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COC becoming a TV show filming hot spot

"Weeds" star Mary Louise-Parker was busted by a crooked security guard at College of the Canyons for possession of marijuana.

"CSI" stars have investigated brutal murders around the campus.

For the show "Chuck," a film crew blew up a car on a dirt lot near the University Center.

These are a few of the scenes that have been filmed at the community college as COC builds a reputation as one of the most filmed locations in Santa Clarita — earning the college about \$250,000 a year.

The film industry frequents COC because of its "anywhere in America" look, according to the city of Santa Clarita's film office.

Popular filming spots on the campus include Cougar Stadium, athletic fields and fixtures like Hasley Hall.

"The facilities offer a lot of different looks," said Robin Williams, assistant director of the civic center, who coordinates filming at the college.

As the newest building on the Valencia campus, the University Center has already become a popular site for filming.

Before any student stepped foot onto the brand new University Center atop College of the Canyons' main campus, production crews for at least six television shows and commercials had used it as a set.

During the 110,000-square-foot building's nearly two years of construction, crews from television shows "Chuck" and "NCIS" and teams for a Clorox commercial used the steel framework overlooking the Santa Clarita Valley as a backdrop.

The college charges anywhere from \$5,500 to \$6,000 a day for filming, and sees about 40 to 45 days of filming each year, Williams said.

The about \$250,000 a year goes directly to the college's general fund, he said.

In some instances, production companies will donate equipment or money to athletics, a way of saying "thank you" for allowing them to use fields.

"It goes right to them," Williams said.

Filming is scheduled so that it has the least impact on students and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

"The community has always supported filming," Williams said.

COC is often portrayed as a college or high school, but crews from shows like "NCIS" have designed sets to make COC look like the East Coast.

College of the Canyons is one of the "hallmark" locations in Santa Clarita, Economic Development Associate Jessica Freude said.

"It has become one of our signature schools out here," she said. "The school is so versatile."

That versatility means shows ranging from "Big Love," "House" and "Weeds" have shot at COC's 153-acre campus.

The growing Canyon Country campus also found a role in a music video for Toby Keith.

COC's constant construction and expansion projects keep the film industry interested.

"We keep building buildings so it gives me new locations to show," Williams joked.

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