, 2010 graduate, Sound Mixer, member of Local 52*




## 06. Appendix





# Study methodology overview



As part of the study, Buro Happold developed and administered an extensive survey to all past graduates to gather a range of data including demographics, income (before and after the program), current role, experience working in the industry, and feedback for BWI. The team received more than 240 responses, which formed the basis of most of the qualitative and quantitative analysis of this report.

Buro Happold also conducted multiple interviews with past graduates, employers within the industry who have hired PAs from the program, NYC's Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, and union representatives to contextualize the findings from the survey and gain a nuanced understanding of the program and its impact from the perspective of a range of stakeholders.

# Data sources and assumptions for income growth analysis

A number of data sources were used to chart out the income trajectory for “Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates.

**Annual income prior to joining the program:** BWI collects data of the hourly wages and duration of work for enrollees for the year prior to joining the program. Buro Happold used this data for graduates from all annual training cohorts between 2019 and 2022 to estimate the average annual income of program enrollees before joining.

**Income 1 year after graduation:** BWI collects hourly wage data for graduates in the year after graduation. The survey provided insights on the average number of hours worked each week by graduates.

Buro Happold used this data for graduates from the cycles between 2019 and 2022 to estimate the average annual income in the year after graduation.

**Income 2 or more years after graduation:** The survey conducted by Buro Happold asked all respondents to include their estimated current annual incomes. The responses were from graduates across all the previous years (2006 to 2022), which helped plot the range of incomes that graduates earn against the years of experience in the Film & TV industry post-graduation. Data from respondents who graduated more than 10 years ago was insufficient for a robust analysis, and hence the income trajectory chart doesn’t go beyond year 10.


## **Income trajectories for other jobs:**

Buro Happold utilized data from EMSI, a platform that aggregates occupational wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This data source includes wages for various occupations based on years of experience of a worker. This data was used to plot the 10-year trajectory of income for the following jobs:

- Food preparation worker
- Fast food and counter workers
- Retail salesperson
- Office clerk
- Warehouse worker

These jobs were the most common occupations held by “Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates prior to joining the program (based on the survey responses), hence were selected for this analysis.

# Calculating the Program's Return on Investment (ROI)



## 1) Collecting and compiling income data.

Determining the average income of graduates for each year after graduation (from year 1 to 5) based on survey data.

## 2) Determining income of other professions.

Identify the most common occupations of graduates prior to joining the program and collect income trajectory data for the top 5 occupations from the EMSI (as identified on the page 47).

## 3) Adjusting both sets of income trajectories.

Making minor adjustments to the income trajectories to account for graduates who do drop out of the Film & TV industry within 2 years of graduating, and those that were unemployed prior to joining the program.



## 6) Determine Return on Investment.

Determine ROI by dividing the present value of graduates' incremental income by the average cost incurred by BWI of training on student.

## 5) Calculate present value.

Calculate the present value of the incremental income of the first 5 years (using a discount rate equivalent to the 10-year treasury yield).

## 4) Calculating incremental income of graduates.

Calculate the difference between the average income of graduates and the income trajectory of other occupations for each year (from year 1 to 5).

# Interviewees

Buro Happold would like to thank the following individuals for their insights and expert opinions leveraged in the report.

## **“Made in NY” PA Training Program graduates**

- Brian Joseph, Sound Mixer, 2010 graduate
- Ethan Silva, Assistant Locations Manager, 2017 graduate
- Jose Guerrero, 2<sup>nd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director, 2015 graduate
- Klarissa Jackson, Key 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director, 2015 graduate
- Myo Campbell, 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Camera, 2006 graduate
- Paradise Montanez, Assistant Locations Manager, 2015 graduate
- Veronica Mammina, Grip, 2021 graduate, former intern on “The Blacklist”

## **NYC, Film & TV industry and union representatives**

- Anne del Castillo, Commissioner, NYC Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment
- Chaim Kantor, Associate National Executive Director, Local 600
- Jennifer Lenihan, Assistant Commissioner, NYC Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment
- Laura Benson, Executive Producer
- Leslie Gyson, Unit Production Manager
- Lynn Powers, Assistant Unit Production Manager

## **Peer city and similar workforce program representatives**

- Cardellia Hunter, Director of Atlanta Mayor’s Office of Film and Entertainment
- Desiree Hadley, Press Officer, City of Newark
- Kwame Amoaku, Deputy Commissioner for Film, NYC Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment (and former Director of the Chicago Film Office)
- Sumi Parekh, Executive Director, Group Effort Initiative

# Contributors

Buro Happold would like to thank the following individuals for their support and contributions to this report.

The core team below was responsible for the analysis, research, and drafting of the report.

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