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## **AHAA Honors Walmart with Marketer of the Year Award Presentation to Take Place at AHAA 2013 Conference in Miami**

**McLean, VA, May 1, 2013** – When CEOs, CMOs, top marketers, industry movers and shakers, plus a formidable list of brands and companies all converge to celebrate the powerful influence of the Hispanic consumer on their bottom line, it is the marketing conference of the year. And it is at this conference that AHAA: The Voice of Hispanic Marketing, will honor Walmart with the first annual Marketer of the Year award.

*“As part of our mission to expand our scope into all aspects of marketing, selecting a marketer of the year became a strategic imperative for AHAA’s Board of Directors,” said Roberto Orci, Chair of AHAA and CEO of Acento Advertising. “Walmart was a standout in all categories, and they continue to pave the way in multicultural marketing. The bar has been set quite high for future nominees, and we hope other brands take notice and step up their efforts.”*

After creating a nominating committee to manage the selection process, AHAA developed the following criteria for the award:

- Companies must show a top-down commitment to multicultural marketing
- Hispanic/multicultural strategy must form part of the company’s overall strategy with measurable accountability across all business units
- Nominees must demonstrate significant spending commensurate with the opportunity in marketing efforts targeting Hispanics

This year, Walmart is doubling its multicultural ad spending as part of a sweeping initiative to move the company from a silo-like approach to making sure everyone takes responsibility for multicultural marketing according to an October 2012 article in *Advertising Age*. The company also plans to train all staff to ensure multicultural marketing is integrated into each line of business with clearly defined objectives and measurable results. Walmart is undergoing a company-wide cultural shift, in which multicultural and general market agencies sit side by side during the earliest planning phases to ensure seamless 360 degrees integration.

In addition, *Advertising Age* reported Walmart has created a multicultural advisory council that includes senior Walmart execs and the heads of Walmart's multicultural agencies, including Alex Lopez Negrete, president-CEO of Lopez Negrete Communications; Don Coleman, chairman-CEO of African-American agency GlobalHue; and Nita Song, president-chief operating officer of IW Group. The group has monthly four-hour sessions attended by Walmart CMO Stephen Quinn, further evidence that multicultural marketing remains a critical priority at the topmost company level.

Walmart's commitment to drive diversity extends to its suppliers. The company is doing a pilot program in Chicago in the production space, to mentor and cultivate diverse junior-level talent.

The Award ceremony will take place on Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 at 1pm at the conference venue, the Eden Roc Hotel. In addition, **Tony Rogers**, SVP of Brand Marketing and Advertising and **Greg Warren**, VP of Creative Marketing will deliver a keynote address as part of AHAA's CMO Chat series.

The AHAA 2013 Conference is presented by AHAA in partnership with FIAP (Festival Iberoamericano de Publicidad), a festival created in Argentina in 1969 to promote and integrate the marketing and communications throughout Spain, Portugal and Latin America, and, since 1993, the U.S. Hispanic market. and Círculo Creativo, a non-profit organization that represents creative directors, producers and ad planners of the Spanish-language advertising industry on a national and international basis. To register for the conference, please visit <http://ahaa.org> and follow all conference chatter on Twitter using the hashtag #thinkahaa.

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**About AHAA:** Headquartered in McLean, VA, AHAA: The Voice of Hispanic Marketing represents the best minds and resources dedicated to Hispanic-specialized marketing. Companies trying to reach and connect with Hispanic consumers turn to AHAA members for unmatched cultural expertise and knowledge. As the voice of the Hispanic marketing industry since its founding in 1996, AHAA demonstrates the value of targeting Hispanics, showcases the impact of using AHAA member agencies, and provides forums for the discussion and dialogue between brands and industry professionals.