

NHMC To Honor Some Of Hollywood's Best Latino Talent

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John Leguizamo, Rosario Dawson and Kenny Ortega among Impact Award Recipients

February 5, 2009 - Pasadena, CA. – The stars will be particularly bright in Beverly Hills on Friday, February 20th when the National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC) presents its 12th Annual Impact Awards Gala at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. The annual fete, hosted by the NHMC, one of the country's foremost Latino media advocacy and civil rights organizations, celebrates outstanding theatrical, television and film performances by Latinos both in front and back of camera and this year's honorees are among Hollywood's most sought after stars. "Among our outstanding honorees this year, we are extremely pleased to honor acclaimed director/choreographer, Kenny Ortega, the beautiful and talented Rosario Dawson and the amazing actor-comedian, John Leguizamo," beamed Alex Nogales, NHMC President & CEO, "They will join past NHMC Impact Award recipients Edward James Olmos, America Ferrera, Eva Longoria and George Lopez, to name just a few."

Proving that it is possible to be taken seriously both as a raunchy comic and a serious dramatic actor, John Leguizamo will be on hand to receive the Impact Award for Outstanding Performance in a Motion Picture for his work in the comedy "Nothing Like the Holidays," as Mauricio Rodriguez the oldest brother of a Puerto Rican family living in West Chicago. And another Impact Award for Outstanding Performance in a Motion Picture will go to Rosario Dawson, best known to her legion of fans for her work in such films as Quentin Tarantino's "Grindhouse" and most recently with Will Smith in "Seven Pounds. The native New Yorker will also be recognized for her voter registration and community activism with her non-profit organization "Voto Latino." The Impact Award for Outstanding Director for a Motion Picture goes to Emmy winning director/choreographer, Kenny Ortega, for his critically acclaimed work on the Disney Channel Original Movie, "High School Musical 2." Born and raised in

California, Ortega admits that his “first love” has always been the theatre and attributes much of his understanding of choreography for the camera to dancing legend and his mentor, Gene Kelly.

Impact Awards will also be presented to: Wilmer Valderrama for his outstanding work in voicing the title role on the hit Disney Channel animated series, “Handy Manny;” to award-winning actress, Lauren Velez, for her convincing portrayal as Lt. Maria LaGuerta on the hit Showtime drama series “Dexter;” to Emmy nominated actor, Freddy Rodriguez, for his role in “Nothing Like the Holidays” as youngest brother, Jesse, who has just returned from Iraq after being wounded in combat; and an Impact Award for Outstanding Marketing in Film and Television will be presented to Santiago Pozo, CEO of Arenas, one of the leading Hispanic entertainment marketing company and the Hispanic AOR for Paramount Pictures.

For more information on the NHMC Impact Awards Gala or for sponsorship opportunities or tickets to the February 20th event, please go to www.nhmc.org or call (626) 792-6462.

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