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**Steven Spielberg and USC Shoah Foundation to Honor Mellody Hobson and George Lucas at Ambassadors for Humanity Gala in Los Angeles**

**The Walt Disney Company is Presenting Sponsor**

Los Angeles, November 3, 2016 – Steven Spielberg, founder of USC Shoah Foundation - The Institute for Visual History and Education, will present Mellody Hobson and George Lucas with the Institute’s 2016 Ambassador for Humanity Award at the organization’s annual gala, to be held this year in Los Angeles on Dec. 8, 2016. Actor Harrison Ford will be one of the evening’s special guests, with additional guests to be announced. The gala presenting sponsor is The Walt Disney Company, a dedicated supporter of the organization.

Mellody & George will be honored for their steadfast commitment to dynamic and innovative humanitarian efforts, and their longtime support of USC Shoah Foundation.

Hobson is the president of Ariel Investments. Lucas is one of the world’s most distinguished filmmakers.

“Mellody and George are worthy recipients who understand the importance of vigilance and education in countering hatred around the world,” Spielberg said. “We are pleased to recognize them for their remarkable commitment to education and diversity, to visual arts and storytelling and to leveraging technology for humanitarian efforts.”

Lucas is a graduate of USC, and both he and Hobson are esteemed leaders and supporters of the university and its diverse community.

“Mellody Hobson and George Lucas not only share this university’s passion for education, research, inclusion and diversity, but they also understand the value and importance of preserving and sharing the 54,000 testimonies in USC Shoah Foundation’s Visual History Archive,” said USC President C. L. Max Nikias. “As recipients of the Ambassador for Humanity Award, they join an inspiring group of past honorees whose collective dedication ensures that we keep the flame of memory alive by educating and enlightening future generations.”

The Ambassadors for Humanity event is a crucial part of the Institute’s efforts helping to forge partnerships that sustain the organization into the future. The gala raises much-needed general funds to support its educational programs including expansion of the Institute’s award-winning IWitness website, professional development for educators globally, the Center for Advanced Genocide Research, academic conferences, expanding access to the Visual History Archive and testimony preservation, to name a few.

“As we see the continuing rise of hatred and racism, the work of the Institute is as important as ever,” said Executive Director Stephen Smith. “We are pleased to honor Mellody and George who embody the Institute’s mission and goals, and have an opportunity to join forces to bring attention and awareness to our mutual educational efforts.”

For more information about the gala or to purchase tickets, please call the USC Shoah Foundation Benefit Line at 818-779-4933 or email ambassadorsgala@usc.edu. Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

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**About USC Shoah Foundation**
USC Shoah Foundation — The Institute for Visual History and Education is dedicated to making audio- visual interviews with survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides, a compelling voice for education and action. The Institute’s current collection of more than 54,000 eyewitness testimonies contained within its Visual History Archive**®** preserves history as told by the people who lived it, and lived through it. Housed at the University of Southern California, within the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the Institute works with partners around the world to advance scholarship and research, to provide resources and online tools for educators, and to disseminate the testimonies for educational purposes. Visual History Archive is a registered trademark of USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education Reg. U.S. Pat. &Tm. Off.