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### TCA Panelist Biographies

### Geena Davis

Academy Award winner Geena Davis is one of Hollywood’s most respected actors, appearing in several roles that became cultural landmarks. Earning the 2006 Golden Globe Award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series – Drama, Davis broke ground in her portrayal of the first female president of the United States in ABC’s hit show “Commander in Chief.”

In 1989, Davis received the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role as the offbeat dog trainer Muriel Pritchett in Lawrence Kasdan’s *The Accidental Tourist*. She was again nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for her performance in Ridley Scott’s *Thelma & Louise*, in which she co-starred with Susan Sarandon. Davis went on to receive a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actress for her portrayal of baseball phenomenon Dottie Hinson in *A League of Their Own*.

Davis made her feature film debut starring opposite Dustin Hoffman in *Tootsie*. She went on to star in such films as *The Fly*, *Beetlejuice*, *Angie*, *The Long Kiss Goodnight* and *Stuart Little*.

Few have achieved such remarkable success in as many different fields as Davis has: She is not only an Oscar and Golden Globe winning actor, but a world-class athlete (at one time the nation’s 13th-ranked archer), a member of the genius society Mensa, and now is recognized for her tireless advocacy for women and girls nearly as much as for her acting accomplishments. She is the founder and chair of the non-profit Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, which engages film and television creators to dramatically increase the percentages of female characters — and reduce gender stereotyping — in media made for children 11 and under.

Davis was appointed Special Envoy for Women and Girls in ICT for the UN’s [International Telecommunication Union](http://www.itu.int/en/Pages/default.aspx) (ITU). Davis is also an official partner of UN Women, working toward their goal of promoting gender equality and empowering women worldwide. She is the chair of the California Commission on the Status of Women.

Davis holds honorary degrees from Boston University, Bates College and New England College.

**Ava DuVernay**

Ava DuVernay is a writer, producer, director and distributor of independent film.

Winner of the Best Director Award at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival, DuVernay was honored with the 2013 John Cassavetes Independent Spirit Award and the Tribeca Film Institute 2013 Affinity Award for her second feature film, *Middle of Nowhere*.

Currently, she is in post production on the upcoming feature film *SELMA*, which chronicles the historic 1965 voting rights campaign led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. DuVernay is directing the film from her screenplay, with Oprah Winfrey and Brad Pitt's Academy Award-winning company Plan B serving as producers.

DuVernay made her directorial debut with the critically acclaimed 2008 hip-hop documentary, *This is The Life*.  Winner of Audience Awards in Toronto, Los Angeles and Seattle, the film debuted on Showtime in April 2009.  LA WEEKLY raved, “*This is The Life* vaults into the upper echelons of must-see hip-hop documentaries.”

In 2010, she wrote, produced and directed her first narrative feature, *I Will Follow*, starring Salli Richardson-Whitfield. Released theatrically in 2011, the family drama was hailed by critic Roger Ebert as "... one of the best films I've seen about the loss of a loved one."

DuVernay has directed the network documentaries “Venus Vs” for ESPN and “My Mic Sounds Nice” for BET, along with “John Legend Interludes Live,” “Essence Music Festival" and “Faith Through The Storm” for TV One. In 2013, she directed an episode of ABC top-rated drama series “SCANDAL,” as well as acclaimed fashion and beauty films for Prada and Fashion Fair, with “The Door” and “Say Yes,” respectively.

Previously, DuVernay worked as a film marketer and publicist for more than 14 years, forming DVA Media + Marketing in 1999. Her award-winning firm provided strategy and execution for more than 120 film and television campaigns for acclaimed directors such as Steven Spielberg, Clint Eastwood, Michael Mann and Bill Condon.

A graduate of UCLA, DuVernay is the founder of AFFRM, the African-American Film Festival Releasing Movement. She is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, as well as the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. She is also board member for both Film Independent and the Sundance Institute. DuVernay is based in Los Angeles.

**Dyllan McGee**

Dyllan McGee is the founder and executive producer of MAKERS. She is also an Emmy Award-winning executive producer at Kunhardt McGee Productions, overseeing all documentary and web programming. Her films include the Emmy Award-nominated documentary *Gloria: In Her Own Words* (HBO); Peabody Award-winning *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross* (PBS); Emmy Award-winning *Teddy: In His Own Words* (HBO); *Faces of America With Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* (PBS); *This Emotional Life* (PBS); *African American Lives* (PBS); *Oprah’s Roots* (PBS); and Emmy-nominated *In Memoriam; 9/11/01* (HBO). McGee served as the director of content and operations for the International Freedom Center at Ground Zero in New York, a cultural institution that was proposed as part of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation’s redevelopment of the World Trade Center site. McGee serves on the board of the Gordon Parks Foundation and lives in Katonah, New York, with her husband and two sons.

**Patricia Schroeder**

Patricia Schroeder was elected to Congress in 1972, the first woman elected from Colorado. She spent 24 years in office and chaired Children, Youth & Families and the Women's Caucus. She was on the Armed Service committee for 24 years, the Judiciary Committee and Post Office and Civil Service Committee.

Some of her key legislation included the Family & Medical Leave Act, Military Family Act, Whistleblower Protection Act and the Women's Health Initiative.

She retired from Congress in 1996, and from1997-2009 was the president and CEO of the Association of American Publishers. From 2009-2013, she was the national and international chair of the English Speaking Union.

Schroeder is currently vice chair of the Marguerit Casey Foundation, and is on the National Common Cause Board, the Florida League of Women Voters Board and the Communication Consortium Board.

Schroeder has authored 2 books, *Champion of the Great American Family* and *24 Years of Housework and the Place is Still a Mess.*

She is an alumna of University of Minnesota and Harvard Law School. She currently lives in Celebration, Florida.

**Linda Woolverton**

While working as a development executive at CBS, Linda Woolverton wrote two young adult novels: *Star Wind* and *Running Before the Wind*. After Houghton Mifflin published her books, she began to write full time.

She started by writing scripts for animated television shows. When one of her novels caught the attention of a Disney executive, she was hired to write the script for the animated feature, *Beauty and the Beast*. Upon its release in 1991, the film won the Golden Globe for the Best Comedy/Musical and became the first animated film to be nominated for the Best Picture Academy Award.

Woolverton was then hired to write the screenplay for *The Lion King*. She then rewrote the script for *Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey* as well as writing on the animated feature *Mulan*.

She went on to adapt the script of *Beauty and the Beast* for the Broadway stage and received the Tony Award nomination for Best Book of a Musical in 1994. Woolverton was also awarded the Laurence Oliver Award for *Beauty and the Beast* for Best New Musical in the U.K. *Beauty and the Beast* ran between 1994 and 2007, becoming the sixth longest running show in Broadway history. She also wrote the Book for Elton John and Tim Rice’s Musical *Aida,* which ran for five years at the Palace Theatre.

Linda Woolverton’s script for *Alice In Wonderland* directed by Tim Burton and starring Johnny Depp, was released in March of 2010. The film grossed over 1 billion dollars worldwide.

In 2008, Linda received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Writers Guild of America-Animation Writers Caucus for her longtime work in the field of animation.

Woolverton's screenplay for Disney's *Maleficent* starring Angelina Jolie was released in May of 2014.  She has recently completed *Through the Looking Glass* for Disney, which is in production in the UK. She is currently working with Ron Howard on a television pilot for LIFETIME.