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Hollywood, Health & Society Announces Call for Entries for 2016 Sentinel Awards

*Top Achievements in TV Storylines That Address Health
and Climate Change Will Be Honored for 17th Year*

LOS ANGELES, March 23, 2016—Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S), a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, has announced a call for entries for its 17th annual Sentinel Awards, which since 1999 have honored TV shows and movies that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives.

Last year, a record number of nearly 90 entries were submitted from broadcast, cable and streaming network shows—showcasing a diverse range of topics that included campus sexual assault, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), autism and climate change. The awards are sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and presented by HH&S, a one-stop shop for writers, producers and others in search of accurate information on public health and climate change topics.

Storylines will be recognized in the following categories: Drama, Comedy, Serial Drama, Climate Change, Reality/Talk/Documentary, Children’s Programming and Spanish-language. The ceremony will be held Sept. 28, 2016 at the Taglyan Complex in Hollywood.

“TV writers and producers not only entertain audiences, but they affect them as well,” said Martin Kaplan, director of the Lear Center. “We know this both from our research, and from stories that viewers tell. This award recognizes the responsible and creative use of that power by television writers and producers.”

HH&S Director Kate Folb added that “writers know that accurate and realistic portrayals make for more compelling stories. They contact us because they know we will provide them with information and access to credible experts—fast and for free. We work with dozens of shows across all genres, networks and cable channels on just about any health or climate change topic you can imagine.”

The 2016 winners will be selected through two rounds of judging. Subject matter experts from the CDC and other partner organizations will review entries for accuracy. Judges from entertainment and public health organizations

will review finalists in each category for entertainment value and benefit to the viewing audience to determine the winners. The deadline for this year's entries is May 27, 2016. Information for applicants can be found at www.usc.edu/hhs.

Among the winners last year, the CBS hit series *Madam Secretary* received first place in the Drama category for its story about U.S. Secretary of State Elizabeth McCord, played by Téa Leoni, suffering from PTSD after barely surviving a bloody attack in Iran. In the Serial Drama category, Hulu's original online series *East Los High* won first place for a powerful story about domestic violence. The CW's *Jane the Virgin* took top honors in the Comedy category for an episode that looked at a medical issue during pregnancy that could lead to fetal abnormalities.

Funded by the CDC, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The California Endowment, The Aileen Getty Foundation and The SCAN Foundation—and with past support from ClimateWorks, the Grantham Foundation and the Barr Foundation, among others—Hollywood, Health & Society is a free resource, providing consultations and briefings with experts for entertainment industry professionals on public health and climate change topics. For more information, visit www.usc.edu/hhs.

The Norman Lear Center is a multidisciplinary research and public policy center studying and shaping the impact of entertainment and media on society. From its base in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the Lear Center builds bridges between faculty who study aspects of entertainment, media and culture. Beyond campus, it bridges the gap between entertainment industry and academia, and between them and the public. For more information, visit www.learcenter.org.

Located in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California, the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism is among the nation's leading institutions devoted to the study of journalism and communication, and their impact on politics, culture and society. With an enrollment of more than 2,200 graduate and undergraduate students (as of Fall 2011), USC Annenberg offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in journalism, communication, public diplomacy and public relations. For more information, visit www.annenberg.usc.edu.