

## **THE HISPANIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES PULITZER PRIZE WINNING AUTHOR JUNOT DIAZ WILL BE HONORED AT THE 29TH HISPANIC HERITAGE AWARDS SEPTEMBER 22nd**

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Washington, DC – The Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) today announced that Author Junot Diaz will receive the Literature Award at the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Hispanic Heritage Awards, which will take place on September 22, 2016, at the historic Warner Theatre in Washington, DC. The Awards recognize the contributions and accomplishments of Latino leaders in various fields while celebrating cultural pride and the great promise to America. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor was announced earlier as another Honoree. Other Awardees will be announced in the coming weeks.

The Awards were established in 1987 by The White House to commemorate the creation of Hispanic Heritage Month in America. The Awards are considered among the highest honors for Latinos by Latinos and the program will include top Latino performers and personalities paying tribute to the Honorees from the stage.

“The Hispanic Heritage Foundation is extremely proud to honor Junot Diaz with our Literature Award,” said Jose Antonio Tijerino, president and CEO of Hispanic Heritage Foundation. “He is a transcendent, truthful story teller who is informed by his community, roots and experiences. Most of all, Junot writes with impact. Our Honorees embody what it is to be real Americans and a source of inspiration for Latinos. The Hispanic community has made significant contributions throughout history, and we are proud to recognize that impact in the present and the future as well.”

Born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New Jersey, Junot Díaz is currently a professor at MIT and has received the Pulitzer Prize, MacArthur Fellowship also known as the Genius Award, among others. He is the author of *Drown*, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*—which won the John Sargent, Sr., First Novel Prize; the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award; and the 2008 Pulitzer Prize—and *This Is How You Lose Her*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award. He is the recipient of the Eugene McDermott Award, a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation, a Lila Acheson Wallace Reader's Digest Award, the 2002 PEN/Malamud Award, the 2003 U.S./Japan Creative Artist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, the Rome Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Sunday Times Short Story Prize and a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship. A BBC poll of US critics has named Díaz’s *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* as “the best novel of the 21st century to date.”

Junot is a longtime advocate of immigrant rights both in the US and in the Dominican Republic having served on the Board of Freedom University, which serves undocumented students. He is currently the honorary chairman of the DREAM Project, a non-profit education involvement program in the Dominican Republic.

The Hispanic Heritage Awards serve as a launch of HHF’s year-round, award-winning programs which inspire, prepare and connect Latino leaders in the classroom, community and workforce to meet America’s needs in priority fields. HHF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For more information on the mission of HHF visit [www.hispanicheritage.org](http://www.hispanicheritage.org).

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