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Nominees for 26th Annual Imagen Awards Announced; Actress Maria Canals-Barrera (“Wizards of Waverly Place,” “Larry Crowne”) to Host Black-Tie Gala Event

Latino Advocacy Organization Promotes More Opportunities for Latinos in Entertainment; Awards Event Scheduled for Friday Evening, August 12th, at The Beverly Hilton Hotel International Ballroom

LOS ANGELES, CA - The Imagen Foundation has announced the nominees for the 26th Annual Imagen (*Spanish for “image”*) Awards, honoring positive portrayals of Latinos and Latino cultures in entertainment. The awards will be presented at a gala black-tie dinner on Friday evening, August 12th, at the Beverly Hilton Hotel International Ballroom.

On hand for the announcement at the Foundation’s headquarters in Pasadena was actress Maria Canals-Barrera, star of Disney Channel’s Emmy award-winning “Wizards of Waverly Place,” who has been chosen to host the annual awards gala. The actress, who plays Selena Gomez’s mother in the series, won an Imagen Award last year in the category of “Best Supporting Actress – Television” for her work in “Wizards of Waverly Place: The Movie.” Her latest role, which has her working alongside Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts, is in Universal Pictures’ upcoming feature “Larry Crowne,” opening this Friday, July 1st. “We are thrilled to have Maria Canals-Barrera serve as host of this year’s Imagen Awards. She is an extremely talented actress who is truly representative of our mission of promoting more positive Latino roles in front of the camera, as well as more opportunities for Latinos as a whole throughout all aspects of the entertainment industry,” said Helen Hernandez, president and founder of The Imagen Foundation.

Winners will be selected by an independent panel of entertainment industry executives and Latino community leaders and announced at the awards gala. Following are the finalists for

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this year's Imagen Awards in their respective categories; please note that there were no nominees for Best Feature Film Director but a new category, Best Young Actress/Television, was added:

Best Primetime Television Program or Movie-of-the-Week: *Law & Order: Los Angeles* (NBC); *Lies in Plain Sight* (Lifetime Television); *Off The Map* (ABC); *Latin Billboards Music Awards* (Telemundo); *The Glades* (A&E); **Best Actor/Television:** Freddy Rodriguez, *CHAOS* (CBS); James Roday, *Psych* (USA); Jon Seda, *The Pacific* (HBO); Victor Rasuk, *How to Make It in America* (HBO); **Best Actress/Television:** Cote de Pablo, *NCIS* (CBS); Martha Higareda, *Lies in Plain Sight* (Lifetime Television); Alana de la Garza, *Law & Order: Los Angeles* (NBC); Rosie Perez, *Lies in Plain Sight* (Lifetime Television); **Best Supporting Actor/Television:** Carlos Gómez, *The Glades* (A&E); Raymond Cruz, *The Closer* (TNT); Marc Anthony, *HawthoRNe* (TNT); Clifton Collins Jr., *The Event* (NBC); Luis Jose Lopez, *Hallmark Hall of Fame Presents "Beyond the Blackboard"* (CBS); Jonathan Castellanos, *Off The Map* (ABC); **Best Supporting Actress/Television:** Eva la Rue, *CSI: Miami* (CBS); Jenny Gago, *Southland* (TNT); Lisa Vidal, *The Event* (NBC); Diana Maria Riva, *The Good Guys* (Fox); Maria Canals-Barrera, *Wizards of Waverly Place* (Disney Channel); **Best Young Actress/Television:** Selena Gomez, *Wizards of Waverly Place* (Disney Channel); Bella Thorne, *Shake It Up* (Disney Channel); Victoria Justice, *Victorious* (Nickelodeon); Yvette Gonzalez-Nacer, *The Fresh Beat Band* (Nickelodeon); **Best Children's Programming:** *Dora The Explorer* (Nickelodeon); *Handy Manny* (Disney Channel); *Go Diego, Go!* (Nickelodeon); *El Perro y El Gato* (HBO); **Best Documentary/Film or Television:** *Sins of My Father* (Red Creek Prods.); *The Fence* (La Barda) (HBO); *mun2 News Special: The New America* (mun2); *The Longoria Affair* (Latino Public Broadcasting); *Monica and David* (HBO); **Best National Informational Program:** *Black in Latin America with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* (PBS); *Maria Hinojosa: One-on-One* (WGBH); *LatiNation* (LATV); *American Latino TV* (LATV); **Best Local Informational Program:** *Everglades Aventura y Diversion* (Univision 23); *SoCal Connected* (KCET); *Eye on Our Community* (KCBS-TV); *Vista L.A.* (KABC-TV); **Best On-Air Advertising:** *Dora 10th Anniversary Campaign* (Nickelodeon); *"Es el Momento"* Univision PSA (República/Univision); *Padres Heroes* (NBCUniversal Telemundo52-LA); *FOX Deportes "All Leagues"* (FOX

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Deportes); **Best Variety or Reality Show:** *Lopez Tonight* (TBS); *Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel* (HBO); *I Love Jenni* (mun2); *Mexican Made Easy* (Food Network); *Hammer Heads* (HGTV); **Best Feature Film:** *Gun Hill Road* (Motion Film Group/SimonSays Ent.); *Tropico de Sangre* (Maya Entertainment); *Spoken Word* (New Mexico Media Partners/Luminaria Films); **Best Actor/Feature Film:** Esai Morales, *Gun Hill Road* (Motion Film Group/SimonSays Ent.); Rubén Blades, *Spoken Word* (New Mexico Media Partners/Luminaria Films); Kuno Becker, *Spoken Word* (New Mexico Media Partners/Luminaria Films); Eugenio Derbez, *No Eres Tú So Yo* (Pantelion Films/Rio Negro); **Best Actress/Feature Film:** Judy Reyes, *Gun Hill Road* (Motion Film Group/SimonSays Ent.); Michelle Rodriguez, *Tropico de Sangre* (Maya Entertainment); Penélope Cruz, *A Matador's Mistress* (Viva Pictures/Iberoamericana Films Producción); Alexa Vega, *From Prada to Nada* (Pantelion Films/Lionsgate); **Best Supporting Actor/Feature Film:** Miguel Sandoval, *Spoken Word* (New Mexico Media Partner/Luminaria Films); Wilmer Valderrama, *From Prada to Nada* (Pantelion Films/Lionsgate); **Best Supporting Actress/Feature Film:** Adriana Barraza, *From Prada to Nada* (Pantelion Films/Lionsgate); Gina Rodriguez, *Go For It!* (Pantelion Films/Go For It!); **Best Theatrical Short or Student Film:** *The Big Deal* (Lucy Rodriguez); *The Nanny* (Valor Prods.); *I Delivered You* (Nahum 17 Prods.); *Primos* (Belinda Salazar); **Best Web Series:** *Chismex* (mun2); *I Once Was Lost - The Series* (Nahum 17 Prods.); *Encounters* (Angel Flight Media); *No Kids. No Cry. A Baby Mama Drama.* (Fanny Veliz).

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About The Imagen Awards

The Imagen (*pronounced ee-mah-hen*) Awards program was established in 1985 from a suggestion by veteran television producer Norman Lear to encourage and recognize the positive portrayals of Latinos in the media. Later, as The Imagen Foundation, it expanded its programs and initiatives to further its mission to serve as a bridge between the Latino community and the entertainment industry in providing access, education, and resources for Latinos in the industry, as well as those seeking careers in entertainment. More information on the organization as well as details of the event can be found online at www.imagen.org and on Facebook.

