

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**UZO ADUBA, MATT CHERNISS, JINNY HOWE,
DEBRA OCONNELL AND ROB WADE NAMED 2026
TELEVISION ACADEMY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
APPOINTEES****Two New Governors Elected to Fill Seats Left Vacant by
Recently Elected Executive Committee Members***Uzo Aduba**Matt Cherniss**Jinny Howe**Debra O'Connell**Rob Wade*

(**LOS ANGELES** – March 5, 2026) — Cris Abrego, chair of the Television Academy, today announced his appointees to the Television Academy Executive Committee for 2026.

These appointees and industry visionaries are Uzo Aduba, three-time Emmy winner and Tony Award-nominated actress; Matt Cherniss, head of programming and domestic development, Apple TV; Jinny Howe, head of scripted series for the U.S. and Canada at Netflix; Debra O'Connell, president, ABC News Group and Disney Entertainment Networks at The Walt Disney Company; and Rob Wade, CEO of FOX Entertainment. They will advise Abrego and the 2026 Television Academy Board of Governors on some of the most important issues and initiatives facing the television industry while helping to shape the organization's direction.

"The next two years will be a pivotal period for both the Academy and our industry," said Abrego. "Bringing together this extraordinary group of leaders ensures we have the experience and insight needed to guide the Academy through this moment of transformation and strengthen its role as a vital, relevant and unifying force for the creative community and the future of television."

Executive Committee appointees:

- **Uzo Aduba**, Actor

One of television's most versatile performers, Aduba, a three-time Emmy winner and Tony Award-nominated actress, recently starred in the Shondaland series *The Residence* on Netflix, earning an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series. The role adds to her impressive collection of accolades, including two Emmys for her celebrated performance as "Crazy Eyes" in *Orange Is the New Black*. Most recently, Aduba appeared in *Roofman*, narrated the PBS documentary *Caregiving*, starred in the comedy/mystery *Greedy People*, and earned an NAACP Image Award nomination for her role in *Painkiller*. In September 2024 Aduba released her debut book, "The Road is Good," a powerful memoir exploring identity and belonging from a unique Nigerian American perspective.

- **Matt Cherniss**, Head of Programming, Apple TV

Since joining Apple TV in 2017, Cherniss has built out the development team and launched a slate of high-quality, all-original television series. Under his leadership, Apple TV has premiered a lineup of hit shows from today's biggest storytellers, including global phenomena like *Pluribus*; history-making, Emmy Award-winning comedy series *The Studio*; *Severance*, which became last year's most Emmy Award-winning drama; Emmy Award-winning comedy *Ted Lasso*; Emmy, SAG and Critics' Choice Award-winning series *The Morning Show*; celebrated comedy series, including *Shrinking* and *Stick*; and compelling, hit dramas like *Presumed Innocent* and *Your Friends & Neighbors*. Under Cherniss, Apple TV has also built a powerhouse lineup of today's biggest sci-fi series with acclaimed titles, including *Silo*, *Foundation*, *For All Mankind*, *Murderbot* and more. Coming up, Apple TV will debut highly anticipated new series like *Imperfect Women*, *Lucky*, *Cape Fear* and *Neuromancer*, as well as the fourth season of global sensation *Ted Lasso*.

- **Jinny Howe**, Head of Scripted Series for the U.S. and Canada at Netflix.

Howe leads the strategic development, greenlighting and production of Netflix's extensive slate of scripted series programming. Since joining in 2018, Howe has overseen award-winning, culture-defining Netflix originals such as *Bridgerton*, *MAID*, *Inventing Anna* and *The Night Agent* — all of which rank among Netflix's most popular series globally — alongside critically acclaimed and breakout hits, including *BEEF*, *The Diplomat*, *Sirens*, *Untamed*, *The Lincoln Lawyer* and *XO Kitty*. Her purview also encompasses comedy, stand-up, first-look and overall deals, cultivating creative partnerships with both emerging and prolific producers and talent. Having emigrated to the U.S. from South Korea at a young age, Howe is a passionate advocate focused on championing the development of emerging and underrepresented voices across the television landscape.

- **Debra OConnell**, President, ABC News Group and Disney Entertainment Networks, The Walt Disney Company

OConnell oversees ABC News and the ABC Owned Television Stations, aligning the nation's No. 1 news network with the No. 1 station group in the country. She also has operational leadership, including P&L oversight of the company's multiplatform linear entertainment networks — ABC broadcast network, Disney Channels, FX Networks, Freeform and National Geographic Channels — across the U.S., Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Latin America, and Asia Pacific regions. In December, OConnell was named as one of Variety's 120 most powerful executives in entertainment. She was inducted into Broadcasting & Cable's Hall of Fame Class of 2024; and, in 2022, she was named Broadcasting & Cable's Broadcaster of the Year and received the Gracie Leadership Award from the Alliance of Women in Media. Later this spring, New York Women in Communications will honor OConnell with its Matrix Award.

- **Rob Wade**, Chief Executive Officer of FOX Entertainment
Wade oversees one of the world's most recognizable media brands and a leading global creator of multi-genre content across broadcast, streaming, digital and emerging platforms. Appointed CEO in 2022, Wade has guided FOX Entertainment's evolution into a modern, next-generation studio operating across three core business units: FOX Entertainment Studios, FOX Television Network and FOX Entertainment Global. In addition to launching recent hits ranging from FOX's *Doc*, *Best Medicine*, *Fear Factor: House of Fear*, *Memory of a Killer* and *The Floor* to Prime Video's *Hazbin Hotel* and *Animal Control* and *Being Gordon Ramsay* on Netflix, Wade has also brought FOX into the digital storytelling arena, launching FOX Creator Studios, investing in leading vertical video platform Holywater, and entering experiential storytelling with Chain. He previously served as president, alternative entertainment specials, where he led all unscripted content for the network, creating FOX-owned hits such as *The Masked Singer* and *Next Level Chef*, establishing the Studio Ramsay Global partnership, and acquiring TMZ.

Additionally, the Academy's Board of Governors has elected the following Peer Group Governors as their representatives on the executive committee for the 2026 term: Phil Gurin (Producers), David Hartle (Production Executives), Christina E. Lee (Public Relations), Sabrina Wind (Producers), and Foundation Chair Tina Perry. They join Chair Cris Abrego, Vice Chair Jacob Fenton (Professional Representatives), 2nd Vice Chair Jo DiSante (Television Executives), Secretary Megan Chao (Documentary Programming) and Treasurer Tony Carey (Producers).

Following a special election to fill seats left vacant by current Executive Committee members, Craig Wagner has been elected as a Governor of the Professional Representatives Peer Group; and Dave Harding was elected as a Governor of the Documentary Programming Peer Group.

About the Television Academy

The Television Academy strives to shape and advance the dynamic television landscape and advocate for the global television industry, capturing the zeitgeist of a new generation of entertainment. Through its innovative programs, publications and events, the Academy and its Foundation endeavors to foster and empower the

diverse community of storytellers fueling the medium while celebrating those who have excelled in the industry, recognizing their achievements through awards and accolades, including the coveted Primetime Emmy® Award. For more information, please visit TelevisionAcademy.com.

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