

METRO

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Huntington U to start talent pipeline for film industry

THE JOURNAL GAZETTE

Huntington University has received the first installment of a \$1 million, three-year grant to support a program that officials said will enhance northeast Indiana's film and media industry.

The \$443,000 payment from the Northeast Indiana Strategic Development Commission will allow the university to launch the Creating a Talent Pipeline initiative, officials announced Tuesday.

The investment will equip high school students with career-ready skills and expand access to higher education pathways, according to a news release.

The talent pipeline project offer early-entry college credit courses to area high school students in film, television and animation.

Students may earn credentialed certificates that count toward an undergraduate degree at Huntington University or other accredited institutions, the release said. The grant also will support Huntington's award-winning film capstone

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program, where college juniors and seniors collaborate with industry professionals on a feature-length film production.

Matthew Webb, assistant professor of film production, said the state also benefits when local students receive high-quality training.

"The (Creating a Talent Pipeline) initiative empowers students with hands-on learning opportunities and real industry connections that are essential in today's com-

petitive media landscape," he said in a statement. "By investing in young creatives now, we're helping shape the next generation of storytellers right here in Indiana."

The goal is for the initiative to serve about 200 students annually and includes dual-credit offerings at regional high schools, an expanded School of the Arts Summer Academy and increased mentorship from film professionals in Indiana.

The \$2.3 million project is funded by Huntington University and the Strategic Development Commission. Huntington University re-

mains committed to sustaining the program through ongoing institutional support and donor funding, the release said.

Huntington University is a liberal arts, Christian college offering graduate, undergraduate and online programs in more than 70 academic concentrations. In addition to its home campus in Huntington, the university offers a doctoral program in occupational therapy and an accelerated baccalaureate nursing program in Fort Wayne and an undergraduate and doctoral program location in Peoria, Arizona.