HOUSE SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI TO ADDRESS CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS INSTITUTE (CHCI) 44th ANNUAL AWARDS GALA; MARIANA ATENCIO TO SERVE AS EMCEE

Education 2021-09-13 22:16:16

Washington, DC - The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) announced that **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** will deliver remarks as a Special Guest during its **44th Annual Awards Gala.** Award-winning journalist and best-selling author **Mariana Atencio** will serve as Gala Emcee, and internationally recognized culinary innovator Chef **Jose Andres** and actress, philanthropist and activist **Eva Longoria**, both previous CHCI Medallion of Excellence recipients, will serve as 2021 Medallion co-presenters. The gala, for which long-time CHCI partner Bank of America is Host Sponsor, will take place on **Thursday, September 23rd** in an all-virtual setting. Registration to the event is now open at **chci.org**

Nancy Pelosi serves as the 52nd Speaker of the House of Representatives, having made history in 2007 when she was elected the first woman to serve as Speaker of the House. Now in her third term as Speaker, Pelosi made history again in January 2019 when she regained her position second-in-line to the presidency, the first person to do so in more than 60 years. In 2013, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Seneca Falls, the birthplace of the American women's rights movement.

Mariana Atencio, who will serve as Gala Emcee, is an award–winning journalist, best-selling author and viral speaker, as well as the co-founder of "GoLike", a premium multimedia production company specialized in motivational storytelling. Her TEDx Talk on authenticity, "What Makes You Special?", is one of the top 10 most watched on YouTube and translated into 13 languages. Her first book, *Perfectly You*, was an Amazon Best Seller and selected by Audible and AppleBooks.

This year, CHCI will also welcome previous CHCI Medallion of Excellence recipients, chef **José Andrés** and actress **Eva Longoria,** as co-presenters.

Twice named to Time's "100 Most Influential People" list, recipient of the 2015 National Humanities Medal, and 2020 recipient of the CHCI Medallion of Excellence In Education, Science, Medicine, Or Civil Rights, **José Andrés** is an internationally recognized culinary innovator, New York Times best-selling author, educator, humanitarian, and chef and owner of ThinkFoodGroup, a collective of nearly thirty restaurants throughout the country and beyond. In 2010, Andrés founded World Central Kitchen, a non-profit specializing in delivering food relief in the wake of natural and humanitarian disasters.

An award-winning actress, Emmy-nominated director, producer, entrepreneur, philanthropist and activist, and 2010 recipent of the CHCI Medallion of Excellence for Leadership and Community Service, **Eva Longoria** has been leading the charge of diverse and female representation since her starring role in the hit ABC series "Desperate Housewives." Through her production company UnbeliEVAble Entertainment, Longoria has become one the most significant trailblazers and recently renewed her overall deal with Twentieth Television. Founded in 2005, the company actively chooses purposeful projects that accurately represent the stories of the Latinx and other underrepresented communities.

As previously announced, CHCI will present its highest honor, the **Medallion of Excellence,** to two distinguished leaders in the Latino community: Emmy Award-winning actor **America Ferrera** and civil rights leader **Sylvia Mendez.** The award is presented annually to exemplary individuals for their contributions as Hispanic American role models and whose extraordinary careers, civic leadership, and service contribute to the greater American society. Previous recipients of the **CHCI Medallion of Excellence** include Astronaut **Dr. Ellen Ochoa**, "Hamilton" creator **Lin-Manuel Miranda**, Univision Anchor **Jorge Ramos**, actor **Salma**

Hayek, and AltaMed Health Services President & CEO **Castulo de la Rocha**, among others.

America Ferrera is the recipient of the *2021 Medallion of Excellence in the Arts, Entertainment, Media, Music or Sports Award*. Ferrera is an award-winning actor, director and producer known for her breakthrough role as “Betty Suarez” on ABC’s hit comedy,â€¯*Ugly Betty.*â€¯For her performance, Ferrera was awarded a Golden Globe®, an Emmy®, and a Screen Actors Guild Award®, as well as ALMA and Imagen Awards. Ferrera recently wrapped production on Season 2 of NETFLIX’s hit Latinx Dramedy, *Gentefied.*

Sylvia Mendez is the recipient of the *2021 American Dream Medallion in Education, Science, Medicine or Civil Rights Award*. Mendez is the oldest daughter of Gonzalo Mendez, a Mexican immigrant, and Felicitas Mendez, a Puerto Rican, who challenged segregation so that she and other Latino children could be provided the same quality education provided to white students. Ms. Mendez and her family have received numerous awards and recognitions, including a US Postage stamp commemorating the 60th anniversary of the appellate victory; two public schools are named after Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez; a Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the National Parent Teacher Association; and the US Congress Civil Rights Champion Award. On February 15, 2011, President Barack Obama presented Sylvia Mendez with the *Presidential Medal of Freedom*, the nation's highest civilian honor.

The Annual Awards Gala is the culmination of CHCI’s Leadership Conference in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. In alignment with the theme for 2021, *Presente: Latinos Leading the Way,* the CHCI Leadership Conference will welcome an engaging virtual line-up of national leaders, elected officials, other policymakers, and influencers recognized for their vision, expertise, and influence across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Past conference speakers have included national leaders such as President Joe Biden , President Barack Obama, and Secretary Hillary Clinton. Attendance at the conference and gala is free but registration is required at CHCI HHM Events.

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WHERE :	

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The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) is the premier Hispanic nonprofit and nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization in the country dedicated to developing the next generation of Latino leadersÂ®. CHCI provides leadership, public service, and policy experiences to outstanding Latino/a/x students and young professionals, and convenes Members of Congress, other public officials, corporate executives, nonprofit advocates, and thought leaders to discuss issues facing the nation and the Hispanic community