



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Maricela Cueva
(626) 403-3200 x 215
maricela@vpepr.com

**MENDEZ NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TRANSPLANTATION'S ONLINE TELENOVELA, FIXING PACO,
NOMINATED FOR THREE 2014 IMAGEN AWARDS**

Web Series Provides Latinos with Culturally-Relevant Information on Life-Saving Medical Procedure

LOS ANGELES- (June 25, 2014) - The Mendez National Institute of Transplantation Foundation (MNITF) announced that its telenovela-style web series, *Fixing Paco*, has been nominated for three 2014 Imagen Awards for Best Web Series: Drama; Comedy; and Reality or Informational. Funded by the UniHealth Foundation, *Fixing Paco* provides dialysis patients and their families with culturally-relevant information on the treatment option of kidney transplantation, living donation, and being proactive in healthcare.

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, almost half of the patients on the organ transplant waiting list in the greater Los Angeles area are Latino. Diabetes and high blood pressure are the main culprits, making kidneys the organ in demand for Latinos. At a national level, there are more than 20,000 Latinos currently awaiting an organ transplant.

"Prior to *Fixing Paco* nothing existed this entertaining and engaging to help inform Latino dialysis patients of this potentially life-saving procedure," said Nicole Mendez Pinkerton, Executive Director at MNITF and Executive Producer/Creator of *Fixing Paco*. "It's an honor to be recognized for a project that is dear to our hearts, which is informing the public on such an important health issue that affects many Latino dialysis patients and their families."

Fixing Paco, directed and produced by award-winning filmmaker Joe Camareno, follows the fictional Fuentes family's triumph in battling kidney failure, a battle many Latino families are currently facing. *Fixing Paco* delivers some heart wrenching and powerful performances by Paul Rodriguez, Emmy-winning actress Marabina Jaimes, Soledad St. Hilaire and Ingrid Oliu. The 10-episode telenovela series also stars Latin pop sensation Christian Chavez and Gloria Garayua.

The Imagen Awards winners will be announced August 1st at an awards ceremony, which will also be aired as a one-hour special on PBS Southern California. *Fixing Paco* won 2012 Best Webisode at the Reel Raquache Art & Film Festival in East Los Angeles.

For more information on *Fixing Paco* visit www.FixingPaco.org. Follow *Fixing Paco* on [Facebook/FixingPaco](https://www.facebook.com/FixingPaco) and on Twitter [@FixingPaco](https://twitter.com/FixingPaco).

ABOUT MENDEZ NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TRANSPLANTATION FOUNDATION (MNITF)

The Mendez National Institute of Transplantation Foundation (MNITF) is a public nonprofit organization dedicated to its founding mission of advancing the science and practice of organ transplantation through research, education and innovation. www.transplantation.com



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