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## **The New Mexico Film Office Announces "Walking with Herb" to film in New Mexico**

**Santa Fe, NM** - New Mexico Film Office Director Nick Maniatis announced today that the independent feature "Walking with Herb," produced by Optimism Entertainment, will begin principal photography in September through mid-October in Las Cruces and Artesia.

"In addition to the impressive economic impact, a vibrant and healthy film industry creates opportunity for New Mexicans to tell their own stories," said Film Office Director Nick Maniatis. "'Walking with Herb' features an impressive roster of homegrown talent. New Mexico's diverse landscapes, our depth of talent and infrastructure and our powerful film incentives are available to anyone with a good idea."

"Las Cruces is thrilled to have 'Walking with Herb' filming in our community," said Las Cruces Mayor Ken Miyagishima. "This is the latest film in a busy summer that continues to show why Las Cruces is a great place to film. We're very proud of our thriving independent filmmaking community, wonderful locations and full service film office."

The production will employ 52 New Mexico crew members, 25 New Mexico actors and approximately 581 New Mexico background talent.

The Optimism Entertainment film is directed by Las Cruces resident Ross Marks ("Homage," "Twilight of the Golds") and produced by Santa Fe native Brian Espinosa ("Phantom Halo," "Paranormalcy") and Mark Medoff ("Children of a Lesser God"). "Walking with Herb" is based on the book by Joe S. Bullock and was adapted for the screen by Academy Award Nominated New Mexico resident Mark Medoff. NMSU alumnus, Keagan Karnes has been hired to Line Produce. The film stars Edward James Olmos (currently starring in "MYANS," the "Sons of Anarchy" Spin-off for FX), George Lopez and Mary McDonnell ("Dances with Wolves," "Passion Fish").

"It's become our mission to create more film jobs and enhance the already thriving creative culture of New Mexico. As native New Mexicans, we're inspired to create content to showcase to the world all the beautiful landscapes and amazing talent we have in New Mexico. It's our home state and we plan to remind the entertainment industry how wonderful it is," said Brian Espinosa, Producer and CEO of Optimism Entertainment.

"Walking with Herb" tells the story of sixty-five-year-old Joe Amable-Amo, who is struggling with his faith as his three-year-old granddaughter and her father have just died. The former amateur golf champion is besieged by the malaise of encroaching older age, working as a bank executive, gearing up for retirement, deep concern for his wife's unanswered needs, his humanitarian daughter's survival, and a potentially lethal loss of faith. But, at his nadir, in his office one afternoon, a voice speaks to him via his computer monitor. What does a syncopated voice--claiming to be God Almighty--have in mind for Joe? An incredibly quirky man named Herb who's a museum of tattoos on a motorcycle.

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