

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers to Honor Guatemalan Filmmaker Luis Argueta with Global Citizen Award

Free Washington D.C. Showing of Immigration Film, ABRAZOS, Set for Monday June 17

WASHINGTON D.C., DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, June 10, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Returned Peace Corps Volunteers will honor acclaimed Guatemalan filmmaker Luis Argueta next week in both Washington D.C. and Austin, Texas, with showings of [ABRAZOS](#) (Hugs in Spanish), one of his latest documentaries on immigration.



Argueta, recipient of the [2019 Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award](#) from National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), will attend the DC showing of ABRAZOS on Monday June 17 at 6:30 pm at New York University's DC auditorium at 1307 L Street NW. Attendance is free. Local Returned Peace Corps Volunteers will co-host the event with NYU-DC and NPCA. To RSVP, go to NYU-DC's [webpage](#).

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Glenn Blumhorst, NPCA President

The moving documentary focuses on a group of U.S. citizen children who travel from Minnesota to Guatemala to meet their grandparents, cousins and in some cases siblings for the first time. After being separated for nearly two decades, these families are able to share stories, strengthen traditions and begin to reconstruct their cultural identity.

Following the film, Argueta will discuss his work with two boys featured in the film and Lisa Kremer, Project Coordinator of Familias Juntas (Families Together). Randy Capps, U.S. Programs Research Director at the Migration Policy Institute, will introduce Argueta and moderate a panel discussion.

Later next week, on Saturday June 22 in Austin, Texas, Argueta will receive the Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award, the highest honor bestowed upon a global leader by NPCA, during the association's annual Peace Corps Connect national conference June 20-22.

“Each year the Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award honors an outstanding global leader who grew up in a country where Peace Corps Volunteers served, whose life was influenced by Peace Corps, and whose career contributed significantly to their nation and the world in ways that reflect shared values in human dignity and economic, social, and political development,” said NPCA President Glenn Blumhorst. “Luis Argueta, who was strongly influenced by a Peace Corps

Volunteer more than 50 years ago in Guatemala City, is an outstanding example of a global leader who embraces the values of Peace Corps."

The Guardian has named Argueta one of Guatemala's National Living Icons, alongside Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchu and Singer/Songwriter Ricardo Arjona. He also has been awarded the Order of Quetzal in the degree of Grand Officer, the highest honor given by Guatemala. His 1994 film, *The Silence of Neto*, was the first feature-length film submitted by Guatemala to the Academy Awards as Best Foreign Language Film.

Argueta's series of films on immigration -- *abUSed: The Postville Raid*, *ABRAZOS*, and *The U Turn* -- brings into sharp focus the resilience of immigrants, their struggle to succeed often against impossible odds as well as their contributions to American society. He is currently at work on a new immigration film that will look at the long lasting effects of family separations.



Luis Argueta Photo Credit: Bea Gallardo

Argueta's long association with the Peace Corps began in 1967 when Argueta met Kenneth Lehman, a newly arrived Peace Corps volunteer in Guatemala City, who served as Argueta's tutor for seven months before Argueta, then a high school graduate, left for the University of Michigan on an industrial engineering scholarship.

Lehman played a key role in helping expose Argueta to the plight of Guatemala City's poor. When Lehman's students asked for help in becoming more involved in the city's social issues, Lehman helped them launch a literacy campaign focused on social centers serving the poorest of the poor in the city. "Luis was a charter member of the group," recalls Lehman. The two have remained close friends for more than 50 years. Earlier this year Lehman nominated Argueta to receive NPCA's Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award.

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