

For Immediate Release

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## **Storylines Featuring Alzheimer's, Asperger's, and Rape Are Among the Finalists for the *2011 Sentinel for Health Awards***

Los Angeles, August 25, 2011 – Hollywood, Health & Society, a program of the Norman Lear Center at the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), announced eight finalists for the Sentinel for Health Awards today.

In its twelfth year, the Sentinel for Health Awards recognize the exemplary achievements of the writers of television storylines that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives. Five categories of storylines will be recognized – primetime drama (major storyline), primetime drama (minor storyline), children's programming, telenovela, and global health storyline.

Eight finalists received the highest scores in a field of 26 eligible entries from 17 shows that were reviewed by topic experts at the CDC and partner organizations. Health topics addressed in the storylines include Alzheimer's, Asperger's, rape, cystic fibrosis, cancer, health hazards of coal mines, nutrition, and HPV.

All finalists will be recognized in an awards ceremony followed by a panel discussion with the writers on Tuesday, September 27, 2011, at the Writers Guild of America, West, in Los Angeles.

"We're delighted to shine a spotlight on television writers and producers who both entertain viewers and at the same time provide them with accurate information," says Martin Kaplan, the Norman Lear Chair at the USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism, and director of the Lear Center. "Our hope is that the storylines we honor with this award will spur other TV writers to recognize and use responsibly the awesome power they wield."

Hollywood, Health & Society works with nationally recognized experts from government, academic and nonprofit organizations to consult with TV writers on health issues in storylines.

HH&S staff responded to hundreds of requests from daytime and primetime TV writers during the past year.

"Every day millions of viewers worldwide learn something new about health from TV storylines and take action on what they've learned," says Sandra de Castro Buffington, director of the Hollywood, Health & Society program. "Viewers turn on their televisions to follow the stories that touch their hearts and minds, and strongly influence their choice making. Recognizing the profound impact of TV storylines on health knowledge, attitudes and behavior, we honor writers and producers who weave accurate health messages into their storytelling."

First-round judging for the Sentinel for Health Awards focused on accuracy of health depictions. Eleven panels of topic experts participated in this activity at CDC and partner organizations. Entries were scored by the experts and those with the highest scores became finalists. The eight finalists were then reviewed for entertainment value and potential benefit to the viewing audience by two panels of judges representing entertainment, academic and public health organizations.

The 2011 Sentinel for Health Awards finalists are:

### Primetime Drama (Major Storyline)

Alzheimer's Trial storyline, Grey's Anatomy (ABC)

Topic: Alzheimer's Disease

Written by: Brian Tanen, Austin Guzman, Mark Wilding, Debora Cahn, Peter Nowalk, Bill Harper

"Qualities and Difficulties," Parenthood (NBC)

Topic: Asperger's Syndrome

Written by: Jason Katims, Bridget Carpenter, David Hudgins, Eric Guggenheim, Kerry Ehrin, Tyler Bensinger, Sarah Watson, Monica Henderson

"Did You Hear What Happened to Charlotte King?" Private Practice (ABC)

Topic: Rape

Written by: Shonda Rhimes

### Primetime Drama (Minor Storyline)

"Not Responsible," Grey's Anatomy (ABC)

Topic: Cystic Fibrosis

Written by: Debora Cahn

"The Hardest Part," Private Practice (ABC)

Topic: Pediatric Brain Tumors  
Written by: Jennifer Cecil

## Children's Programming

"Food For Thought: Eating Well on a Budget," Sesame Street (PBS)  
Topic: Nutrition/Healthy Foods  
Written by: Christine Ferraro

## Telenovela

"Once a Year, For Peace of Mind," El Clon (Telemundo)  
Topic: Cervical Cancer Screening  
Written by: Roberto Stopello, Sandra Velasco

## Global Health Storyline

"It's a Leaf," Off the Map (ABC)  
Topic: Quechua Birth, Mining Health Hazards  
Written by: Gabriel Llanas

Hollywood, Health & Society provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate and timely information for health storylines, including free consultations and briefings with CDC and partner experts. HH&S is funded by the CDC, The California Endowment, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Health Resources and Services Administration's Division of Transplantation, The National Cancer Institute, The Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Barr Foundation. The program is based at the USC Annenberg School's Norman Lear Center as a one-stop-shop for writers, producers and others in search of credible information on a wide range of public health topics. For more information about resources for writers, visit [www.usc.edu/hhs](http://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. Based at the USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism, the Lear Center works to bridge the gap between the entertainment industry and academia, and between them and the public. For more information, visit [www.learcenter.org](http://www.learcenter.org).

Located in Los Angeles at the [University of Southern California](#), the [Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism](#) is a national leader in education and scholarship in the fields of communication, journalism, public diplomacy and public relations. With an enrollment of more than 2,200 students, USC Annenberg offers doctoral, master's and bachelor's degree programs, as well as continuing development programs for working professionals, across a broad scope of academic inquiry. The school's comprehensive curriculum emphasizes the core skills of leadership, innovation, service and entrepreneurship and draws upon the resources of a networked university located in the media capital of the world.

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