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INNOVATIVE JOBS PROGRAM PROMOTES DIVERSITY IN FILM AND
Digital Media Workforce

On the eve of the 2020 Oscars, a first of its kind jobs program promoting diversity in the film and digital media workforce is now on its way to LA County due to a motion by Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Kuehl.

“The film and digital media landscape is changing at such an exponential rate that carving out pathways to careers in this area is absolutely necessary,” Ridley-Thomas said. “We are a diverse county, and developing our strongest advantage — our talent pool — will increase the range of narratives we share around the world while boosting the growing creative economy.”
The program “will help guarantee that Los Angeles’s film and digital media businesses remain highly competitive and reflect our diverse national and global audiences,” said Supervisor Kuehl.

According to the 2019 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, the direct employment generated by creative industries account for around 11 percent of total employment in Los Angeles County, and statewide in California, creative industries were responsible for 15 percent of total employment overall, in terms of direct and indirect employment. Los Angeles County accounts for 9 percent of film and digital media employment nationwide, generating roughly $141 billion in annual economic output and supporting 568,000 jobs, according to the report.

However, the people who fill those jobs don’t reflect the ethnic, racial and gender diversity of Los Angeles County because finding employment opportunities often relies on access to close-knit professional networks, according to Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Kuehl, who authored the motion.

The jobs program is just one component of the region’s growing creative economy and Supervisor Ridley-Thomas’ sustained commitment to developing a diverse creative workforce. A ten week endangered Arts Internship Program that had given hundreds of undergraduate college students the opportunity to work with a non-profit organization was restored through the action taken by the Board of Supervisors. In 2011, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas spoke to the cohort of arts interns.

“It made me proud to see an African American man in front of 75 future potential art leaders,” said Elena Muslar, one of the graduates of the LA County Arts Internship Program.

“There are so many transferable skills,” said Muslar of her internship experience.

Muslar is now the Associate Director of Creative Professions and Strategic Initiatives at Loyola Marymount University and was profiled in the video below.

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