

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact: Gail Ortiz
(661) 255-4314**

**CITY OF SANTA CLARITA FILM OFFICE TAKES TOP HONOR AS
LEADING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN THE STATE**

The City of Santa Clarita's Film Office was awarded the *Grand Prize* in the "*Economic Development Programs*" category as part of the California Association for Local Economic Development's (CALED) annual awards competition. State Assemblyman Juan Arambula and CALED CEO Wayne Schell presented the award to Assistant City Manager Ken Striplin and Film Associate Jason Crawford today at a luncheon in Monterey, California.

The City of Santa Clarita's Film Office competed state-wide for the award, which included 10 total finalists. Finalists included: the cities of Long Beach, Vista, Fresno, Riverside, Selma and Santa Rosa.

"The City of Santa Clarita's Film Office is consistently recognized as one of the finest in the state by private industry and other public organizations, but this is certainly one of the top honors we've received to date," said City of Santa Clarita Mayor Marsha McLean.

"Five years ago we recognized the need to develop a film office to help keep jobs and film work local, while growing the industry. And in just a few short years we've been able to create a model for a successful film program, an example that can be applied to a variety of industries in cities around the state," she commented.

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The City of Santa Clarita's Film Office was created in 2002 to help attract and retain the filming industry, including location filming and film-related businesses. The office currently issues permits for all location filming within the City ensuring that there is a minimal impact on residents and businesses, promotes the City as an ideal place for the film industry to do businesses, and promotes the Santa Clarita Valley as a great place for location filming.

Today, the film industry is responsible for more than \$16 million annually in direct economic impact to the Santa Clarita community and local businesses from location filming alone.

Runaway production has been a state-wide concern in California as an increasing number of productions and jobs have opted for more affordable locations like Louisiana, New Mexico and Vancouver that offer production incentives. To help combat this, the City of Santa Clarita has aggressively marketed the area's close proximity to Los Angeles and location within the "30-mile zone," an industry designation that keeps production costs to a minimum by not having to pay mileage and travel costs. Santa Clarita was also careful to make the location permitting process as simple as possible, while also ensuring that Santa Clarita offers the lowest permit fee in the area.

The City of Santa Clarita's film-friendly message is being heard loud and

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clear within the industry. The City is currently home to eight network shows including: Nickelodeon's "Zoey 101," HBO's "Deadwood," "Big Love," and "John from Cincinnati," CBS's "The Unit" and "NCIS" and FX's "Drive" and "The Riches."

"Santa Clarita has been a filming community for nearly a century and we're proud to welcome and support an industry that does so much for our businesses and residents," said Mayor McLean.

In addition to the Film Office program, Santa Clarita was also recognized for its *Economic Development "New Destination" marketing package*, which received an Award of Merit in the "Promotions" category.

CALED is the premier statewide professional economic development organization dedicated to advancing its members' ability to achieve excellence in delivering economic development services to their communities and business clients.

CALED supports its members through information, technical assistance, training, education, and research. Begun in 1980, CALED has grown to over 700 members, representing cities, counties, state and federal agencies, economic development corporations, and the private sector. CALED, through its own programs and through its management of the California Academy for Economic Development, provides professional training to economic development professionals. Supportive

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research includes data development and analysis, modeling, and policy analysis.

Specific projects focus on sustainable development, regional competition, financing, and technological support for economic development

For additional information please contact the City of Santa Clarita's Economic Development Office at (661) 255-4347.

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