

Mesa del Sol Welcomes Sony Pictures Imageworks

New Jobs for New Mexicans

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ALBUQUERQUE, NM—The developer of Mesa del Sol, Forest City Covington, NM, LLC, today welcomed Sony Pictures Imageworks, Inc., an Academy Award winning, state-of-the-art digital production studio. Sony will lease a 100,000 square foot, purpose built facility developed and built by Pacifica Ventures Albuquerque Studios, on the Albuquerque Studios lot at Mesa del Sol. Sony Pictures Imageworks, based in Culver City, CA, is dedicated to the art of visual effects production and character animation. Recent credits include *Polar Express* and the *Spider-Man* franchise, as well as the current project of *Beowulf*, *Surf's UP!* and *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*.

“We are extremely pleased to welcome Sony Pictures Imageworks to Mesa del Sol,” said Michael Daly, president of Forest City Covington. “This is just another way we are delivering on our promise to draw high-paying jobs to New Mexico.”

He said the first estimates are that Sony will have 100 employees. Daly credited Albuquerque Studios for attracting Sony Pictures Imageworks to the state. He also recognized the Forest City Covington team, as well as project partners the City of Albuquerque, the State of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico (UNM), for working so diligently to pursue this deal.

“Sony is a significant addition to our list of tenants and is even more a reflection of the commitment by our development partners to grow the availability of skilled crews and to develop new production facilities here in New Mexico, resulting in new jobs and significant economic development,” Daly asserted. “This move,” Daly said, “will create synergy for New Mexico's growing entertainment business.”

Responding to the Sony Pictures Imageworks announcement, Mark Lautman, chairman of the New Mexico Economic Development Commission and director of Economic Development for Mesa del Sol, said that this is a “classic economic development story in the sense that this announcement flows directly from a long-term strategic commitment of state and local government, our educational institutions and our business community to create a competitive platform for this industry.”

Imageworks President Tim Sarnoff, said in making the announcement, “New Mexico offers a combination of quality of life plus economic advantages that will help us as a company to manage both our cost and expand our capacity. We have the potential to

grow our business in the region, while at the same time maintaining strong ties with filmmakers as the amount of physical production continues to increase.”

Mesa del Sol Endows UNM Film School to Prepare Film and Digital Media Workforce

Earlier this year, the UNM Foundation established the Mesa del Sol Endowed Professorship in Film and Digital Media. “With the development of Albuquerque Studios and the availability of other adjacent sites at Mesa del Sol, New Mexico has the potential to become the site of a major industry cluster,” Daly said. “We've worked with the UNM Foundation to establish the Mesa del Sol Endowed Professorship in Film and Digital Media because a significant factor of the success of this media cluster is going to be a prepared workforce.”

The professorship was started with a \$750,000 endowment from Forest City Covington. The Mesa del Sol Professor will lead a multi-disciplinary program in Film and Digital Media at UNM, which will draw students from fine arts, engineering, arts and sciences, and other disciplines, allowing them to work in collaborative, real-world work teams.

Also noteworthy in its move to New Mexico, is the fact that Imageworks has chosen UNM to become a member of the Imageworks Professional Academic Excellence program (IPAX). IPAX was created by Imageworks to build stronger relationships with established academic programs and to nurture and grow future generations of digital talent. This membership dovetails with Mesa del Sol's recent commitment to fund education about the film industry within New Mexico.