

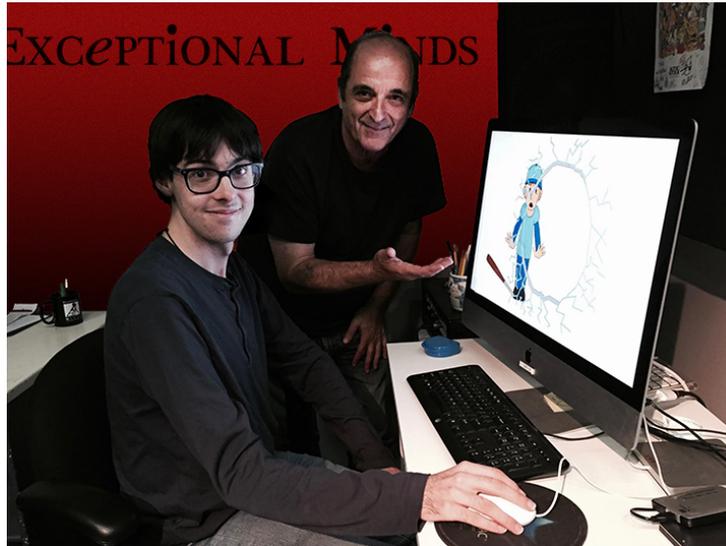
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EXCEPTIONAL MINDS

For Immediate Release

Hollywood Foreign Press Association Helps Fund Exceptional Minds Expansion

*Animation services added to working studio staffed by young professionals on
the autism spectrum*



Sherman Oaks, California – September 9, 2016 -- Exceptional Minds Studio officially opened a new animation unit today that is staffed by young professionals with autism, thanks in part to a generous grant provided by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) last month.

The new unit includes up to 18 workstations for producing professional animations for the entertainment industry and broadens the scope of the Exceptional Minds working studio, which provides paid work and experience for graduates of the Exceptional Minds vocational school for young adults with autism. “We are very fortunate to have the support of an amazing industry that has given these unique individuals the opportunity to become independent, productive adults,” says Exceptional Minds Executive Director Ernie Merlán.

Since opening its doors in January of 2014, Exceptional Minds Studio has completed visual effects projects for more than 50 productions, including *Game of Thrones*, *The Knick*, *X-Men*, *Avengers: Age of Ultron* and *Captain America: Civil War*

Now, with the addition of an animation unit funded in part by a \$25,000 grant by the HFPA as well as donations from an anonymous donor, Exceptional Minds is able to add animation to its list of contracted services that include rotoscope, vfx cleanup, green screen keying, simple compositing, object removal, tracking mark removal, and end title work.

The studio has already been contracted to provide animation services for a documentary as well as an educational cartoon on hygiene produced by writer/producer David Obst.

The HFPA grant helped fund new software and hardware for the animation unit and was part of nearly \$2.4 million in grants handed out by the HFPA last month at its annual Grants Banquet at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel.

This is the second year in a row that HFPA has donated to Exceptional Minds, the only vocational school and working studio to prepare and successfully place young men and women with autism in careers in the fields of animation and visual effects.

Currently, the majority of the nation's 3.5 million people with autism are unemployed or underemployed, according to government statistics. More than 500,000 U.S. children impacted by the disorder will enter adulthood during this decade, with one in 68 children to follow.

About Exceptional Minds (<http://www.exceptionalmindsstudio.org>): Exceptional Minds is a non-profit vocational center and working production studio for young adults on the autism spectrum. It was chartered in 2011 to provide the training necessary for creatively gifted individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who may not otherwise be able to make the transition from high school to careers. Exceptional Minds offers technical proficiency and work readiness training that prepares students for careers in graphic arts, animation, web design, visual effects and rotoscoping. Located in Sherman Oaks, California, Exceptional Minds is both an instructional learning facility and a working studio with hands-on student involvement in production projects, many for the film industry.

About the Hollywood Foreign Press Association: Founded in the 1940s during World War II, the HFPA was originally comprised of a handful of L.A.-based overseas journalists who sought to bridge the international community with Hollywood, and to provide distraction from the hardships of war through film. Seventy years later, members of the HFPA represent 56 countries with a combined readership of 250 million in some of the world's most respected publications. Each year, the organization holds the third most watched awards show on television, the Golden Globe® Awards, which has enabled the organization to donate more than \$25 million to entertainment-related charities and scholarship programs. For more information, please visit www.GoldenGlobes.com and follow us on Twitter (@GoldenGlobes) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/GoldenGlobes).

