

**[\*PRESS EMBARGO\*: November 14, 2018 @ 10am ET]**

## NEW YORK WOMEN IN FILM AND TELEVISION APPOINTS CYNTHIA LÓPEZ AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*López Will Step into Position January 1, 2019*

**New York City [November 14, 2018]** -- New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT), the largest member chapter within its worldwide network, has named Cynthia López, an Emmy, Peabody and duPont-Columbia Award-winning media strategist, and former Commissioner of the New York City Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, as its new Executive Director. López will succeed Terry Lawler, who concludes a remarkable 21-year tenure, effective January 1st. The announcement was made today by the organization's President, Simone Pero, and its 18-person Board of Directors.

"We are thrilled to welcome Cynthia López as NYWIFT's newest Executive Director," said NYWIFT Board President Simone Pero. "Cynthia's proven talent at fostering community, building organizational and governmental partnerships, plus her outstanding fundraising abilities and a deep commitment to equality in all areas of entertainment align perfectly with NYWIFT's storied forty-year history and our vision for the future of the organization. We are immensely grateful to Terry Lawler for her leadership these past two decades, and look forward to Cynthia guiding NYWIFT as we continue to serve and expand our membership, grow organizationally, and heighten the call for parity in the rapidly changing moving image industry."

In her new role as Executive Director, López will lead NYWIFT initiatives and oversee daily operations, alongside the organization's Board of Directors, including advocacy, fundraising, programming, special events, membership, and outreach. The organization's most recent signature initiatives will continue under López's direction including NYWIFT's From Script to Pre-Production Workshop, Women Filmmakers: Immigrant Stories, and The Writers Lab for women screenwriters over 40, funded by Meryl Streep and Nicole Kidman.

López joins NYWIFT with a distinguished career as a public television executive. She developed effective strategies to support filmmakers, collaborated with industry leaders and solidified unique partnerships – all of which made her the ideal candidate. López is the recipient of many coveted industry awards including: 11 News and Documentary Emmy Awards, a Special Emmy Award for Excellence in Documentary Filmmaking, three Peabody Awards, and two duPont-Columbia

Awards. In addition, she received the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) Award for Commitment to Corporate Diversity.

“Women have repeatedly earned their rightful place in our society, government, media, and the economy. The recent electoral victories in Congress are exceptional examples, where, for the first time ever, more than 100 Congresswomen will be sworn in come January 2019. This is an inspiration to women in all areas of the film and television industry who are standing up for gender equity, equal pay, and safer work environments. I am primed for the challenges that lay ahead of us, while also galvanized by the secured victories, and look forward to developing new initiatives in support of women working in media,” said Cynthia López. “I am honored to serve as NYWIFT’s new Executive Director and am eager to work collaboratively with its membership, corporate partners, board and staff, WIFT chapters worldwide, and the guilds to meet the complex demands of the digital media industry.”

López served as the Commissioner of the New York City Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment, where she was the steward of the Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting. López implemented strategies to support film and TV production throughout the five boroughs. The media industry increased its direct annual spend to the local economy by 21 percent during her tenure. Prior to working as Commissioner, López was Executive Vice President and co-Executive Producer of the award-winning PBS documentary series, *American Documentary I POV* and was involved in the organization's strategic growth and creative development for 14 years. López is a founding member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP). She served on the Board of Trustees for the Paley Center, NYC & Company, Museum of the Moving Image and the Tribeca Film Institute Latin America Fund Advisory Board. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for Latino Public Broadcasting, Manhattan Neighborhood Network and Hunter College IMA Program. López was named by *People en Español's 25 Most Powerful Women*, The Imagen Foundation’s Top 20 Most Influential Latinos in Entertainment in 2013 and 2014, and *Variety's* Top 50 New York Entertainment Elite.

The hiring of Cynthia López comes after Terry Lawler announced she would be stepping down from her position. Lawler joined the staff in June 1997 at the start of NYWIFT’s 20th anniversary year. During her successful tenure, Lawler elevated the organization through extensive growth and moved NYWIFT through a pivotal period for women in the moving image industry.

The final Muse Awards under Terry Lawler’s direction is slated for December 13, 2018. Honorees for the upcoming 39<sup>th</sup> Muse Awards gala, honoring women of vision and achievement both in front of and behind the camera, will be announced soon.

### **About New York Women in Film & Television:**

New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) advocates for equality in the moving image industry and supports women in every stage of their careers. As the preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York, NYWIFT energizes women by illuminating their

achievements, presenting training and professional development programs, awarding scholarships and grants, and providing access to a supportive community of peers. NYWIFT brings together nearly 2,500 women and men working both above and below the line. NYWIFT is part of a network of 50 women in film chapters worldwide, representing more than 15,000 members. NYWIFT is a nonprofit 501c3 public charity.

More information can be found online at: [www.NYWIFT.org](http://www.NYWIFT.org)

**Press Inquiries and Photo Selects:**

Katie Chambers

Community Engagement Director, New York Women in Film & Television

[kchambers@nywift.org](mailto:kchambers@nywift.org)