FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Re: Call to action to support new fall shows starring Asian Americans!

Dear Friends:

Next week, two groundbreaking new television series (SELFIE and STALKER) will premiere starring Asian Americans. We are asking you to promote these shows and help demonstrate that Asian Americans will watch shows that feature us in non-stereotypical roles. The Asian Pacific American Media Coalition (APAMC or the Coalition) and its member organizations (listed on the left) have been advocating for greater diversity in network television for the past 15 years. The APAMC has worked with the NAACP, the National Latino Media Council and American Indians in Film and Television to persuade the networks to include more people of color both in front of the camera and behind the scenes. In that time, significant progress has been achieved.

In the 1999-2000 television season, the four major television networks unveiled a slate of new series that did not feature a single person of color in a starring role. In subsequent years, due in part to the Coalition’s advocacy, Asian Americans have been featured in prominent roles in the ensembles of such series as GREY’S ANATOMY, HEROES, LOST, and HAWAII FIVE-O, and more Asian American writers, producers, directors and executives have been hired.

In the Fall of 2011, the Coalition challenged the networks to present series that showcased an Asian American as the main star of a show. We felt that if we were featured in the main leading role of a show, that would make the most impact on public perceptions of Asian Americans. We would not just be one role in an ensemble of characters, or a character that mostly reacts to the lead’s story in a show, but the audience would come to see things from the Asian American character’s perspective.

Three of the four networks have now risen to the challenge (four out of five, if one includes the CW network’s BEAUTY AND THE BEAST starring Kristin Kreuk or NIKITA starring Maggie Q, which actually premiered in 2010). This year, Fox will present the third season of THE MINDY PROJECT, starring Mindy Kaling. CBS will debut the frightening drama STALKER, starring Maggie Q as the head of a special police unit dealing with crimes of stalking and harassment. And, ABC will
premiere the new comedy SELFIE, starring John Cho, in addition to the mid-season show FRESH OFF THE BOAT, the first Asian American family sitcom in 20 years. (We will be organizing around the premiere of FOTB later this year.)

SELFIE is especially noteworthy for featuring an Asian American male as a romantic lead, something both highly unusual for television and most welcome. An updated retelling of "Pygmalion"/"My Fair Lady," John Cho plays marketing executive Henry who takes on the challenge of rebranding the image of Eliza Dooley (played by Karen Gillan), a shallow young woman obsessed with taking "selfies" for her popular Instagram account. By showing an Asian man as a relatable American in both the corporate and social media worlds, SELFIE has the potential to shatter stereotypes and open the doors for more non-traditional casting of roles in the future.

STALKER gives Maggie Q her second straight dramatic series in which she plays the lead character. In STALKER, Maggie Q is a tough, no nonsense police Lieutenant with a mysterious past that somehow relates to her job in the stalking unit. While Dylan McDermott is also featured as a talented detective, the pilot makes clear that the Lieutenant is the boss and the main storyteller in this series. Maggie Q's fascinating character is simultaneously strong, sexy, vulnerable and totally badass. There is no mistaking her character as either a "dragon lady" or submissive Asian female. Once again, well worn tropes are set aside in favor of fresh, fully-dimensional characters.

This year, the American viewing public is being presented a unique fall season that is significantly different: new primetime television series that star Asian Americans in groundbreaking roles. It is crucial that the Asian American community watch these shows and spread the word about them. Please feature a story about these new series on your Blog, Facebook Page, or YouTube Channel to create a viral campaign. Like the shows' Facebook pages. Tweet about them. In addition to ratings, the networks now track viewer comments, tweets and social media interaction about shows in order to assess their popularity and potential.

The APAMC needs your help to publicize these shows and demonstrate to television network executives that when they present series with non-stereotypical Asian American roles, we will watch and support them. Thank you for your consideration in helping to promote these new series.

SELFIE premieres on Tuesday, September 30 on ABC at 8 pm/7 pm Central Time.

The pilot is available online until September 28 here: http://abc.go.com/shows/selfie
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ABCSelfie
Twitter: @SelfieABC
#SelfieABC
STALKER premieres on Wednesday, October 1 on CBS at 10 pm/9 pm Central Time.

http://www.cbspressexpress.com/cbs-entertainment/shows/stalker/about
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/StalkerCBS?ref=br_tf
Twitter: @StalkerCBS
#stalker

The Asian Pacific American Media Coalition (APAMC) has agreements with ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC committing them to work to increase diversity on-screen and behind the camera. APAMC members include such organizations as the Asian American Justice Center, East West Players, Japanese American Citizens League, Media Action Network for Asian Americans, National Federation of Filipino American Associations, OCA, and Visual Communications.