

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 18, 2016

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41 LGBTQ Latinos Named Trailblazers in Annual Award's List

Honor 41 Releases Annual List Recognizing LGBTQ Latino Role Models

LOS ANGELES, CA – Honor 41 is proud to announce the fourth annual edition of “The 41 List,” which honors and celebrates 41 LGBTQ Latina/o role models. This year’s list includes a diverse group of distinguished academics, activists, artists, entrepreneurs, journalists, community leaders, students, non-profit leaders, and more. To view a video of all 41 honorees click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C30HTQKglDg>

“Now more than ever, at a time when the President-elect’s hate rhetoric has resulted in a political climate hostile to women, immigrants and people of color, it is critical that we lift up positive images of the LGBTQ Latino leaders. We cannot allow hate to prevail and we hope that the stories of these inspiring individuals serve as role models for the LGBTQ Latinos searching for love, compassion and acceptance,” said Alberto B. Mendoza, founder of Honor 41 and producer of The 41 List.

Every week, beginning November 22, video interviews of each honoree will be released on the organization’s social media channels and website. The videos highlight each of the honoree’s personal experience with coming out and how religion, family, and HIV/AIDS have impacted their lives. The 2016 honorees are:

1. Jorge Amaro, Washington DC
2. Joshua Baca, Dallas
3. Gustavo Briand, Miami Beach
4. Yordy Cancino, Los Angeles
5. Isaac Cano, Medellin, Colombia
6. Cassandro El Exotico (Saul Armendariz)
El Paso and Juarez, Mexico
7. Nicole Castillo, Boston
8. Mario Ceballos, Los Angeles
9. Fredy Ceja, Los Angeles
10. Luis Cruz, San Diego
11. Marissa Ditimus, San Diego
12. Ramon Escobar, New York City
13. Laura M, Esquivel, Washington DC
14. Dr. Orlando Espin, San Diego
15. John Jude Duran, West Hollywood
16. Janet Duran, Washington DC
17. Dr. Alicia Gaspar De Alba, Los Angeles
18. Miriam Gilson, San Diego
19. Alex Guerra, Miami Beach
20. Dr. Yolanda Leyva, El Paso
21. Alma Lopez Gaspar De Alba, Los Angeles
22. Dra. Johanna Malaret, San Diego
23. Kenny Martin-Ocasio, Chicago
24. Mario J. Novoa, Los Angeles
25. Jacqueline Olan, Los Angeles
26. Louie A. Ortiz-Fonseca, Philadelphia
and Washington DC
27. Uriel Posada, El Paso
28. Dr. Uriel Quesada, New Orleans
29. Jose C. Rollano, Medellin, Colombia
30. Jorge Rivas, Los Angeles
31. Christofer Rodelo, Boston
32. Chris Salamanca, Los Angeles
33. Chris Sanchez, Los Angeles
34. Nico Santos, Phoenix
35. Hector Silva, Claremont
36. Lalis Solorzano, Medellin, Colombia
37. Cary Tabares, Miami
38. Cesar and Miguel Topete, Long Beach
39. Inoe Vargas, Los Angeles
40. Catalina Velasquez, Washington DC
41. Ronnie Veliz, San Fernando Valley

"To this day, LGBTQ Latino youth lack the necessary and adequate support in school, home, healthcare, and places of worship in order to be able to live their lives genuinely and authentically. And despite the ongoing systems of oppression that we face--including racism, discrimination, violence, and hate--LGBTQ Latinos continue to succeed in a wide range of arts and professions. I am humbled and privileged to be included in this year's list. In our work to secure full freedom, justice and equality for all,

we must continue elevating the voices of those who are often marginalized in society." Said **Jorge Amaro**

"It is a privilege to be recognized in such a way by Honor 41, because, for me, it's an opportunity to continue a much needed discussion. Us Latinos who fall somewhere on the queer spectrum have two strikes against us in this world, but this organization really showcases how we are not only good enough, but we are great, and we are only getting better!" Said **Nico Santos**

"It is a great honor to be recognized by Honor 41 this year. As someone who came out in the 1970s when queer Latinx history was invisible, I am thrilled to see the life work of so many of us made visible. The youth of today need to know that they are part of a long line of people who have struggled for inclusion and justice." Said **Dr. Yolanda Leyva**.

"At this time when our people are in fear of getting deported to a death sentence and families torn apart, Positive images of a fraction of our resilient and powerful community members are a message of hope. Our existence is defiance and resistance and will remind folks that our strength comes when we proudly and unapologetically stand in our truth". Said **Catalina Velazquez** .

"HONOR41 is important for all of us committed to Latinx LGBTQ visibility, inclusion and equality. I hope my story and life-journey will help someone realize their own self-worth and inspire him or her to be an agent of positive change no matter where they came from, who they are now, and who they want to become. There is a role for each of us to play -- and our world needs more agents of love, justice and respect than ever before." Said **Mario Ceballos**

" As a queer person of color, Latino and immigrant I am grateful to be included on the 41 List. My contribution to the Latino LGBT community may be very modest: I am just someone that writes. However, my writing is the tool I have to make sense of this world. My novels, short-stories, essays and oral-histories help me reflect on the reality around me, connect with others and be free. For that reason, I would like to think that writing is also a way to give back. I dedicate the honor of being one of the 2016 *Cuarenta y Uno* to all my brothers and sisters, and to the new generations of Latina/o LGBT activists. Said **Dr. Uriel Quesada**.

"Growing up in the 70s and 80s, I had few Latinx role-models, and definitely no LGBT ones. Although we are seeing more celebrities and public figures coming out, very few of them are Latinx. I still have young people tell me that I am the first, open queer Latinx person they have ever heard speak about that experience and identity. It is just as important today as it was back then, that we be visible and proud. I am so humbled to be recognized as a role model by Honor41 along with all of the others who understand that we also have responsibilities to nurture our roots, honor our culture, and be visible to - and for - our communities, and not just model our roles." Said **Laura M Esquivel**

"I am humbled to be named as one of the 41 honorees this year. More now than ever, it is important for LGBTQ leaders to be visible and taking leadership roles within our communities. I hope that my story brings strength to others, and in particular young LGBTQ Latinx youth: You are our hope and future. You are beautiful and perfect. Don't ever forget that." Said **Nicole Castillo**.

Honor 41's name originates from an anti-LGBTQ hate crime that took place in Mexico City. In the 1901 incident, 41 men were beaten, arrested, and eventually disappeared for their sexual orientation. Since then, the number 41 has been used as slang in Mexico to refer to gay men. Honor 41 reclaims the number to honor inspirational individuals in the LGBTQ community and their tireless work toward acceptance and equality.

This year marks the 115th anniversary of the raid on the original 41 and the release of this year's list coincides with that anniversary. This year's list is also dedicated to the unfulfilled lives of those who lost their lives on June 12, 2016 at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida.

For more information about Honor 41, an independent 501(c)(3), online non-profit organization, please visit: www.honor41.org.