

WNMU hosts premiere, watch party for 'The College Tour'

Written by gallupsun
Monday, 25 March 2024 19:38

SILVER CITY, N.M. — Western New Mexico University hosted the premiere of a special, WNMU-focused episode of the Amazon Prime TV series *The College Tour* on March 21. The episode was filmed entirely in southwestern New Mexico and showcases WNMU students, the campus, the town of Silver City, and the Gila National Forest. WNMU is the first university in New Mexico to be featured on the series.

The half-hour episode was the result of a months-long planning and production process that occurred last fall. It features the stories of ten WNMU students and alumni: Oscar Arteaga Romero, Stacey Bernstein, Megan Custer, Itzela Darkenwald, Natalee Drissell, Logan Eastman, Antonio Guerrero Ramos, Violeta “Blanca” Jaure, Brooke Rodgers and Ethan Sanchez. The episode also had three understudies: Dorrie Dennison, Keana Huerta and Ariana Medina.

Each of the students and alumni featured in the episode shared their WNMU stories, highlighting a variety of academic majors as well as student life and campus resources.

The premiere was preceded by an Emmy-style reception in the lobby of the Fine Arts Center Theatre. Photographers were on hand to capture photos of students walking the purple carpet.

WNMU President Dr. Joseph Shepard welcomed attendees to the event and recognized the students featured on the episode. The students, said Shepard, were the reason for the evening, a thought echoed by Director of Undergraduate Admissions and Recruitment Andrew Lunt, who helped produce the episode.

“One of the purposes of the premiere was to make the students feel appreciated and special,” Lunt said. “And I believe that was accomplished. It was professionally set up and looked incredible with true Hollywood style in mind. The students, staff and faculty, and community members that participated created a huge amount of energy, which was truly impressive.”

The episode is available online at *The College Tour* website, and it will air on Amazon Prime in May. In the meantime, the university is already finding the episode a useful tool in its recruitment efforts.

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“We have already started sharing clips from our episode with inquiries and applicants, and have received positive feedback that the clips have helped solidify their decision to choose WNMU,” Lunt said. “The clips are being used to help build excitement for those that have expressed interest.”

According to Lunt, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment has selected the clips to share with prospective students based on the students’ interests and needs. This is “helping recruitment by providing a tailored, customized and unique experience in promoting what WNMU has to offer them,” he said.

Lunt indicated that his office plans to use the episode even more extensively in the coming months.

“We plan to use the videos by sending the episode and clips to high school counselors and schools for showing students, use them in recruiting presentations, show them in open houses and orientations, and a myriad of other ways to help promote and create excitement surrounding WNMU,” he said.

