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For Immediate Release

GSU Awarding Honorary Doctorate to Journalist Maria Hinojosa

University Park, Illinois, May 22, 2013 - Governors State University will award bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees to approximately 1,500 graduates at its June 8 Commencement. GSU will host morning and afternoon ceremonies at the Tinley Park Convention Center.

GSU is awarding an honorary doctorate to Maria Hinojosa, an award-winning journalist for some of the nation's most respected news organizations. Hinojosa will speak at the 10 a.m. ceremony.

During her 25-year career at CNN, PBS, National Public Radio, and WGBH in Boston, Hinojosa has striven to give voice to the voiceless, to make the invisible visible, and to shine light where there is darkness. Hinojosa was the first Latina to be employed at NPR, the first Latina correspondent at CNN, and the first Latina anchor at PBS. Those "firsts," she says, gave her a great sense of the responsibility to represent an entire community at editorial meetings.

As the anchor and executive producer of her own weekly NPR show, "Latino USA," and anchor of the talk show, "Maria Hinojosa: One-on-One," from WGBH/LaPlaza, she has informed millions of Americans about the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States.

Previously a Senior Correspondent for "NOW" on PBS, and currently a contributing correspondent for "Need to Know" on the network, Hinojosa has covered hundreds of important stories. Her powerful reporting has focused on immigrant work camps in New Orleans after Katrina, teen girl victims of sexual harassment on the job, and the poor in Alabama.

In April, 2010, Hinojosa took a groundbreaking step by launching The Futuro Media Group, a multi-platform, nonprofit production company based in Harlem with the mission to give critical voice to the social and civic justice issues facing the diverse new America.

Hinojosa was the first Latina to anchor a "FRONTLINE" report "Lost in Detention," which aired in October, 2011. The documentary explored abuse at immigrant detention facilities, attracting attention from Capitol Hill to both the mainstream and Spanish-language media.

"She is in so many ways emblematic of the new world in which we live," veteran journalist Tom Brokaw said.

Hinojosa has won top honors in American journalism including four Emmys, the 2012 John Chancellor Award for Excellence in Journalism, the Studs Terkel Community Media Award, the Robert F. Kennedy Award for Reporting on the Disadvantaged, and the Edward R. Murrow Award from the Overseas Press Club for best documentary for her groundbreaking "Child Brides: Stolen Lives." In 2009, Hinojosa was honored with an AWRT Gracie Award for Individual Achievement as Best TV Correspondent.

Hinojosa is the author of two books, including a motherhood memoir, "Raising Raul: Adventures Raising Myself and My Son." She has also been a weekly syndicated columnist for King Features/Hearst. Hinojosa was born in Mexico City, raised in Chicago, and received her BA from Barnard College. She lives in Harlem with her husband, artist German Perez, and their son and daughter.

GSU's Commencement will take place at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., on Saturday, June 8. Admission is by ticket only.