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***THE UNDOCUMENTED* PREMIERES ON *INDEPENDENT LENS* ON MONDAY,
APRIL 29, 2013 ON PBS**

**Powerful New Film from Marco Williams Puts a Human Face on the Thousands of
Migrants Who Have Perished Trying to Come to the U.S.**

(San Francisco, CA) — In the loud and contentious debate over immigration, there are voices that will never be heard — those of the more than 2500 border crossers who have perished in the vast wasteland between Sonora, Mexico and Tucson, Arizona in the last fifteen years. *The Undocumented* tells the story of these migrants who died while trying to cross an unforgiving desert in search of a better life, and follows them on their long journey home, shining a light on an often-forgotten but very human side of the ongoing national conversation about immigration reform. Directed by Marco Williams (*Two Towns of Jasper*, *Banished*), the film will premiere on the award-winning series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Stanley Tucci, on Monday, April 29, 2013 at 10 PM ET (check local listings).

The Undocumented is told through the first-person stories of the men and women at the deadly ground zero of the immigration issue. In Arizona, the film follows the heroic efforts of the Pima County medical examiners who work to identify the remains of border crossers. Says medical examiner Bruce Parks, “We do a full autopsy on everyone who passes away who we suspect is a border crosser. We believe that it’s important to treat people equally and treat them just as we would a U.S. citizen. We have just a few shots to get the most accurate cause of death, to get these people identified, and get them back to their families.”

The medical examiners work closely with the Mexican consulate in Tucson, headed by Jeronimo Garcia. Fielding calls from worried families back in Mexico whose loved ones have gone missing, Garcia sums up their plight: “In search of the American dream, they lose it all in the desert.”

The film also follows Border Patrol Search and Rescue (BORSTAR) agents, who balance law enforcement with lifesaving in the midst of a deadly hot summer, as well as humanitarian workers who search the desert, looking for crossers in need of water, food, and medical aid.

In Chicago, we meet Marcos Hernandez, an undocumented Mexican who came to search for his father Francisco, who disappeared while trying to cross the Sonora Desert. And back in Mexico, the film explores the impact of border deaths on migrant families who explain why their loved ones chose to make the perilous journey.

While everyone featured expresses a wide range of viewpoints regarding the border and illegal immigration, the one thing they are able to agree on is that the migrant deaths must end.

“People are dying — and that should be enough to change things.”

- Kat Rodriguez, Derechos Humanos

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To learn more about the film, visit the companion website for *The Undocumented* at www.pbs.org/independentlens/undocumented. Get detailed information on the film, watch preview clips, read an interview with the filmmaker, and explore the subject in depth with links and resources. The site also features a Talkback section where viewers can share their ideas and opinions.

About the Filmmaker

Marco Williams (Director) is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and fiction film director. He is also an associate professor of undergraduate film and television at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. Williams’ *Two Towns of Jasper* (2004) received the 2004 Peabody Award and was broadcast on *POV* on PBS. The film and its directors were featured on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and it was the catalyst for a live town hall meeting, “America in Black and White,” anchored by Ted Koppel. *Banished* (2007) won the Grand Jury Award for documentary feature at the Miami International Film Festival, while *Freedom Summer* (2006) won a broadcast Emmy® as part of the series *Ten Days That Unexpectedly Changed America*.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about unique individuals, communities, and moments in history. Presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.