

Grafton Alumnus Brings Always Late TV Movie Awards Back to L&C

by Jan Dona

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GODFREY – When filmmaker Kevin Edwards began his education at Lewis and Clark Community College, his sights were set on a career in law enforcement. Little did he know, his passion for film would alter his trajectory.

Although his degree in Criminal Justice wasn't an obvious first step into the entertainment industry, his studies fueled an interest in human nature.

Edwards, who is from Grafton, believes the Sociology classes he took with L&C Associate Professor Jen Cline, along with his Criminal Justice courses, had a major impact on him by helping him develop an interest in other people's experiences.

"These classes opened my mind up to the rest of the world and taught me about the different perspectives of different people," he said. "Jen did an amazing job by opening me up to social issues and presenting them in a way that made me want to learn more."

Cline, who has become a staunch supporter of Edwards' efforts to bring the Always Late TV (ALTV) Movie Awards and Festival to L&C, describes him as a memorable student, as well as a professional and diplomatic leader.

"He was a confident student who was there to learn and excelled at class discussion, especially with being diplomatic in a class with controversial topics," she said. "He creates a fun atmosphere that gets everyone engaged and excited as he continues to grow this awards show."

Following high school, Edwards spent years working in professional wrestling as a manager, producer and writer, eventually deciding to follow his passion for filmmaking.

Edwards' foray into film started in 2012, shooting a small reality program called "Local Ambition," which was in production until 2021.

"It was a great way for me to learn the ins and outs of filmmaking, in front of the camera and behind it," he said. "After 'Local Ambition,' I jumped into making films."

Edwards has evolved into a full-time filmmaker, launching his own production company, Always Late TV, and making two award-winning short films, "Schmetterling" and "Bonnie Conway, P.I." which are streaming on several services including Tubi, Cineverse, Amazon Fire and Mometu, among others.

Following a long-held dream to create a film festival, he launched the Always Late TV Movie Awards, which was first held at Lewis and Clark Community College last spring.

"I had the right finances and creative inspiration to finally bring the Always Late TV Movie Awards to life," he said. "I used my connections in the film industry and brought the festival to Lewis and Clark in March 2023."

Edwards thinks it's important to support students in pursuit of their creative passions. He believes creative people provide inspiration and encouragement.

"The world needs creative people," he said. "Whenever someone is going through a rough time in their life, they turn to music, movies or TV shows to help them. Art makes life better."

So far, Edwards' career has had number highlights. Among them are the 11 awards his work has won, forming relationships with other industry professionals and having his films carried by several streaming services.

"Having your work reviewed by industry professionals and then having those professionals put their stamp of approval on it really helped show me I'm heading in the right direction," he said.

The 2024 Always Late TV Movie Awards and Festival will return to L&C, March 23-24. All festival events are free and open to the public.

For more information, call (618) 954-8342 or email alwayslatetv@yahoo.com. Visit the ALTV website at www.alwayslatetv.com.