

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Congresswoman Diane E. Watson Honored by WLAC for Her Key Role in Securing \$2.5 Million in Grants

Watson pledges continued support before entertainment industry leaders present

Over 100 entertainment industry leaders, Culver City officials, special guests, faculty and staff gathered at West Los Angeles College on Thursday, May 29 for a special reception to honor Congresswoman Diane E. Watson for her role in securing two grants totaling \$2.5 million to drive job training in the entertainment industry trades at WLAC.

Congresswoman Watson (D-33rd Dist.) is Chair of the House of Representatives' Congressional Entertainment Industry Caucus.

Representing entertainment trades professionals was guest speaker Michael F. Miller, Ninth International Vice President of the International Alliance of Theater and Stage Employees (IATSE). Other industry guests included Fox Entertainment Group executives Gerald Alcantar and Gretchen Lewotsky; Sony Pictures Entertainment executive Gerald Alcantar; Gary Gray, acclaimed film and music video director/producer; and Rodney Allen Rippy, former child star and National Marketing Director for Westwood One Radio Network.

The college's Fine Art's gallery "set" was "dressed" by Fox Entertainment Group with costumes and posters from blockbuster movies including Titanic, X-Men and Moulin Rouge. Hollywood Cinema Production Resources' students decorated the set with film lights, camera cranes and other movie trades equipment. The event was used as a hands-on training day for HCPR which partners with West to provide entertainment trades education.

"I am so inspired by the program here," said Watson who pledged her support to extend and expand West's program. "These young people are training for the kinds of jobs that will make them economically independent throughout their lives." She added, "These students will produce art work that goes around the globe," she added

Watson is a product of California Community Colleges and a long-time advocate for them. "I owe everything I am today to the community colleges," she said. "They gave us the platform we needed to go on to universities."

"We are also deeply grateful for Congresswoman Watson's steadfast support of West Los Angeles College," said West L.A. College President Dr. Mark W. Rocha. "Congresswoman Watson understands that a sound local economy is built on education and workforce training for the high-wage jobs of the 21st century."

Culver City-based West Los Angeles College is no stranger to the film business. The 80-acre campus was once MGM Studio's backlot and some accounts say scenes of Gone With the Wind were filmed on part of what is now college property. The college also enjoys strong support from Fox and Sony. Recently, Sony was instrumental in establishing a student intern program for West L.A. College students at the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

For more information on West Los Angeles College, visit www.wlaac.edu

For more information on the WLAC / HCPR training program, contact Laura Peterson at (310) 258-0123



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Event Photos from Reception Honoring Congresswoman Watson on May 29, 2008

For higher resolution images, contact Michelle Long-Coffee. Advertising/PR (310) 287-4597



LEFT: Michael F. Miller, Ninth International Vice President of IATSE; Congresswoman Diane E. Watson; and WLAC President Dr. Mark W. Rocha



RIGHT: WLAC President Dr. Mark W. Rocha; Congresswoman Diane E. Watson; and Gerald Alcantar, Vice President Diversity Development – Fox Entertainment Group, Inc.



LEFT: Michael F. Miller, Ninth International Vice President of IATSE



RIGHT: Behind speaker Congresswoman Diane E. Watson are Los Angeles Community College District Chancellor Dr. Marshall E. Drummond with Board of Trustees Angela Reddock and Georgia L. Mercer; and WLAC President Dr. Mark W. Rocha



LEFT: WLAC President Dr. Mark W. Rocha; Congresswoman Diane E. Watson; Keith Weaver, Vice President of Government Affairs at Sony Pictures Entertainment; Gary Gray, film and music video producer/director



RIGHT: Rodney Allen Rippy, child star and Ntl. Marketing Dir of Westwood Radio Network; Michael F. Miller, Ninth International Vice President of IATSE; Congresswoman Diane E. Watson; and Gary Gray, film and music video producer/director



LEFT: Hollywood CPR set lighting students hands-on training with Local 728 teacher Michael Katz



RIGHT: Titanic and X-Men costumes provided by Fox Entertainment Group, Inc. to add ambiance to the room