

NEWS RELEASE

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WKAR Community Cinema Features 'The Graduates/Los Graduados'

(East Lansing, MI) – A new season of WKAR Community Cinema will kick off on Tuesday, October 29 at 7 p.m. with a screening and discussion of "**The Graduates/Los Graduados**." The new documentary from Independent Lens explores education today through the eyes of Latino and Latina adolescents from across the United States. On the discussion panel are Lansing School District Superintendent Yvonne Caamal Canul and education scholar Rubén Martínez of the Julian Samora Research Institute at MSU.

The WKAR Community Cinema event takes place in Room 145, Communication Arts and Sciences building on the Michigan State campus. The event is free, but online reservations are required at WKAR.org

About 'The Graduates/Los Graduados'

"**The Graduates/Los Graduados**" explores pressing issues in education today through the eyes of six Latino and Latina students from across the United States. The bilingual, two-part film offers first-hand perspectives on key challenges facing Latino high school students and their families, educators and community leaders. It is the story of the graduates who will make up America's future.

The film follows six teenagers – three girls and three boys – each with their own unique obstacles to overcome. A running theme throughout all of the stories in "**The Graduates/Los Graduados**" is the importance of civic engagement, of students becoming involved in their schools and communities and crucially, having a say in their own futures.

We hear from these students' parents, many of whom have had to make great sacrifices in order to see their children graduate. The film also interweaves engaging interviews with successful Latino. Actors like Wilmer Valderrama, writers like Angie Cruz, politicians such as San Antonio mayor Julian Castro, teachers, and more, look back on their own experiences as students in the USA.

About the Panelists

Yvonne Caamal Canul is superintendent of the Lansing School District. Raised in Latin America, she brings a rich worldview to her work in the field of education. Caamal Canul recently served as director of implementation for FirstSchool, an early childhood research and direct practice collaborative between Michigan State University and the University of North Carolina. She has received numerous awards, including the National Educator Award presented by the Milken Family Foundation and the Human Rights Award given by the Michigan Education Association.

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Dr. Rubén O. Martinez is a professor of sociology and director of the Julian Samora Research Institute at Michigan State University. He is a nationally known scholar with expertise in the areas of higher education, race and ethnic relations, and diversity leadership. His research includes focuses on leadership and institutional change, education and ethnic minorities, youth development and environmental justice. Dr. Martinez is the editor of the *Latinos in the United States* book series with Michigan State University Press.

On the Air

"The Graduates: Part 1" airs Monday, Oct.28, 10 p.m. on WKAR-TV/PBS.

"The Graduates: Part 2" airs Monday, Nov. 4, 10 p.m. on WKAR-TV/PBS.

Community Cinema is a groundbreaking public education and civic engagement initiative featuring screenings of films from Independent Lens on location in 100 cities and online. Between September and June, Community Cinema brings together leading organizations, community members and public television stations to learn, discuss and get involved in today's critical social issues.

WKAR is part of Michigan State University's College of Communication Arts & Sciences and includes WKAR-TV, WKAR Radio, WKAR Radio Reading Service and WKAR Ready To Learn. WKAR is funded in large part by contributions from viewers and listeners with additional support from Michigan State University and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

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