



“There’s a lot of film schools, but this is the only program that has this kind of pathway... if you want to work on the big Hollywood projects, you need to be in the union.”

ROCKY FORD, Motion Picture and Television Production Crafts professor has worn many hats during his 35 years in Hollywood.

“I’ve become a Hollywood key grip, and I joined the union, and so teaching is my next phase,” he said.

Ford has always had an affinity for still photos and went to Texas A&M University-Commerce to major in photography. After earning his bachelor’s, he worked for still photographers in Dallas and Atlanta before getting involved in a few film projects.

“I decided that I really liked that,” he said. “One thing led to another, and I found myself working on TV commercials and movies and TV shows. Then I met some people from LA and that brought me out to Hollywood.”

Ford has worked on more than 100 films and TV shows including the Academy-Award winning film *Forrest Gump*, as well as *RoboCop*, *Bad Santa 2*, *The Mindy Project* and *Everybody Hates Chris*. His extensive work also includes hundreds of commercials and music videos. As a key grip, Ford shapes the light and moves the camera while also building special rigs for lighting, camera, fx and set dressing.

Teaching at West Los Angeles College appealed to him because it is the only program that has a pathway to enter the unions to work on motion pictures and in television, Ford explained. West’s unique program provides well-rounded experience in set etiquette and protocol, lighting and camera work among other skills.



“There’s a lot of film schools, but this is the only program that has this kind of pathway,” he said. “And if you want to work on the big Hollywood projects, you need to be in the union.”

While being an instructor at a school is new to Ford, he has actually been teaching throughout his career.

“I have a crew of guys that I’m always directing and teaching,” he said. “So I teach in that way when I’m teaching the kids. They’re like my crew and the guys that are working for me, so I teach them the same way.”