

By Cheryl V. Jackson
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Illinois cashes in on Caped Crusader

Batman might be a vigilante, but there's little doubt he's a hero to the state's film industry.

Filming of the latest Hollywood movie based on the Caped Crusader, "The Dark Knight," generated about \$40 million in revenue in Illinois, making it the largest movie made in the state, according to the Illinois Film Office. It created about 4,500 jobs and paid about \$17.5 million in wages.

The film helped the state hit an all-time high of \$155 million in movie-making revenue for 2007. About 26,000 movie industry-related jobs were created last year, twice that logged in 2006, and that's just super, said Illinois Film Office Managing Director Betsy Steinberg.

The expected blockbuster had its Chicago premiere Wednesday night and opens elsewhere at midnight tonight.

Look for the Old Post Office, Lower Wacker Drive, Hotel 71, the IBM Building, Lincoln Park and Navy Pier.

This year, "Public Enemies," starring Johnny Depp, and "The Informant," with Matt Damon, were filmed in Chicago.