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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **NATIVE AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS SELECTED FOR THE 2016 NATIVE AMERICAN WRITERS LAB**

Sponsored by Comcast/NBCUniversal, CBS Entertainment Diversity and HBO

Friday, April 22nd, 2016

Los Angeles, CA - The LA Skins Fest, a Native American film festival, in partnership with Comcast/NBCUniversal, CBS Entertainment Diversity and HBO announced today they have selected 7 participants for the inaugural NATIVE AMERICAN TV WRITERS LAB, a talent development program that aims to boost the careers of Native American writers.

The NATIVE AMERICAN TV WRITERS LAB received more than 100 applicants recommended by such entities as Universal Studios and the Writers Guild of America-West. The participants will take part in a five week curriculum curated by seasoned writing executives. The lab will consist of daily workshops, seminars and one-on-one mentoring to help each writer develop and complete a pilot in five weeks and hone skills to prepare the writers to move into staff writing jobs.

The 7 participants are:

Joseph Clift (Cowlitz Indian Tribe)

Kelly Lynne D'Angelo (Tuscarora)

William Jehu Garroutte (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)

Tom Hanada (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)

Khadijah Holgate (Nipmuc)

Jason Levinson (Northern Cherokee Nation of Missouri and Arkansas)

Carlee Malemute (Athabascan)

At the end of the program, each participant will have completed an original television script and will take creative meetings with various executives. The five week total immersion lab will be mentored and guided by Geoff Harris, the program mentor for the National Hispanic Media Coalition's Writers Program and former head of StoryDevelopment at NBCUniversal.

The NATIVE AMERICAN TV WRITERS LAB was created to expand the amount of Native Americans working behind the camera, as a way to increase fair and accurate portrayals of Native Americans on television. During the 2013-14 television season, Native Americans composed only 0.1% of writers staffed on TV shows, according to the 2015 Writers Guild of America-West TV Staffing Brief.

Ian Skorodin (Choctaw), Founding Director of the LA SKINS FEST, said, "Together with our partners at Comcast/NBCUniversal, CBS Entertainment Diversity and HBO, we are honored to offer this incredible opportunity. This lab is a first step in giving a voice to an overwhelmingly talented but overlooked community."

The 2016 Native American TV Writers Lab is sponsored by Comcast/NBCUniversal, CBS Entertainment Diversity and HBO.

For more information, visit [laskinsfest.com](http://laskinsfest.com)