



**Department of English and Language Arts – Screen Writing and Animation (SWAN) Program**

Chair Atterbeary and Members of the  
House Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building, Room 131  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**HB432-SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

Morgan’s cinematic arts and sciences major named Screenwriting and Animation (SWAN) is among a half dozen or more public and private undergraduate and graduate film programs in the region. SWAN is a fast- growing interdisciplinary major in our Gilliam College of Liberal Arts. Among incoming majors are high school students from Maryland arts magnates, and students from regional community college programs with AA degrees awarded in related areas such as digital media arts.

The SWAN major provides a liberal arts context and emphasizes skillsets that are value-added for careers in film and TV, and across broad segments of our domestic and global economy. SWAN integrates computer science and the liberal arts and humanities and has over 100 majors. More demand for SWAN courses comes from students from across disciplines for applied skillsets to enhance their competitive edge for jobs. English Graduate Studies also converges SWAN into its MA and Ph.D. tracks in film and visual storytelling.

Internships and field experience are fundamental to the curriculum and pedagogy for all of these programs. To that end, the foundation of a strong tax incentive framework has expanded film and television production in Maryland and benefitted student internships and experiential learning on set. There is no better way for aspiring film and TV professionals to gain an understanding of the collaborative process of filmmaking than as production assistants with a view to the departments, units, and workflow of creative industry. Strong COVID protocols and practices have aided the past year of vigorous production activity in Maryland. SWAN students and alumni have worked in various capacities on HBO, Lifetime, Showtime, and Snapchat productions.

We find that our alumni moving forward in their careers in the film and TV industry on both coasts can trace their entry points in the profession back to Baltimore. Their experiences within the region on films and series were crucial to pave the way to their professional success. Without regional opportunities, these Morgan students and their counterparts at other local institutions would not have had a way forward in their careers without the great expense of travel and study away that most of our students cannot afford whether in New York or Atlanta, or even Virginia, not to mention Los Angeles.

The enhancement of our MD film tax incentive increases the possibilities for our state to become a hub for creative industry. This increases the potential for roads to film and TV careers to begin in Maryland and to return there and grow creative industry with great collateral benefit to the local economy and workforce Maryland.

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