

Women In Film & General Motors Announce Five Winners of the 2nd Annual 2007 Emerging Latina Filmmakers Grant

Outstanding Latina Women Pursuing Careers in Entertainment Will be Given Inside Track to Network with Industry Leaders

Los Angeles, CA / New York, NY--(HISPANIC PR WIRE)--September 13, 2007--For Immediate Release – The national alliance organization of Women In Film (WIF) and the General Motors Corporation (GM) announced today five winners of the second annual WIF/GM 2007 Opening Doors/Abriendo Puertas: The Acceleration Grant for Emerging Latina Filmmakers.

The grant is a project of the WIF/GM Alliance, the goal of which is to support talented filmmakers from Latina/Hispanic communities and other under-represented groups. The WIF/GM grant is again being presented to five up-and-coming Latina filmmakers, chosen through an application process overseen by a WIF selection committee comprised of professional filmmakers and entertainment industry executives from the New York-based chapter of WIF, New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT).

Grant recipients were chosen from among numerous submissions from across the U.S., U.S. territories and three foreign countries. Applicants included women of Brazilian, Cuban, Columbian, Costa Rican, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Spanish and Peruvian heritage.

The grant will provide recipients with a broad-based understanding of the business of filmmaking through a six-day, full-immersion mentoring program, shepherded by members of NYWIFT, which includes some of the industry's most successful female talent.

Commented Judith James, chair of the WIF/GM Alliance, "Once again, we are tremendously impressed with the depth of talent among Latina women across the country and in other territories and countries. Women In Film steadfastly believes in mentoring, fostering and supporting exceptional women who want to work in the entertainment industry. And the emphasis of the grant is to support emerging filmmakers from diverse communities. We applaud this year's winners and look forward to their future contributions to our industry."

Recipients of the WIF/GM 2007 Opening Doors/Abriendo Puertas: The Acceleration Grant for Emerging Latina Filmmakers:

Erika Bagnarello — Heredia, Costa Rica

A native of Costa Rica, Bagnarello is a graduate of Florida State University and a former Fulbright Scholar. In 2006, she was awarded an honorable mention in the Latino category of the Directors Guild of America's Student Awards for her short, *The Melting Pot*. Her thesis film *Inner Sight*, won second place in the student category at the 2007 Palm Beach International Film Festival and was chosen to screen at this year's Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival. Bagnarello's current project, *Flyways*, tells the story of a Costa Rican woman illegally immigrating to the U.S. with her daughter via a cruise ship.

Sarah Duran — Los Angeles, Calif.

A graduate of Cal State Northridge, Duran was recently accepted as one of 16 participants in the 2007 Producers Guild of America's Diversity Workshop for her feature screenplay *The Search for Santiago*. She is a member of the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) and was selected to attend their 2007 signature program, the Latino Producers Academy, as a feature production fellow. Duran's first short film, *Red Phoenix*, premiered at the 2006 Los Angeles Film Festival and her second short, *Girls Night Out*, won the grand prize in the 2006 Mercury/NALIP Latino Short Film Challenge. She is currently at work on her first feature-length screenplay which she hopes to direct.

Xochitl Gonzalez — Los Angeles, Calif.

Gonzalez received an MFA in directing from the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. She has directed numerous short films and documentaries, including two award-winning narrative shorts, *Countdown* and *Stuck*, both shot on 35mm. Her films have screened on KCET's *Fine Cut* series and at numerous film festivals, including Film Independent P:I Showcase, Newport Beach Film Festival, San Diego Film Festival and Durango Film Festival, among others. Gonzalez has completed screenplays for a feature film, *Dr. Kevin*, and a television pilot, *The V.A. Spa*, both of which she hopes to direct.

Michelle Malley-Campos — San Juan, Puerto Rico

Malley-Campos is a graduate of New York University's film program. Her senior thesis, the short narrative *When Chickens Bark*, has been accepted at numerous film festivals and was awarded "Outstanding Achievement" at the 2007 International Student Film Festival. She is currently working in the Puerto Rican production office for the film, *The Argentine*, directed by Steven Soderbergh and starring Benicio Del Toro. As an office production assistant, she is serving as assistant to Soderbergh, as well as the film's producer, executive producer, first assistant director and unit production manager.

Brenda Zuniga — Los Angeles, Calif.

A graduate of the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, Zuniga is now exhibiting her thesis film, *Santa Teresa*, at film festivals across the country, including the Los Angeles International Short Film Festival and the DC Shorts Film Festival. Currently, she is working as a cinematographer and camera assistant in feature film production. Zuniga's goal is to

write and direct feature films

Recipients of the WIF/GM 2007 Opening Doors/Abriendo Puertas: The Acceleration Grant for Emerging Latina Filmmakers will receive round-trip transportation to New York City and be hosted by NYWIFT Oct. 15-21. The grant will begin with two days of meetings and seminars with leaders and executives in the film and television industries, including distributors, financing experts, producers, marketing executives, television broadcasters and studio representatives. Participants will also receive industry passes to the acclaimed Hamptons International Film Festival, Oct. 17-21, in East Hampton, Long Island, including admission to the Independent's Ball and other festival parties hosted by Lifetime Television Networks and NYWIFT.

"By providing the opportunity to attend dedicated workshops and to network with professionals from all aspects of the filmmaking industry," said Terry Lawler, executive director of NYWIFT, "these grants will provide these women with a broad base of skills and knowledge of how to turn creative ideas into reality."

About the Women In Film/General Motors Alliance:

General Motors Corporation is the National Presenting Sponsor of Women In Film. The Women In Film/General Motors Alliance was created to support women in the entertainment industry and to expand Women In Film chapter programs across the country. The multi-year initiative was announced in Los Angeles in January 2005 and is supporting programs as diverse as the Film Finishing Fund, Women's Film Preservation Fund, Legacy Series, PSAs, scholarships, mentorships and local WIF chapter award events across the nation. For more information about the WIF/GM Alliance and its programs, visit <http://www.women-in-film.com>.

Founded in 1973 in Los Angeles, Women In Film (<http://www.wif.org>) is the leading non-profit organization dedicated to women in the global entertainment industry. Its purpose is to empower, promote, nurture and mentor women in the industry through a network of valuable contacts, events, programs, workshops, finishing funds and scholarships. In the U.S., there are chapters in Arizona, California (3), Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas (2), Washington and Washington, D.C. The international network, Women In Film and Television International (<http://www.wifti.org>), of which WIF-Los Angeles is a founding member, boasts 35 chapters on six continents. Member chapters range from developing nations to countries with established industries, including the U.S., Australia, Canada, France, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom, to name a few.

New York Women in Film & Television is the preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York City. Dedicated to helping women reach the highest levels of achievement in film, television and new media, and promoting equity for women in these industries, NYWIFT produces over fifty innovative programs and special events each year. NYWIFT's membership includes more than 1,600 women working in all areas of the film, television and new media industries. Founded in 1977, NYWIFT is part of a network of 40 women in film organizations worldwide, representing more than 10,000 members. For more information, please visit <http://www.nywift.org>.

General Motors Corp. (NYSE: GM), the world's largest automaker, has been the annual global industry sales leader for 76 years. Founded in 1908, GM today employs about 280,000 people around the world. With global headquarters in Detroit, GM manufactures its cars and trucks in 33 countries. In 2006, 9.1 million GM cars and trucks were sold globally under the following brands: Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, GMC, GM Daewoo, Holden, HUMMER, Opel, Pontiac, Saab, Saturn and Vauxhall. GM's OnStar subsidiary is the industry leader in vehicle safety, security and information services. More information on GM can be found at <http://www.gm.com>.