

By Beverly Fortune

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HONORING LI.'S WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT

This column is dedicated to honoring 52 different Long Island women who make significant, unique and lasting contributions to their communities and workplaces.



Featured This Week:

**Debra
Markowitz**

Director

Nassau County Film Office

In a small office located in Eisenhower Park, a lone woman with a part-time intern is busy generating between \$40 million and \$50 million that will impact the Long Island economy and 85,000 people.

For 19 years, Debra Markowitz has been the director of the Nassau County Film Office. How did she get the job? She saw an opening in the commerce and industry department, put together her own proposal for a position and submitted it to the county executive. Obviously, this is a woman who knows how to get things done.

Location scouts looking to shoot an episode of *The Sopranos* in Nassau County must contact Debra. The filming at a private home on Long Island and on the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway of the soon-to-be-released movie *The Good Shepherd*, starring Angelina Jolie, Matt Damon and Robert De Niro, was overseen by Debra. Recent television shows shot in Nassau County include *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, *Extreme Makeover*, *Nanny 911* and *The Apprentice*. Movies set for release include *Bernard and Doris*, starring Susan Sarandon and Ralph Fiennes, and *Dedication*, starring Billy Crudup and Mandy Moore. Thankfully, Debra says, County Executive Tom Suozzi is a huge advocate of the film office. Debra credits Suozzi with securing the location for the Jack Black movie *The School of Rock*.

Does having your home used as a film

location sound interesting? That's also Debra's realm. Nassau County has just set up a new Web link where you can list your home in its database. And, in most cases, if your home is selected, you will be compensated. To list your house, go to <http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Filmcom/index.html>.

Debra is also the vice president/secretary of the Long Island Film/TV Foundation, which will hold its ninth annual International Film Expo from July 14 through 20 at the Bellmore Movies. More than 100 of the world's best short and feature-length independent films will be shown during the fest and winners will be chosen by audience ballot and a judging committee. Debra is the organizer of the star-studded celebrity gala that honors the winners of the expo. She also collaborates with the Hamptons and Stony Brook film festivals.

The film office is working on an exciting new event scheduled for November. The Long Island International Film Expo's Grassroots Film Gallery will present short and feature-length films shot at least partially on Long Island by LI-based filmmakers.

A single mother of two children ages 14 and 18, Debra has also written three novels, does freelance writing for magazines and provides written content for websites. She also holds a brown belt in Goju karate and has been a yoga student for three years. ❶

For more information about the Nassau County Film Office, call 516-572-0012, or you can e-mail Debra at debfilm@aol.com.

If you know a super woman who deserves good Fortune—and a profile—e-mail your nominations to Beverly at bfortune@longislandpress.com.