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FocusON Movies

Oscars 2016 Predictions: A Look at the 2016 Latin American Oscar Selections

By Francisco Salazar, *Latin Post*

This year a number of countries are representing at the Oscars and are bringing some of the most acclaimed films of the year, many of which already have distribution.

The biggest contenders come from Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Guatemala and Argentina. Brazil is represented by "The Second Mother," a film that was selected for Sundance and which was picked up by Oscilloscope. In its theatrical run, the film enjoyed rave reviews and a potent box office showing.

Meanwhile, Pablo Larrain is back with the Berlin Film Festival selection "The Club." The movie won the Grand Jury Award and went on to be a big festival hit. Music Box is releasing the picture next year and if the film is nominated, it would be the second time for a Larrain film.

Previously "No" by the director received

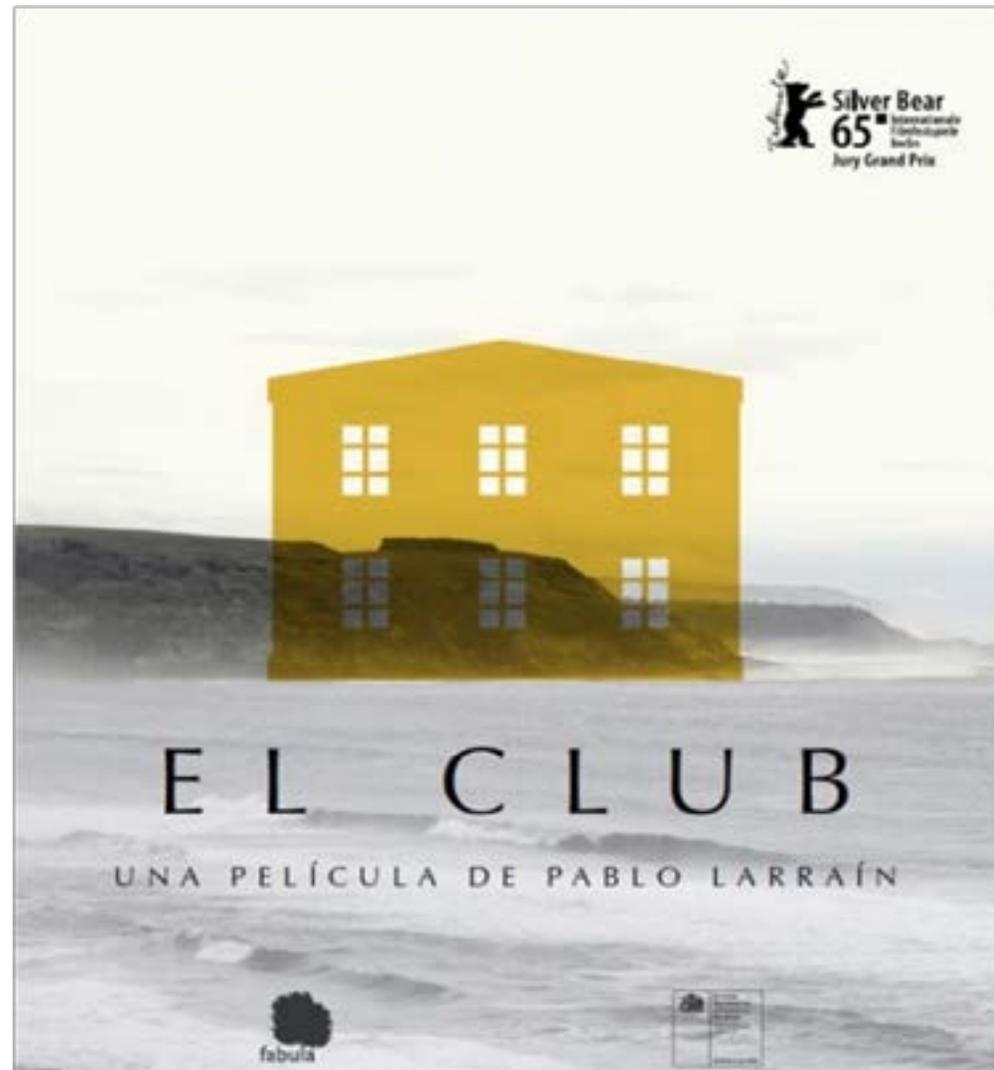


Photo : Music Box Films

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There are no politics in keeping food on the table for the Hispanic hands that make the popular topper.

[hispanic] market works

the first nomination for Chile.

Colombia is also a tough contender this year as it has "Embrace of the Serpent." The movie opened in Cannes to rave reviews and win the C.I.C.A.E Award at the festival. It was later picked up by Oscilloscope for U.S distribution and began an impressive festival run. The film is a huge contender and many expect to get Colombia its first nomination.

Argentina has "El Clan," which premiered at the Venice Film festival and won the Best Director prize at the festival. The country has previously submitted Pablo Trapero films but this seems to be his strongest to date. Argentina is among the most awarded Latin American countries and this year may be another lucky year for the country.

Although these are the strongest of Latin America, there is a plethora of amazing movies that Hispanics have to offer for the Academy.

Dominican Republic has "Sand Dollars" with Geraldine Chaplin which was distributed by Breaking Glass. The movie premiere at Toronto and reviews have been very positive.

Guatemala submitted for the first time with "Ixcanul Volcano." The film was recently picked up by Kino Lorber after a successful festival run.

Ireland's film is a Latino story set in Cuba and deals with LGBT issues. The movie is being released by Magnolia next year and its festival response is impressive.

Pantelion is releasing Mexico's "600 Miles." The movie won the Best First Feature at the Berlin Film Festival and it stars Tim Roth.

Venezuela, which made history at the Venice Film Festival with "Desde Alla," is submitting the Berlin Film festival selection "Gone with the River." The film was among the most acclaimed for the country but U.S. distribution has not occurred yet.

Of the countries with the least chances are Uruguay's "A Moonless Night," Paraguay's first submission ever "Cloudy Times" and Costa Rica's "Imprisoned."

While there is no way of knowing that any of these films will actually make it, 2015 showed that Latin American film was in full bloom and continues to break boundaries.



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FocusON Marketing

The Total Market Approach Starts with Why

By Joe Kutchera

Whenever I hear the term “Total Market Approach” to Hispanic marketing, I scrunch my face in doubt since it strikes me as a “one size fits all” path to cost reduction. Perhaps some marketers do use it to avoid the difficult work in segmenting multicultural audiences or as a means to consolidate the advertising agencies they hire. But recently, at the Association of National Advertisers’ Multicultural Conference, a handful of companies provided examples that not only edified me as to what the term “Total Market Approach” exactly means but, moreover, changed my opinion in the process by providing examples of their work.

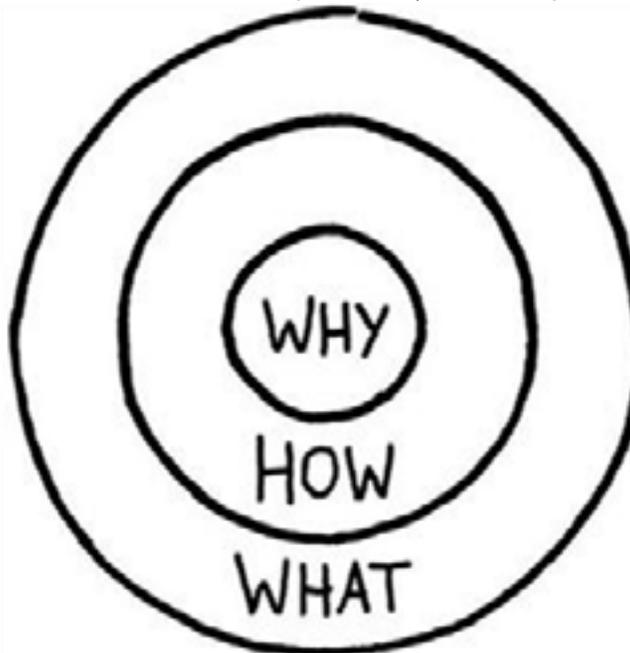
To less sophisticated marketers, Hispanic advertising equates to:

1. Translating advertising copy into Spanish
2. Throwing in some soccer balls
3. Actors wearing mariachi hats
4. Adding salsa music with a touch of “café con leche”

But these stereotypes only provide superficial, quick-fix approaches.

Which leads us to the question: Why do you do what you do? Your response will inform not only the mission of your entire company but make your Hispanic marketing more authentic.

Simon Sinek wrote his book, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*, to show that the best companies, like Apple, clearly define why they do what they do. Organizations can explain “what” they do or “how” they do it. But very few clearly articulate “why” they do what they do, or in other words, their mission. Yes, other companies may sell smartphones



or computers. But very few companies boil down their passion for simplifying the experience of listening to music and making technology beautiful as succinctly as Apple does. (If you haven’t seen it, Sinek’s TED talk summarizes his book in 18 minutes and is well worth it.)

Christine Paige, SVP of Marketing and Digital Services at Kaiser Permanente, cited Sinek’s model in her presentation at the ANA Multicultural Conference to explain her company’s purpose and the strategy behind its total market message, “Thrive.”

Seventy years ago, industrialist Henry J. Kaiser and physician Sidney Garfield founded the integrated managed care non-profit as a means of providing health care to ship yard workers and their families during World War II. Paige says, “That set the tone for serving people who otherwise would not have access to healthcare.” Today, that remains the foundation for the organization’s mission to “provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve.”

To accomplish this, Paige says, “Communication between the physician and the patient is key. You cannot deliver quality care if you cannot adequately communicate, which is both linguistic and also cultural. In order to deliver quality care you actually have to provide training on how to connect with your patients.”

Kaiser Permanente operates in eight states including California, a “majority minority” state, where historic minorities like Hispanics represent more than 50% of the total population. Paige says, “We recruit as aggressively as possible against the composition of our membership and do a lot of training. For example, our physicians in Southern California learn Spanish so that we can increase the number of caregivers who speak the language of our patients.” She pointed out that “our strongest market share by ethnic group is African-American and Latino.”

In addition, Kaiser Permanente provides quality medical content in Spanish. It provides full patient medical records in both Spanish and English to members in Southern California, via secure login on KP.org. Members can send a message to physicians, see lab results, and order prescriptions in both languages.

KP's tagline is "Thrive," which it translated into Spanish as "Viva Bien." Paige says, "After we did the inside work that led to Thrive, we validated the approach for the Spanish-speaking audience. It is the same advertising but with a different voice over. The message of the campaign is so universal that it does not need additional contextualizing. And we cast our ads with a diverse set of actors."

Seventy years since its founding, KP continues as a non-profit. Paige says, "As a not-for-profit, we take our community contribution very seriously. Last year, the company earned \$56 billion in revenue and \$2 billion of it went back into community programs."

"We make long-term investments in things like prostate cancer screenings, for example. And while this may cost us something, we are going to have these members 20 and 30 years from now. So why don't we do the screening for that now."

In conclusion, successful Hispanic marketing never comes from creating a façade with superficial, quick-fix approaches. It needs to come from the heart and soul of an organization. A clearly defined "Why" or mission statement sets the foundation to authenticity.

What do you think? Has your company clearly answered the question: why does your organization exist?

Copyranter: Advertising Is Not A Science. It Never Will Be

By Mark Duffy, [The Copyranter](#)

In 1947, creative director Bill Bernbach wrote a resignation letter to ad agency Grey New York. Two years later, Bernbach started his own agency, which started the advertising creative revolution that transformed the industry. And, as Bernbach predicted, Grey went on to become a hacky data-driven sweatshop — much like your digital/tech agency, only bigger. You should read the letter.

Wait. What can tech gurus learn from a 68-year-old typewritten letter by a man who died in 1982, without ever using a computer, *even once*?

First some brief background info for those not familiar with Bernbach or the work DDB did in the 1950s-1960s. The creative department he molded produced ad campaigns directly responsible for VW, Avis and American Airlines (among others) growing into the huge corporations they are today. Yes, they created great ads, the best ads in the world at the time. But the ads also sold *magnificently*.

Bernbach despised the "technicians" of advertising. If you're the TL;DR type of techie, just read this sentence, out loud, at your desk:

Advertising is not a science.

Read it again, out loud. Now, go to the nearest conference room white board and write it 100 times, in red ink. Then, take a photo of the board and mass email it to all your contacts. After that, go ahead and order

your headstone and make it your epitaph. Don't worry it'll still be true 100 years from now.

Still refuse to read the letter? OK, I'll pull out the tidbits that directly apply to you and your ilk.



Lemon.

The Volkswagen missed the boat. The chrome strip on the glove compartment is scratched and will be replaced. Chrome are you wouldn't have noticed it, Inspector Sam Kesser did.

There are 2,000 men at our Volkswagen factory with only one job: to inspect Volkswagen at each stage of production. 2,000 technicians are produced daily. There are more inspectors than cars!

Every third inspector is hired! Inspecting isn't his job, every mechanical is covered. We've been inspected for surface scratches barely visible to the eye.

And inspection is really something! Our inspectors are sent out off the line using the factory-issued car seat cover. Not an 800 check points, you ahead to the automatic.

And he'll, and say "no!" to any VW out of line.

This pronunciation will spell more the VW has longer and deeper hole maintenance, to and help, from other cars. It also means to use VW inspection line. Hearing other VW.

We glad, the better, you get the plans.



"There are a lot great technicians in advertising. And

unfortunately they talk the best game. ... They can give you fact after fact after fact. They are the scientists of advertising. But there's one little rub. Advertising is fundamentally persuasion and persuasion happens to be not a science, but an art."

Do you get what he's saying? Ads are not art, but creating good ads is.

"...look beneath the technique and what do you find? A sameness, a mental weariness, a mediocrity of ideas. ... It [is] like worshipping a ritual instead of the God."

Ritual worshipping — a perfect description of ad tech, and even of native advertising.

"[The] danger is a preoccupation with technical skill or the mistaking of technical skill for creative ability. The danger lies in the temptation to buy routinised men who have a formula for advertising ... that will not make us stand out in competition but rather make us look like all the others."

Not all ad techies are as "routinised" as you. James Britton, managing director of StinkDigital (a digital/tech agency) gets it: "If you notice the technology first, truth is, the idea probably isn't good enough."

Ain't no "probably" about it: Content isn't king, and data isn't queen. The idea is king. And it isn't married to any technology.

But you optimizing, programmatic geniuses, let me know when you create a bot that can create better ads than a good human creative.

Mark Duffy has written [the Copyranter](#) blog for 10 years and is a freelancing copywriter with 20-plus years of experience. His hockey wrist shot is better than yours.

Discussions and Confusion on Total Market

Let's Stop Over-thinking Total Market

By Mario Carrasco, partner, ThinkNow Research

The Total Market continues to cause confusion and discussions regarding the "right" definition and execution of this relatively new concept that has taken the multicultural marketing ecosystem by storm. At the center of the controversy is, perhaps, the definition itself, which defines Total Market as:

A marketing approach followed by corporations with their trusted internal and external partners which proactively integrates diverse segment considerations. This is done from inception, through the entire strategic process and execution, with the goal of enhancing value and growth effectiveness.

This definition, crafted by The Association of Hispanic Ad Agencies, or AHAA, is the best currently available. But in my opinion, the complexity of it reflects an even bigger issue at hand.

Similar to many of the other definitions of total market floating around, all with varying interpretations in execution as well as outright denials of its efficacy, one commonality emerges, and that is this: by definition, Total Market is too complicated.

Is it possible that we're all making this too hard? Could we take a more Nike approach to it, and "just do it"? Believe it or not, some things really are that simple. And in my opinion, that is what Total Market needs to succeed as a marketing philosophy.

So how does one, "just do it"? We need only look to Aziz Ansari's new Netflix show, "Master of None," to see a great example of Total Market from a content perspective. Ansari and his team didn't strategically integrate diverse segment considerations; they seamlessly weaved diversity into the DNA of the show.

As we know from our research, Millennials are acutely aware of diversity and living it every day, which is likely how Ansari was able to create a show that embraced a Total Market viewpoint almost flawlessly without it feeling forced. This is not to say that only Millennials can execute Total Market strategies, but embracing the inherently diverse millennial mindset is key to reaching diverse segments through Total Market efforts.

Another current artist exemplifying Total Market thinking with ease is the multi-platinum recording artist, Drake, a Toronto native of African-American and Jewish Canadian descent. Drake takes hip-hop and weaves in elements of Jamaican, Afro-Cuban, and salsa rhythms, appealing to a diverse mass audience. Lyrically, he has rapped in Spanish and given nods to the Asian community. A quintessential Millennial with a mixed-ethnic background, Drake embodies Total Market at its best by weaving in diverse segments throughout his music and breaking rap sales records along the way, proving that Total Market is not a nice to have, but a "must have."

So I have pointed to a couple artists doing Total Market right. But what about companies? My choice to highlight only artists at "peak" Total Market performance was intentional because not many companies have reached this level. We've barely scratched the surface of the type of marketing approach defined by AHAA, which

takes us back to the problem.

We need to stop over-thinking Total Market.

Let's take a page from the artist playbook and "just do it." There is no lack of inspiration as diversity is all around us and continuing to grow. Using the definition of Total Market is a great start, but when attempting to create an effective and meaningful Total Market campaign, don't let the confines of the definition keep you from just going for it.

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Of course not, unless you have joined the conversation

Send us your reaction, your opinion, your input

We will publish it and help you...

Join The Conversation

FocusON Deportes

A Pitch Is Framed by Diplomacy in Cuba

By Dan Barrynov, The New York Times

A minibus of Americans rumbled through a city in transformation, past the run-down housing and round-the-clock construction, the sparsely stocked bodegas and chic new restaurants, to a reception at the residence of the American chargés d'affaires. The hint of change teased the November night.

A few guests wore golf shirts embroidered with the brand names of sodas and snacks and auto parts. But the business of these men arriving by bus, all in dark suits or blazers, was of a different order: to have a major league team's minor league affiliate based in Havana, perhaps as early as 2017.

Their plan was freighted with history. It would restore the professional baseball bond once shared by two countries long at odds, but it would be possible only in accordance with United States law and, these men insisted, with the full participation of Cuba.

In other words, when the time was right. But, as the common sight of a driver talking on a cellphone while in a 1950s-era Chevy suggests, time moves differently here.

More than half a century has passed since the Havana Sugar Kings, a Cincinnati Reds affiliate, played in the Class AAA International League. Since the giddy gunfire of followers of the revolutionary Fidel Castro grazed a shortstop and a third-base coach at a game against the

Rochester Red Wings. Since Havana won the 1959 Little World Series against the Minneapolis Millers here at home.

The notion of returning to those days, absent the gunfire, may sound like pie in the sky, given the longstanding American embargo against Cuba. But President Obama and the Cuban president, Raúl Castro, announced plans last December to restore full diplomatic ties — a first hesitant step toward normalizing relations — and some see a chance for an exemption from the embargo: a baseball "carve-out."

What's more, this group's enthusiastic leader, a veteran minor league executive named Lou Schwechheimer, has spent the last dozen years preparing for just such a moment.

He has secured the exclusive rights from Minor League Baseball to return professional baseball to Havana. He has assembled this group, called the Caribbean Baseball Initiative, which includes two highly regarded former American ambassadors. He has obtained the necessary licensing from the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. He has raised considerable capital.

And, very quietly, he has built a baseball empire.

As of this month, the Caribbean Baseball Initiative owns controlling interests in the New Orleans Zephyrs, a Miami Marlins franchise in the Class AAA Pacific Coast League, and the Charlotte Stone Crabs, a Tampa Bay Rays franchise in the Class A Florida State League. The group also holds a minority interest in the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders, a Yankees franchise in the International League.

None of these teams will be moved to Cuba,

Schwechheimer said, although they may figure in various good-will initiatives he has in mind, including playing a Class AAA all-star game in Havana, providing much-needed baseball equipment, and sponsoring seminars on training and conditioning.

But he also said, “We have the financial resources to acquire additional minor league teams, one of which may ultimately wind up in Havana — but only at the appropriate time.”

Until that appropriate time, Schwechheimer and his associates plan to continue their minibus missions to Cuba, listening, explaining and seeking a partner in a joint baseball venture.

“But only thoughtfully, respectfully and when Cuba is willing,” he said. “We’re not going to be the ugly Americans.”

Looking to Past, and Future

Schwechheimer’s Cuban mission sprang from a long-ago gathering of baseball lifers, swapping stories over drinks. A particularly informed hot stove league, you might say.

In Havana minor league baseball was once a part of the culture. Credit Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times

It was at professional baseball’s 2002 fall gathering in Tampa, Fla., and Schwechheimer, then a 45-year-old executive and part owner of the Pawtucket Red Sox, found himself with, among others, Frank Verdi, the third-base coach once winged by a bullet, and Harold Cooper, a onetime president of the International League, who began his career during the Depression, wiping the mold from a ballpark’s hot dogs with a vinegar rag.

As they recalled the days when Havana was part of minor league baseball — the high level of play, the passion



Lou Schwechheimer, leader of the Caribbean Baseball Initiative, playing catcher in a game with children at Finca Vigía, where Ernest Hemingway lived. Credit Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times

of the fans, the Sugar Kings — one of the men, George Steinbrenner, challenged the young Schwechheimer to return Havana to the fold.

Schwechheimer accepted. Soon he was sharing his vision with advisers at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, where he was studying. Soon he was the keynote

speaker at a conference in Havana, delivering a paper titled “Your Baseball Stadium: A Front Porch to Havana and an Economic Development Opportunity for Cuba.”

Since then, he has dedicated himself to having the International League once again live up to its name — a goal made all the more possible with Obama’s surprise

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and daring announcement last December to “begin a new chapter” with Cuba.

“This is the moment in time,” Schwechheimer said. “And we’re closing in on it.”

But Schwechheimer faces a few daunting obstacles, said Juan A. Triana, a professor of economics at the University of Havana. For one, the “vertical permission” structure of Cuban bureaucracy can be exhausting, he said. For another, some hard-liners here have little interest in restoring ties with the United States.

“It must be done step by step,” Triana said. “It could take one year, two years, three years.”

This was Schwechheimer’s fifth trip to Cuba, and many others are planned, including one next month. His patient confidence, he said, comes from believing that baseball is the “common denominator” in the Cuban-American equation, as well as from the directive he has received in meetings with State Department officials: “Be bold and engage.”

For five days, the men on the minibus kept to a crowded schedule of meetings with top-level American and Cuban officials, interrupted here and there with arranged moments of baseball good will.

They spent a good part of their time peering through tinted glass at the evolving Havana panorama: the New World utilitarian building blocks and crumbling Old World structures, the Che Guevara silhouettes and the restaurants with valet service, the northward view of the sea along the boulevard called the Malecón, toward Florida, 90 miles away.

All the while, their mantra was “respectful engagement,”

with a side of “tranquilo.”

With Schwechheimer were a Rhode Island financier, a university professor of sports management, a veteran minor league executive, and three members of the Cohen Group, a high-voltage consultancy firm in Washington: Tommy Goodman, a Spanish-fluent lawyer who handled the trip’s every detail, and two legendary American statesmen.

One, Marc Grossman, a former ambassador to Turkey, retired in 2005 as the State Department’s third-ranking official, serving as the undersecretary of state for political affairs. In 2011, Obama called the retired Grossman into temporary service as a special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

He roots for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

The other, Jeffrey Davidow, has been the ambassador to Mexico, Venezuela and Zambia, as well as the assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs. He retired in 2003 as career ambassador, the Foreign Service’s highest position, which, by law, can be held by no more than five people at a time.

He follows the Boston Red Sox.

[An Emphasis on Patience](#)

The two Foreign Service veterans had learned long ago how to hear what was not being said, how to deconstruct a handshake, how to deftly use the tool of time. They understood the value of patience.

For example, on the group’s first night in Havana, Schwechheimer treated several Cuban friends to dinner. He mentioned in passing that he would someday like to share his baseball plans with Antonio Castro, an

orthopedic surgeon, one of the country’s most prominent baseball officials — and a son of Fidel.

It was quickly intimated that such a meeting was possible. The next night, one of Schwechheimer’s dinner guests, a former Cuban legislator, invited the Americans to the historic Hotel Nacional de Cuba. There they were introduced with some pomp to the hotel’s manager, who said he would provide a private room for the meeting on the day it happened.

Then the American entourage was led into a small theater to watch a long cabaret performance that seemed lifted from a 1940s MGM musical. Every so often the legislator would raise his hand, and bottles of Cristal beer, bowls of olives and trays of cured ham would appear.

For the rest of the five-day trip, a meeting with Antonio Castro seemed imminent. There were periodic cellphone calls to Goodman to stand by, prompting the American visitors to change out of casual clothes and into suits and ties. All the while, the two former ambassadors kept their expectations low.

The meeting never took place, further underscoring the sense that not all is what it seems in Cuba.

But Schwechheimer was unperturbed. A chat with Castro was never part of the original schedule. Besides, the group was already making headway in substantive meetings with Cuban officials in the ministries of culture and sports — as well as with the Cuban Baseball Federation, which governs the sport — and this would not be its last trip.

“Tranquilo,” Schwechheimer said. “We’ll be back.”

Besides, the visitors had more than enough to do in trying to navigate the decades-old distrust between the two

countries, even in the limited sphere of baseball.

There is the Cuban resentment over the continuing and often risky defections of its ballplayers, including some of the top stars. Many believe this baseball drain has led to a decline in the quality of play in their country's amateur games and on the national team.

There is also the thorny matter of compensation. Given the embargo, Cuba receives nothing when a defecting ballplayer, like Yoenis Cespedes or Yasiel Puig, signs a multimillion-dollar contract with a major league team, which is not the case when a Cuban plays in, say, Japan or South Korea.

The two countries, along with Major League Baseball, have been working to resolve the matter. Antonio Castro told ESPN last year that the current arrangement, which effectively forces Cuban ballplayers to sever ties with their native country, was "crazy," but he also allowed that Cuba "has to budge" on the matter.

Once these issues are resolved — perhaps through an exemption to the embargo — Schwechheimer expects to be at the front of the line, offering affordable family entertainment, as well as jobs, to Havana. And, yes, Cuban ballplayers would be welcome to play in these minor league games — if they made the roster.

Schwechheimer said his group was not lobbying to change Cuban or American law. Its mission, he said, is to present its motives as honorable should Cuba someday say yes to the possibility of a minor league franchise, and to celebrate, through gestures of good will, the commonality found through a game.

"What Lou's trying to do makes sense," Davidow said. "It

more than makes sense. It's a good thing."

Baseball's Complex Role

To that end, the group gravitated toward various baseball-centric places in and around Havana. This is not difficult, given the game's hold on the country, where baseball souvenirs are for sale at an open market in Old Havana, and black-and-white photographs of legendary Cuban ballplayers hang in a high-end, museumlike restaurant called San Cristobal Paladar.

Still, the growing popularity of soccer in Cuba was evident everywhere, especially on television. At one point, the minibus passed a soccer game being played on a baseball field, and someone half-joked, "The enemy."

In addition, baseball remains intertwined with the complex diplomatic and political realities of Cuba, as evidenced by the reluctance of Cuban and American officials to discuss it.

A State Department official said in an email that the American Embassy in Havana was aware of the efforts by private institutions like the Caribbean Baseball Initiative to increase ties between the two countries, and described baseball as "an excellent avenue for sports diplomacy and creating good will between our peoples."

The official wrote, "The connections that our countries already have in baseball create a common bond, and the increased flow of players and friendly competition furthers the U.S. goal of enhancing opportunities for the Cuban people."

Officials for the Cuban Baseball Federation declined to speak on the record, and a request for comment from the Cuban Embassy was not answered. It was left, then, to a

Cuban ballplayer to speak.

The player, Carlos Tabares, 41, is a star veteran for the Havana Industriales, the tradition-steeped Yankees of Cuban baseball. The stocky Tabares was found one day working out with a group of aspiring young players, his shirt sweat-soaked and grass-flecked after a series of sprints.

He has had many teammates in his 24-year career, including two defectors who played in the 2015 World Series: Cespedes, of the Mets, and Kendrys Morales of the Kansas City Royals.

Tabares said he was happy for both men. Although sad to see his good friend Cespedes leave, he said he rejoiced in hearing of his former teammate's success at the major league level.

"I had many proposals myself when I was in my 20s," Tabares said, perspiration beading on his shaved head. "But I would never do that to my family. What I would have lost for the major leagues. ..."

As for the prospect of minor league baseball one day returning to Havana, Tabares said he welcomed it, of course.

"It has to be that way," he said.

One day the American baseball ambassadors were given a tour of Estadio Latinoamericano, home to the Industriales. In the bowels of that worn 70-year-old stadium were pieces of Cuba's baseball past: a marble tablet engraved with the names of "Inmortales del BaseBall"; the busts of two legends, Martin Dihigo and Adolfo Luque; a wall-size painting of Fidel Castro, in military fatigues, standing at

the plate, bat in hand.

The Cuban baseball officials leading the tour allowed that they would one day like to build a hall of fame. Well, Schwechheimer responded, perhaps the Caribbean Baseball Initiative could help with that.

Another day, the minibus of Americans made a pilgrimage to Finca Vigía, the hilltop house where Ernest Hemingway lived and wrote — and carved a crude baseball field among mango trees, so that his two sons and children from the area could play the game he loved. Often he would pitch to the boys, who were called the Gigi All-Stars.

Some new all-stars, young members of a local Little League team, were taking batting practice while waiting for their American visitors. Schwechheimer bounded out of the bus, grabbed a glove and assumed the role of catcher.

For a little while, other matters were set aside. The logistics for the next trip. The plans for more meetings with top officials, including Antonio Castro. The challenge of getting past the diplomatic impediments, the bureaucratic obstacles, the more than half-century of mutual suspicion.

For a little while, before the rains came and the minibus of Americans left for the next appointment, the scrawny Minnie Minosos and Tony Olivas and Yasiel Puigs of the future smacked balls into the mango trees, and the former ambassador Davidow caught a foul ball in his straw hat, and Schwechheimer presented the boys with dozens of much-needed baseballs. They said “bueno” and “gracias,” but the shared language was this game.

FocusON Retail

The Science of Shopping

By Mindy Shepperd, Dieste's Account Executive

While shopping has become easier for consumers, the continued advancement of how goods are bought requires retailers to dig below the surface and truly analyze purchasing patterns. More than ever, merchants and marketers are using data in order to learn and further drive dollar-spending both online and offline.

Nordstrom leverages Pinterest to pinpoint and track trending products and then uses signage promoting those goods in their brick and mortar stores.

• Designer Rebecca Minkoff is also ahead of the curve in utilizing data to enhance shopper experience with her “futuristic” stores’ use of RFID



technology to keep an accurate tab of inventory, “magic” mirrors that serve as screens allowing customers to request additional items from their dressing rooms, and sensors and cameras that monitor shoppers in order to improve store layouts.

- Dallas-based retailer Neiman Marcus enforces the SoLoMo model (social, location, mobile) through their dedicated mobile app to effectively connect sales associates with customers while in the store to deliver the “personal shopper” experience.

These are just some of the businesses and ways that big data is being used to evolve shopper experience and increase acquisition. With online fashion sales alone predicted to rise by over 40% in the next year, we are sure to see a consistent stream of multichannel marketing... and even more retailers following suit to those who have already been reaping the benefits of successful digital innovations.

If you are currently investing
in the emerging Hispanic markets;
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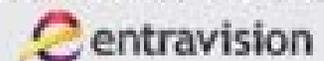
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FocusON Miami

Congrats to Gloria & Emilio Estefan

By *The Miami Herald Editorial Board*

Two weeks ago, President Obama presented Miami Beach residents Gloria and Emilio Estefan with this country's highest civilian honor — the Presidential Medal of Freedom — at a ceremony at the White House.

It's quite an honor, and we all should be proud. Yes, they are celebrities. But they also are engaged, roll-up-their-sleeves members of this community.

Whether or not Ms. Estefan's hit songs were your cup of tea or the couple's politics are to your liking, the truth is that in their arduous ride to fame and fortune, the couple proudly carried Miami's flag every step of the way. They pioneered the "Miami sound," a Latin-fusion beat that spread across the world, first as the Miami Sound Machine, then as Ms. Estefan sold 100 million records as a solo artist. For that alone, the Estefans also deserve our thanks.

And if you're a Cuban exile in South Florida, you should also be proud, for the Estefans have proudly displayed their Cuban roots. "They have promoted their cultural heritage," Mr. Obama said as he introduced the couple.

Ms. Estefan's parents, José Manuel and Gloria Fajardo, fled Cuba with the rise of Fidel Castro; her father later took part in the failed Bay of Pigs invasion and also served in Vietnam. Ms. Estefan largely was reared by her mother in Little Havana. She couldn't be more representative of Miami's historic exile community.



Singer Gloria Estefan and husband, music producer Emilio Estefan, warmly hug following the Presidential Medal of Freedom ceremony in the East Room of the White House. Olivier Douliery ABACA PRESS

But what makes the Estefans truly special is that they have always believed in Miami's promise — through their songs and business ventures. They never went Hollywood.

From Emilio Estefan's first act of civic pride, naming his young musical group the Miami Latin Boys, to the couple's current effort to renovate and reopen the Miami Marine Stadium, they support and promote our hometown like no other celebrities have. Others, such as Madonna and Sylvester Stallone, bought homes and made Miami their headquarters — temporarily.

Gloria and Emilio Estefan are still here, believing, investing in being Miami ambassadors. Just like they were in the early years of Miami Beach's rebirth when they jumped in and backed the first successful Cuban restaurant on South Beach, Larios, then renovated the famed Cardozo Hotel up the street.

They have been here at horrendous times for this community. In 1992, when Miami-Dade was rocked by Hurricane Andrew, the Estefans put on a star-studded benefit concert for the victims. Ms. Estefan's singing *Coming out of the Dark* that day helped the community's psychological healing begin. And too many times to count, they've spoken out in support of Cubans here and on the island.

They have spent millions in the local economy. Emilio Estefan has run companies, written books and helped launch other artists' musical careers, including those of Jon Secada and Albita. He's a dynamo, a true entrepreneur, a visionary — and a man, President Obama disclosed, who had the courage in the late 1970s to play *The Hustle* on an accordion and still win the girl singer's heart.

Currently, the Estefans are showcasing the success they created in Miami in a hit Broadway play, *On Your Feet*. We hope it eventually will have successful Miami run.

On Tuesday, the president honored 15 other incredibly successful people, including Barbra Streisand, Steven Spielberg, Willie Mays, Stephen Sondheim and James Taylor. And on the stage with them were the Estefans, representing Miami.

Well done.

FocusON Immigration

Social Media Helps Drive Historic Cuban Exodus to US

By Michael Weissenstein

As summer began to bake the central Cuban city of Sancti Spiritus, Elio Alvarez and Lideisy Hernandez sold their tiny apartment and everything in it for \$5,000 and joined the largest migration from their homeland in decades.

Buying two smartphones for \$160 apiece on a layover on their way to Ecuador, they plugged themselves into a highly organized, well-funded and increasingly successful homebrewed effort to make human traffickers obsolete by using smartphones and messaging apps on much of the 3,400-mile (5,500-kilometer) overland journey that's become Cubans' main route to the U.S.

Some 45,000 Cubans are expected to move by bus, boat, taxi and on foot from Ecuador and other South and Central American countries to the Texas and California borders this year, afraid that the normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba will mean an imminent end to special immigration privileges that date to the opening of the Cold War. With thousands more taking rafts across the Florida Straits, 2015 may witness the biggest outflow of Cubans since the 1980 Mariel boatlift that hauled 125,000 people across the Florida Straits.

The overland exodus has caused a border crisis in Central America, set off tensions in the newly friendly U.S.-Cuban relationship and sparked rising calls in the U.S. to end Cubans' automatic right to legal residency once they touch

U.S. soil.

Those who've arrived have gotten in touch with their acquaintances, their friends, and tell them how the route is.

At the heart of it all is Cubans' ability to cross some of the world's most dangerous territory relatively unscathed by the corrupt border guards, criminal gangs and human traffickers known

as coyotes who make life hell for so many other Latin American migrants. Key to that ability is the constant flow of information between migrants starting the journey and those who have just completed it.

"Those who've arrived have gotten in touch with their acquaintances, their friends, and tell them how the route is. That means that no one needs a coyote," said Hernandez, a 32-year-old psychologist. "You go making friends along the way. I myself have 70, 80-something friends on Facebook who've already gotten to the United States."



Cuban migrants sleep inside a public restroom of the border control building, in Penas Blancas, Costa Rica, border with Nicaragua. Central America governments have called an emergency meeting on recent Cuban migrant crisis in El Salvador on Tuesday. Nicaragua, a close socialist ally of Cuba, has not publicly responded to a Costa Rican proposal to create a "humanitarian corridor" for Cubans to move unhindered toward the U.S. Esteban Felix Associated Press

Cuban migrants start with an advantage others can only dream of: Many countries along the route grant Cubans free passage because their government does not respond to most requests for information about illegal migrants that would allow them to be deported.

And many

Cubans who run out of money along the way have access to hundreds or thousands of dollars in backup funds sent by relatives who belong to one of the United States' most prosperous immigrant groups.

Once they reach the U.S. border, they can just show up at an established U.S. port of entry and declare their nationality, avoiding the dangerous desert crossings that confront many migrants who try to avoid U.S. Border Patrol. Federal data shows 45,000 Cubans appeared at U.S. land border points

in the 12 months ending Sept. 20, and at least as many are expected in the coming year.

But along the way, Cubans still must navigate jungles, rivers, at least seven international borders and countries in the grip of gangs responsible for some of the world's highest homicide rates.

Asked their secret, Cubans interviewed in shelters along Costa Rica's northern border with Nicaragua almost universally pointed to cheap smartphones, data plans and Facebook.

"We're completely, always, alert to our phones," Alvarez said, gesturing to his Samsung Galaxy S3 Mini outside a border station in northern Costa Rica, where he and some 2,000 other Cuban migrants were stuck waiting for resolution of a regional conflict set off by Nicaragua's closure of the crossing. "This is our best friend, the phone. It's always on, always ready."

They tell you when you can get money, at what moment you can arrive somewhere, what hotel to go to. In all of those things, you run less risk and go with more security and peace of mind.

The metallic "zing!" of a new message arriving in the Facebook Messenger app has become the soundtrack to this year's historic migration as Cubans consult friends further along the route for tips on bus routes, border closures, even how much to bribe the notoriously corrupt Colombian police.

"They tell you when you can get money, at what moment you can arrive somewhere, what hotel to go to," said Annieli de los Reyes, pharmacist from the eastern city of Camaguey. "In all of those things, you run less risk and go with more security and peace of mind."



Cuban migrants Annieli de los Reyes and Carlos Mena talk with a Annieli's mother back in Cuba, at a shelter in La Cruz, Costa Rica, on the border with Nicaragua. "We have been able to stay in contact with all the persons that are ahead of us and help those behind," the couple said when asked on how technology is helping them on their trip. The local sales office for telecommunications company Movistar has increased the number of sales vans along the border from two to seven, most stationed permanently outside the Cubans' temporary encampments in schools and churches, selling 2-for-1 \$3-per-megabyte data packages to a steady stream of Cuban migrants. Esteban Felix Associated Press

While many move across large swathes of territory independent of coyotes, others still depend on traffickers, most commonly when they need to get across complicated

borders.

On Nov. 10, a U.S.-backed Costa Rican task force on human trafficking arrested 12 people suspected of helping run an

international ring that charged Cubans between \$7,000 and \$15,000 to be smuggled from South America to the U.S. border, or \$400 to be moved safely across Costa Rica.

Alongside the anti-trafficking operation, Costa Rica began holding Cubans in the town of Paso Canoas on the Panamanian border. Their numbers grew to around 1,600 until Costa Rica announced on Nov. 13 that it would allow them to transit the country to Nicaragua. Complaining that it wasn't consulted, Nicaragua dispatched soldiers to the border to block the Cubans' passage, setting off minor clashes at the Penas Blancas crossing on Nov. 15.

The dispute has left some 2,000 Cubans stranded in shelters in Guanacaste province on the Nicaraguan border, with dozens more arriving daily. The local sales office for telecommunications company Movistar has increased the number of sales vans along the border from two to seven, most stationed permanently outside the Cubans' temporary encampments in schools and churches, selling 2-for-1 \$3-per-megabyte data packages to a steady stream of Cuban migrants.

Central America governments have called an emergency meeting on the crisis in El Salvador on Tuesday. Nicaragua, a close socialist ally of Cuba, has not publicly responded to a Costa Rican proposal to create a "humanitarian corridor" for Cubans to move unhindered toward the U.S.

Cuba, meanwhile, has made a series of public statements blaming U.S. emigration policies for drawing so many from their homeland, draining the country of badly needed professionals and working-age adults. Ironically, the Cuban government has been joined by an increasing number of Cuban-American legislators in the U.S. who say the Cold War-era Cuban Adjustment Act that grants new migrants

special privileges is being abused by economic migrants instead of granting asylum to political refugees as originally intended.

Outside observers say Cuba's own policies also fuel emigration, which siphons dissatisfied Cubans away from the island and increases the number of people injecting badly needed remittances into Cuba's cash-starved economy. The communist government did away with a hated exit permit three years ago and also began allowing Cubans to establish permanent residence in the U.S. while maintaining their property rights and access to social services in Cuba.

Geny Machado worked as a private shopkeeper in the Havana neighborhood of Guanabacoa before he hopscotched from Trinidad and Tobago to Venezuela, where he started a months-long journey north with stops to work and earn money for the next stages. Other Cubans interviewed in Costa Rica were making their way from as far south as Chile, Argentina and Brazil.

Machado showed a reporter a string of Facebook messages from a friend recently arrived in the U.S. advising him on the best route from Guatemala City to the Mexican border; what to say to Mexican border guards once he arrived; what hotel to stay at on his first night in Mexico; and even the nightly rate: \$10.

"The one who's ahead guides the one behind," said Machado, 45. "We go along communicating like that. Social networks are what's helping Cubans along the whole migration route, more than the coyotes."

When migrants are stopped by border guards along the route, officials' first step is contacting the migrant's country to confirm their identity. In the case of Cubans, that's often impossible. The Cuban government doesn't respond to as

many as 90 percent of inquiries about people with Cuban passports but no visas, said Mario Madrazo Ubach, head of immigration control at Mexico's National Migration Institute. Since entering the country without a visa in itself isn't a crime in Mexico, Mexican authorities generally give the Cubans 20 days to leave the country, which they use to get to the U.S. border and claim legal residency. Similar scenarios take place throughout Central America.

"You're not going to find Cubans in the back of tractor-trailers," Madrazo said.

Still, Cubans are not immune to the dangers of northbound migration. A migrants' rights group said in July that Mexican border officials had been holding Cubans in border inspection stations until their relatives in the U.S. sent as much as \$5,000 to win their freedom.

Mario Martinez, 24, trained as a computer programmer but worked in a barber shop in the Havana neighborhood of Marianao until he left for Ecuador this fall with his friend and traveling partner Manuel Gonzalez. Sitting on the floor of a public bathroom next to the only available electrical outlet he could find in a bus station on the Costa Rica-Nicaragua border, he said that Facebook friends had been steering the two men away from coyotes, saying that "it was going to end up being very expensive, that they were going to charge us more money, that they could cheat us."

"The first ones, sure, they had to do this with 'contacts,' the great majority had coyotes," Martinez said as Gonzalez's Facebook Messenger app pinged with the sound of new messages arriving. "But there were coyotes who were picking people up to cheat them, to kill people, to rape them. So now we Cubans are showing each other how to do the journey on our own."

FocusON Entrepreneurship

Inside The Southern California Factory That Makes the Donald Trump Hats

Mai-Duc went inside the factory and delivers [this report](#).

By Christine Mai, Du

When Brian Kennedy's family business was first asked to make the now-famous Donald Trump trucker hats, he knew he would need to address his workers, many of whom are Latino and speak Spanish.

"I said to them, 'We're not political. We're here to work,'" Kennedy tells the Los Angeles Times from the second floor of the factory, the steady whirl of sewing machines below him. "And I haven't gotten any negative comments."

Dozens of employees, almost all of them Latino, continue to work, sweeping scraps of fabric from the floor, peering over glasses as their deft hands assemble one hat after another. All around them sit stacks of freshly minted camouflage-print trucker caps, with the real estate mogul and 2016 presidential hopeful's familiar "Make America Great Again" slogan emblazoned on the front in orange.

The hats, known best in the signature red with white font, have inspired hipster fashion trends, Halloween costumes, a make-your-own-Trump-hat generator and even a short-lived rumor they actually were made in China.

(They weren't, Kennedy assures).

But they have been a boon to Kennedy's family business, Cali-Fame, the Carson-based hat manufacturer that pulled in more than \$270,000 from the Trump campaign last quarter, according to campaign finance records.

The merchandise was a portion of the more than \$825,000 the Trump campaign dropped on bumper stickers, T-shirts, hats and other promotional gear, the largest category of Trump's spending outside of travel.

The hats have seemingly been a boon for Trump's campaign too. Most of the caps sell for \$25 each and appear to have boosted the billionaire's small donations column, making donors of those who purchase them, ironically or not.

Kennedy and his brother, Tim, Cali-Fame's vice president of sales, have been reluctant to wade into the political fray and bristled at the media coverage they received for weeks after campaign finance disclosures were released.

Kennedy downplayed the role Trump's orders have played for his business as the holiday season begins, but several employees said this is the busiest November they've seen in years, with plenty of overtime work to go around.

Yolanda Melendrez, 44, has worked for Cali-Fame since 1991. She started as a machine operator, sewing together the seams of baseball caps, and now works as a lead on the floor, roaming as she checks on the flow of work and supervising other sewing machine operators and embroiderers.

She says she's heard some of the things Trump has said about immigrants and Latinos like her, but she tries to

ignore them.

"A lot of what he says about Latinos is not correct," she says just as a buzzer signals the end of her Saturday overtime shift and workers line up to clock out. The sound of Spanish punctuates the air as the machines sputter to a stop. "When we first got the order [for the Trump hats], I said to myself, 'Just wait until he sees who's making his hats. We're Latinos, we're Mexicans, Salvadoreños.'"

But first and foremost, she knows she has a job to do.

"You know," she adds, "he's giving us a lot of work. Keeping us busy... It's a job, I get paid to do it and it pays my bills and my rent."

And for that, Melendrez says, she's thankful.

A spokeswoman for the Trump campaign did not return a request for comment.

Kennedy says that since his father bought the business in 1977, Cali-Fame has weathered rising labor costs, changing technologies and cutthroat competition from cheap overseas labor.

"To be a local manufacturer in the United States, there's so many challenges, not only in America but in California alone," he says while surveying the massive warehouse.

For decades, the company had its bread and butter in golf tournament caps and other promotional headwear.

More recently, the manufacturer has branched out into street wear and urban fashion, launching a brand that has focused on supporting burgeoning clothing companies. Wood panels separate a portion of the warehouse for a showroom of sorts, allowing Cali-Fame

to host an occasional sale. On a recent weekend, curious deal-seekers browsed straw fedoras and baseball caps of varying designs, but no Trump hats were in sight.

"The old cliché is that you roll with the punches," Tim Kennedy says. "We've done that many times, and we're constantly changing what we do and how we do things."

But it's been increasingly difficult to stay competitive, the Kennedy brothers say. Rising healthcare costs, the possibility of a \$15 minimum wage countywide and workers' compensation laws have been a "juggling act" to keep up with, they say.

Brian Kennedy says his company has been making hats for Trump's golf courses for about a decade, which is how he got connected with the campaign.

These caps -- "the five-panel trucker hat with cord," Kennedy will tell you -- have become a solid front-runner when it comes to 2016 campaign kitsch.

"It's a classic," says Tim Kennedy. "Everything comes full circle in the fashion business. It's straight from Middle America to New York and Los Angeles

Arriba y Abajo

NBC Anchor Spot for Diaz Balart

José Díaz Balart, Telemundo's network news anchor, has joined NBC's Nightly News Saturday as part of the anchor rotation and as a panelist on "Meet the Press."

José is the only journalist to simultaneously anchor network newscasts in English and Spanish.

The new role for Diaz Balart was announced by Telemundo

network president Luis Silberwasser in a memo to his staff. Silberwasser took the opportunity to highlight the advantage of working for NBC Universal, which owns NBC, Telemundo and MSNBC networks.

Here's his memo:

From: "Silberwasser, Luis (NBCUniversal)"

Subject: News Announcement

As you know, our network News team has been on a roll this year. Coming off their best season ever for both "Noticiero Telemundo" and "Al Rojo Vivo con Maria Celeste," they successfully launched their 2016 elections coverage campaign "#Yo Decido" and are getting ready for a very exciting political year ahead. In addition, our News talent continue to grow and are increasingly being recognized by their peers and the industry at large.

On that note, I take this opportunity to share with you some news that make us all very proud. In addition to his double duty as "Noticiero Telemundo" and MSNBC's "The Rundown with José Diaz-Balart" anchor, our very own Jose Diaz-Balart will join the rotation of anchors for Saturday editions of "NBC Nightly News" and become a frequent panelist on "Meet the Press" on the NBC network. Needless to say, this is a recognition of the great year Jose has had as the first and only journalist to serve as daily news anchor on two national television networks in Spanish and English, and a testimony to what the NBCUniversal properties can achieve when we work together.

Please join me in congratulating Jose and I invite you to tune-in to watch him anchoring this weekend's newscast of the #1 news organization in the country, another great example of Hispanic America at its best.

Luis

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