

KCSN Airs Advice for Showbiz Jobs

Radio program pairs hopeful students with Hollywood mentors.

When tasked with developing content for California State University - Northridge's public radio station KCSN, Professor Benjamin Davis was overwhelmed with ideas. But one kept coming back to him: A program offering actionable insights about how to succeed in show business, geared toward the ethnic minorities and other populations that had long struggled to break through Hollywood's gates.

"There was this huge storm taking place in my head," recalled Davis, a former radio and television broadcaster who began his career as a receptionist at NPR. "I thought about all the controversies going on in the entertainment industry - 'Oscar's So White,' among others - and about how hard it is for (minority) students to get into that workforce."

He had noticed that many of the aspiring scriptwriters, producers and composers he spoke with at CSUN were facing the challenging road ahead without the guidance of an industry veteran. While



Standby: Composer Kurt Farquhar with 'The Hustle' Producer Eunetta T. Boone.

it would be impossible to pair each student with a personal mentor, a radio show featuring guests who had weathered the entertainment world themselves might be an effective way to bridge the gap.

"I would ask students if they had any contacts, a mentor, anyone they could look up to who had done this before," Davis said. "A lot of them would get this blank look on their face - they had no idea what I was talking about."

Thus, "The Hustle" was

born. Knowing the show would require a host who had lived the experience of "making it" in Hollywood, Davis enlisted the help of screenwriter and producer **Eunetta T. Boone**, whose credits include television shows "The Fresh Prince of Bel Air" and "Roc." For her first show on Feb. 5, Boone chatted with Hollywood composer **Kurt Farquhar** who shared wisdom picked up along the course of his career. Later, a music student joined the pair.

Boone plans to have a

different guest and student on "The Hustle" every week.

For Davis, the real potential of the show lies in its ability to offer tips that can diversify the entertainment industry more quickly than Hollywood's initiatives alone.

"It's one thing to say we'll have a committee or task force on diversity, but it's another thing to do something right away that will help fill that diversity pipeline in Hollywood," he said.

- Helen Floersh

The Number

Economist **Jeff Meyers** delivered a report about Porter Ranch real estate on Feb. 2, in which he noted that the highest-priced homes in the neighborhood are selling for more than \$2 million.

The president of **Meyers Research** in Beverly Hills noted that the updraft in real estate prices is evidence that the market has overcome any lingering effects of the nearby Aliso Canyon gas leak, and it appears the future looks even clearer.

"That's obviously a milestone to be selling houses north of \$2 million," Meyers told the Business Journal. "Despite the continued discussion (about the gas leak), it's getting further and further behind us."

The event was sponsored by **Toll Brothers**, the Horsham, Penn.-based home-builder that has several projects in Porter Ranch. The most recent is Westcliffe, where Meyers' presentation was given in a model home.

Meyers said Porter Ranch has emerged as the nearest enclave where luxury homes can be built in Los Angeles County. Land is plentiful in Santa Clarita and the Antelope Valley, but distance to work poses a prob-

lem, while Calabasas and Westlake Village - which until recently had vacant land - are now built out.

"This is one of the closer-in communities where you can buy a brand-new

\$2 Million+

Top home prices in Porter Ranch

luxury home," Meyers said. "I wouldn't have said that a decade ago."

The other option for a new home, Meyer explained, are infill developments, which often take advantage of small-lot zoning ordinances. These can have street frontage as narrow as 20 feet, and only a 6-inch gap between houses.

Toll Brothers' Westcliffe development features homes in the \$1.3 million to \$1.6 million range. The company also has the Avila collection with homes between \$900,000 and \$1 million, a price point Meyers sees as ideal in L.A.

"These are mostly move-up luxury homes, underneath \$1 million, and they should find a receptive market for this product line," he said.

- Joel Russell



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