

# Santa Clarita International Film Festival to Provide Work Opportunities for Creatives with Disabilities in Film Industry

*12 "Yes I Can" students were selected to work with the Santa Clarita International Film Festival, marking a significant win for the disability community."*

LOS ANGELES, UNITED STATES,  
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-- The [Santa Clarita International Film Festival](#)



(SCIFF), a thriving non-profit organization, has partnered with "[Yes I Can](#)" (YIC), an educational institution catering to students with disabilities, to pave the way for employment opportunities for special needs students in the entertainment industry. This collaboration aims to challenge preconceived notions and offer a platform for individuals on the autism spectrum to explore diverse roles within the world of film.

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*Bret Lieberman, Executive  
Director of YIC*

Bret Lieberman, the Executive Director of Yes I Can Unity Through Music & Education, Inc., shared his perspective on this groundbreaking partnership, saying, "Having our YIC students getting trained in camera work, video production, marketing with the SCIFF team has been an amazing experience. These young adults are going to be able to use these skills as they move forward in finding jobs in the entertainment industry. Getting to work on set, doing various jobs, and working on several projects at the same

time has really better prepared them for what it's like to work in the fast-paced gig production environment."

SCIFF's founder and executive director, Lisa deSouza, emphasized the deliberate approach taken to offer the YIC interns responsibilities that extend beyond traditional intern roles. Instead of mundane tasks like photocopying or fetching coffee, the students were entrusted with critical roles such as camera operations, project management, resource allocation, marketing, budgeting, artist interactions, and providing essential assessments of film submissions. This

approach aimed to dismantle stereotypes and provide a meaningful platform for the special needs community within the film industry.

DeSouza challenges the industry to see these individuals as more than just assistants but as potential talents with the ability to learn, grow, and contribute significantly to the filmmaking process. She witnessed firsthand how empowerment and confidence led these students to excel in their roles.

Impressed by the exceptional contributions of the twelve students, SCIFF is committed to maintaining its partnership with YIC. The festival plans to involve more students in future events, creating more opportunities for creative individuals with disabilities within the film industry.

In its third year, the Santa Clarita Film Festival has become a prestigious event that attracts filmmakers and audiences from around the world. This renowned festival provides a platform for a wide range of films, from full-length documentaries to concise short films. Additionally, the festival enriches the film community by providing workshops and seminars that aid filmmakers in refining their artistic skills and expertise.

One of the key highlights of this partnership is the SCIFF Production Bootcamp, which fully launched in March 2023. Unlike traditional internships that involve menial tasks, this program offers hands-on training in various aspects of film production. The students learned how to operate cameras, understand the rule of three, manage studio lighting versus field lighting, and operate sound equipment. They also gained valuable experience in production coordination and social media management. This program has been a resounding success, with students becoming well-rounded and efficient members of the production crew. It is worth noting that this initiative opens up opportunities for grants in the future, further supporting the program's growth and success.

The SCIFF Production Bootcamp is an ongoing program that starts with conference room training and speakers, providing a well-rounded education for aspiring filmmakers. This year, it took off as interns became actual production resources, gaining real-world experience in creating web content. This initiative is a significant part of SCIFF's commitment to helping young adult creatives with disabilities, setting it apart from many other festivals.

In addition to their involvement in production, the YIC interns are also part of the MySCV.Life web series, which showcases all things Santa Clarita. They form an essential behind-the-scenes production team, further highlighting their abilities and contributions to the film industry.

The partnership between SCIFF and Yes I Can is a testament to the power of inclusion and empowerment. By offering real-world training and opportunities, these organizations are paving the way for a more inclusive and diverse film industry. If these students continue to be hired, it will be a clear sign of the program's success and its potential to create lasting change in the world of cinema.

For more information about the Santa Clarita International Film Festival, please visit:  
<https://sciff.org/homeidex/>

To learn more about Yes I Can, follow this link: <https://www.yicunity.org/>

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