



Lionsgate Studio developer discusses vision for making Yonkers "Hollywood on Hudson"

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Shown are: Robert Halmi of Great Point Studios with BCW president and CEO Marsha Gordon.

New Rochelle, NY In an informative conversation with Business Council of Westchester (BCW) president and CEO Marsha Gordon, Great Point Studios president and CEO Robert Halmi discussed his vision for bringing Lionsgate Studios to Yonkers and his plans for transforming Yonkers into "Hollywood on Hudson". Halmi was the special guest at the BCW's annual dinner held at the VIP Country Club, attended by more than 500 BCW members and guests.

Halmi, a Westchester County native, explained that he chose Yonkers to build three film and television production studio campuses—one of which houses Lionsgate—because the city lies within a critical 25-mile radius from Manhattan. Halmi said that he sought unusual spaces like the former Otis Elevator Building and the former Rising Ground residential school.

“We wanted someplace unique. Some of the studios are old warehouses and they really don’t look that great,” said Halmi, who called the former Otis Elevator Building spectacular. “We have these beautiful old buildings incorporated into these modern facilities. It’s a seamless transfer and it’s really something that I could never have dreamed of.”

By the completion of construction in December 2023, the \$500 million Great Point Studios in Yonkers will be the largest media production facility in the Northeast, and it will consist of three locations. The location in downtown Yonkers on Wells Ave. will be the headquarters and primary production center. The South Campus on Hawthorne Ave. will house the largest LED screen stage in the United States. The North Campus on North Broadway will be leased by Mediapro, a European film and television production company that also occupies space at the Wells Ave. location.

Great Point Studios’ South Campus will also house a new media high school for the Yonkers Public Schools. The new school will open unprecedented opportunities for Yonkers youth interested in media careers at a time of explosive content production due to online streaming. Halmi said that students who graduate from this high school will possess valuable skills that will position them for higher-wage jobs with media production companies.

Halmi had a long and distinguished career in media before opening Great Point Studios. “As the president and CEO of Hallmark Entertainment, you transformed the business from a small production company into one of the first modern studios with production, distribution, and broadcast all under one umbrella,” said Gordon, who moderated Wednesday’s conversation with Halmi. “Now you have embarked on bringing to life your vision of creating major new film and television production facilities across the US and abroad.”

The three campuses are expected to create almost 2,000 jobs when fully operational. The downtown Yonkers facility currently employs 400 people, with 100 of them Westchester County residents. Gordon called the new campuses an economic development game changer for Yonkers, Westchester County and New York.

Halmi credited local officials for their support in making Great Point Studios a reality. “We couldn’t get more support than partnering with mayor Mike Spano,” said Halmi. “He understands his city. He understands what industry will work there. He really knows what’s important to what we’re trying to establish and really helped pave the way. Without him, we never would have built this studio.”