



APRIL 21, 2015

KAUFMAN ASTORIA STUDIOS HOSTS NYFTSA DURING FIRST NYC VISIT

New Organization Promotes and Supports Next Generation of

Homegrown Film Talent

Astoria, NY (April 21, 2015) — Kaufman Astoria Studios (KAS) announced today that it will host 14 film and television students from Ithaca College on Thursday, April 23rd who will be visiting New York City as part of a newly formed organization, the New York Film and Television Student Alliance (NYFTSA). NYFTSA was formed in part to foster relationships between film students throughout New York and leaders of New York's film/television production and post-production communities. This is the organization's inaugural trip to New York City.

"The film industry in New York supports thousands of jobs every year, and we're thrilled to offer these students a chance to get an inside, professional perspective on the opportunities that exist here," said **Hal Rosenbluth**, President and CEO of Kaufman Astoria Studios. "Thanks to the tax credits and the film friendly policies of the Cuomo administration, New York is busier now than it has ever been; these are exactly the kind of bright, talented young people we want to keep in New York here so the industry can continue to grow and thrive."

While visiting KAS, the NYFTSA students will meet with professionals from various productions, including the Netflix hit *Orange is the New Black*, which shoots at KAS.

"The successful launch of a statewide initiative like NYFTSA, run by and for the students themselves, is a testament to the kind of energy and enthusiasm found on campuses from Montauk Point to Niagara Falls," said **Gigi Semone**, Executive Director of the Governor's Office for Motion Picture and Television Development. "By bringing together students from four different regions of the state and, at the same time, introducing them to some of the most important leaders of New York's production community, we are helping them on this trip to build the vital connections and bridges that will enable them to continue to pursue their careers here in the state."

Built in 1920, KAS was the original home of *Paramount Pictures*, with over 100 silent films made on its sound stages. Today, top film, television, and digital on-demand series are made at the studio, including Best Picture Oscar winner *Birdman*, Amazon's *Alpha House*, and *Sesame Street*, which has filmed at Kaufman Astoria Studios since 1992. Recent TV and film productions include *Nurse Jackie*, *The Slap*, *Run All Night*, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, *Men in Black 3*, and *The Bourne Ultimatum*.

With the creation of this first chapter at Ithaca College, NYFTSA aims to bring together students from colleges and universities across New York State which offer majors or minors in film or television production and post-production. Their mission is twofold: to nurture homegrown talent by encouraging and supporting students who want to pursue their future careers in New York State; and to facilitate the entry of graduating students into the industry here by giving them contacts and connections with working professionals and organizations to which they otherwise wouldn't have access. The inter-campus cooperation of NYFTSA itself will foster relationships and a sense of shared identity that will serve student members well as they move forward to join the larger New York production community.

During the three-day itinerary set by the Governor's Office for Motion Picture and Television Development, in addition to visiting KAS, the NYFTSA students will participate in a roundtable with union and guild leaders at the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 52 soundstage/training facility in Queens; meet with a group of industry experts from the New York Production Alliance at the headquarters of McCann Erickson; and discuss insights on careers in post-production and visual effects/animation with principals at the Post Factory. They will also convene with fellow students from New York University, Hamilton College and SUNY Oswego to discuss the formation of more NYFTSA chapters at these and other campuses across New York State.

The students planned this trip to garner early and direct feedback from key industry stakeholders as they gear up for their official launch and statewide summit in Fall 2015. They will be learning first-hand what they should focus on as they continue putting together the building blocks for the statewide organization.

"We are so grateful the Governor's Film Office and to all the great organizations, companies and individuals from the New York community who have come out to support these students with so much of their time and energy," said **Chrissy Guest**, Assistant Professor of Television-Radio Program in the Roy H. Park School of Communications at Ithaca College. "It's amazing the level of support and assistance we're getting. This visit will clearly demonstrate to other schools that by working together through NYFTSA, New York's film and television students can have access to unique resources, share ideas, create collaborative programs, and expand their networking opportunities in so many invaluable ways."

NYFTSA's first elected President is **Elena DeLuccia**, currently in her junior year at Ithaca College. "As a film student from Upstate New York, getting involved with the formation of NYFTSA is proving to be one of the most exciting and rewarding choices I have ever made," she said. "Even before this trip, NYFTSA has been helping me meet and network with film/tv students on campuses in other regions all over the state. Now I am here meeting so many top professionals whose insight and advice I could never have gotten on my own. I'm proud of what we are accomplishing here, and I can't wait to help other students join in the future growth of NYFTSA chapters across the state."

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