

Film USA Film Commissioners at Cannes 2023



Alfred Cervantes
Executive Director
Houston Film
Commission

Alfred Cervantes, Executive Director of the Houston Film Commission and a native Houstonian, has worked in the film industry in various capacities since 1992. As a freelance crew member, some of the movies he has worked on are Reality Bites, The Chase, Jason's Lyric, Powder, and Apollo 13. His role with the film commission is to promote the greater City of Houston & Harris County area to film/TV/media producers, production executives and independent filmmakers, to scout locations, and to facilitate any production's local filming experience.



Houston Film Commission

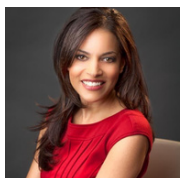


John Daugherty
Executive Director
Film Columbus

John Daugherty has been film commissioner in Columbus for eight years. He has worked even longer to foster growth in the Ohio film industry. His commitment to tirelessly expanding the Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit (OMPTC), providing resources for local filmmakers, holding scriptwriting competitions for teens, and being a champion for the local film industry proves his commitment to the city of Columbus and Ohio.

In 2017, John was instrumental in doubling the OMPTC from \$20 million to \$40 million. In 2023, he has been spearheading the push to expand the credit again and provide incentives for capital improvement projects, building out infrastructure across Ohio to spur even more growth in the industry.

John was a volunteer and an instrumental partner in forming the first annual Indigenous Filmmakers Lounge at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival. Recognized by the Sundance Institute as an official Sundance Event, the lounge provided a place for networking, speakers, and panels. Conversations centered around the need for the film industry to help those in underserved communities break into film and filmmaking.



Danette Tull
Production &
Communications
Manager
Nevada Film Office

Danette Tull is the Production & Communications Manager for the Nevada Film Office, a division of the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). The Nevada Film Office (NFO) markets the state's diverse locations and promotes Nevada as a premier destination for productions, including feature films, Television, Documentaries and many other forms of programming. Along with the GOED, the NFO strives to diversify the Nevada economy through the entertainment industry by driving business to local vendors, creating employment opportunities, developing young talent, and promoting tourism to Nevada through exposure on the big and small screen.

At the Nevada Film Office, Ms. Tull's work focuses primarily in the area of Public and Community relations; however, her passion for the local community keeps her involved in all aspects of the operations. Working closely with major productions, Danette directly has a hand in films, television series, and commercials featuring Las Vegas and Nevada, driving economic benefits, tourism and promoting our state. She works closely with student filmmakers and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Film School, College of Southern Nevada, and Nevada State College to ensure that the next generation of Nevada filmmakers has all the possible opportunities to become successful. Danette also recognizes the under-representation of women in the film industry and has worked closely with on campus groups such as UNLV Cinefemmes and serves as Executive Producer & Board Member for the Nevada Women's Film Festival and Advisory Board Member for the Cordillera International Film Festival.

She independently also founded the Nevada Film Group on Facebook, a social networking group with over 5K members and created the office's FILManthropy charitable giving initiative where members of the Nevada Film Community give back to local charities.

Danette received a Master's degree in Library Science from the University of North Texas, She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages from the University of California, Riverside. She is fluent in Spanish, Italian, Japanese and English and has lived and traveled abroad.

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Jeanette Stanton
Director
Oklahoma Film +
Music

Jeanette Stanton is the current Director of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office (OF+MO) and has served the agency in multiple roles since 2014. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, Stanton brings program management across public, non-profit, and private sectors as well as experience in governmental affairs supporting motion picture, television, music, and commercial production state-wide. Her previous experience in marketing and business development assists her in leading a team to build dynamic relationships and drive economic impact for film and music. During her time with OF+MO, Stanton has worked to support film & television production in Oklahoma from companies including NBC Universal, Apple, Lionsgate, Viacom CBS/Paramount, Disney/FX, A24, and many more. In addition to her work at OF+MO, Stanton has enjoyed previously volunteering with leadership and various professional development groups.



Allison Whitmer
Film Commissioner
Montana Film Office

For over 20 years, Allison has been involved in filmmaking – beginning with the Robert Redford classic, *The Horse Whisperer*. A member of the Directors Guild, Allison's filmography includes 30+ movies and numerous television and documentary credits. Notable credits include the adaptation of the Native American breakthrough novel, *Winter in the Blood*, penned by the acclaimed author James Welch; *Certain Women*, which brings the everyday stories of Montana women to life; and *Walking Out*, which captures the very real consequences of interacting with the Montana wilderness. Over her career she has worked with many clients in Print (Valentino, Italian Vogue), Sports (SLC Olympics), and Commercials (Ford, Toyota, Jaguar). She is a graduate of Montana State University with degrees in Media and Theatre Arts and Consumer Economics.

As the Montana Film Commissioner, Allison is an expert in the business aspects of filmmaking. She strives to market Montana as an Ultimate Location and prove the value of our industry through economic reporting, managing incentive programs, and advocating for Montana filmmakers.

Allison emanates the generational knowledge and spirit of her pioneer grandparents and possesses a love of open spaces. She actively promotes historic preservation and youth education, especially in her home area of Montana – the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.



Katie Pryor
Executive Director
Baton Rouge Film
Commission

Katie Patton Pryor is the Executive Director of the Baton Rouge Film Commission since appointed by Mayor Sharon Weston Broome in April 2017. She is responsible for promoting Baton Rouge worldwide as a location for film and television. Katie works to attract, retain, and grow the creative economy and industry support.

Katie is an adjunct professor at the Louisiana State University film program. Her university course focuses on industry trends, the social impact of screen storytelling, and the economic power of representation in film.

Katie is the co-founder of Film USA, a national 501(c)6 trade organization of state and regional film commissions across the USA. Katie serves on the Board of the Louisiana Film and Entertainment Association and was appointed by Gov. John Bel Edwards in 2022 to the Louisiana Naval War Memorial Commission.



Tony Armer
Film Commissioner
and Director
Creative Industries for
Dallas, TX

Tony Armer is the Film Commissioner and Director of Creative Industries for Dallas, TX. From 2014-2022 he was the Film Commissioner for St. Petersburg Clearwater, Florida. He is the Co-Founder of Film USA, a National non-profit organization and the first National Association of United States Film Commissions in the Country.

He is an Award Winning Filmmaker and the Founder of the internationally acclaimed Sunscreen Film Festival. Tony works closely with studios, producers, film distributors and sales agents to package films for sales and distribution at markets and festivals around the world.



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Jennifer Loren
Film Office Director
Cherokee Nation Film
Office

Jennifer Loren (Cherokee Nation) is an award-winning on-host, filmmaker and senior director of Cherokee Film. In this role she sets strategy and oversees Cherokee Film Productions, Cherokee Film Studios, Cherokee Film Commission and the Cherokee Film Institute.

Jennifer passionately leads a staff of nearly 30 content creators and other staff, whose mission is to protect and share the authentic Cherokee experience, culture and history, through film, tv and the metaverse and to increase the presence of Native Americans in every level of the film and tv industries.

With a background in broadcast television and investigative journalism, Jennifer began working for her tribe in 2014. She co-created, produces and hosts the Emmy-award winning docuseries "Osiyo, Voices of the Cherokee People," which airs on PBS stations and is now in its 8th season.

In 2019, Jennifer helped the Cherokee Nation create and roll out the first certified Native American film commission to open in the United States, the Cherokee Nation Film Office (CNFO). Under her leadership CNFO created and maintains unique, online talent, crew and consulting directories featuring Native American actors, extras, voice actors, crew, cultural experts and other industry resources.

In 2020, Jennifer oversaw the buildout of a state-of-the-art 27-thousand square foot virtual production soundstage in the Cherokee Nation, which is used to create Cherokee and other Native content as well as provide much-needed infrastructure for the growing Oklahoma film industry. With the stage's XR technology, the Cherokee Nation became the first tribe to create Native content in the metaverse.

In early 2022, under Jennifer's direction, the CNFO accomplished yet another groundbreaking feat by offering the first-ever tribal film incentive program which is a \$1 million annual cash rebate program for hiring Native Americans and filming in the Cherokee Nation reservation.

Also in 2022, Jennifer began expanding original content for Cherokee Nation, producing feature-length documentaries and introducing a film and tv development branch to bring more Cherokee stories to mainstream media.

In 2022, Jennifer was named the Oklahoma Film ICON award by the state's largest film festival deadCenter Film. She has also been named Woman of the Year by Tulsa YWCA and the Tulsa Mayor's Office; Woman of the Year by The Journal Record; as well as a Great Plains Distinguished Lecturer by Tulsa Press Club. In the past ten years, she has earned 17 Heartland Regional Emmy Awards for her work in journalism and documentary film. She is a wife and mother to four young girls. She serves on many local and regional Boards and commissions including but not limited to the Booker T Washington High School Foundation for Excellence and is currently the Chairwoman of the Oklahoma Motion Picture Alliance.



Tava Sofsky
Director of Cherokee
Film Commission
Cherokee Nation Film
Office

Tava Maloy Sofsky serves as director and film commissioner for the Cherokee Nation Film Office (CNFO). Sofsky left her post as director of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office in 2022 to join CNFO, which is based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. During her tenure serving the state for more than eight years, Sofsky oversaw Oklahoma's \$30 million annual film incentive program and helped expand the state's top-rate talent, crew base and infrastructure to include four Oklahoma Certified Sound Stages and more than 25 Film Friendly Certified Communities statewide. Under her leadership, OF+MO was named an Oklahoma Film ICON by deadCenter Film, and Sofsky's team was honored to receive the award for Outstanding Film Commission at the 2022 Location Managers Guild International Awards. Sofsky brings more than 23 years of industry-leading experience to her new role supporting the mission and strategic growth of CNFO and oversees the film incentive and educational and mentor programs, among other initiatives in the tribal film office. Sofsky, a citizen of Cherokee Nation and an Oklahoma native, began her film career in Los Angeles after earning a bachelor's degree in film and media studies from the University of Oklahoma. She has worked on major motion pictures, independent features, and several national commercials, establishing an impressive network of filmmakers and talent, including Doug Claybourne, Francis Ford Coppola, Steven Spielberg, Anthony Hopkins, John Travolta, Jennifer Lopez and many studio executives such as Jay Roewe (HBO), Mary Ann Hughes (Disney) and Michael Walbrecht (Warner Bros.).

CNFO is a branch of the umbrella organization Cherokee Film, led by Senior Director Jennifer Loren. Both Sofsky and Loren serve on the board of the Oklahoma Motion Picture Alliance.

Cherokee.Film – The mission of the Cherokee Nation Film Office is to increase the presence of Native Americans in every level of the film and television industries, while creating economic opportunities and jobs in the Cherokee Nation – a 14-county reservation area in northeast Oklahoma. CNFO also created and maintains unique, all-inclusive talent, crew and consulting online directories featuring Native American actors, extras, voice actors, crew, cultural experts, and other industry resources.

