



HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY

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USC ANNENBERG ANNOUNCES SENTINEL FOR HEALTH AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRIES

New category established to recognize Spanish-language telenovelas

LOS ANGELES, May 24, 2005—Hollywood, Health & Society, a partnership of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the USC Annenberg School's Norman Lear Center, announces a call for entries for the sixth annual Sentinel for Health Awards. A Spanish-language telenovela category will be added to this year's Sentinel for Health Awards program. The deadline for all entries is June 30, 2005.

The Sentinel for Health Awards recognize exemplary achievements of television storylines that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives. The winners are selected through two rounds of judging. The first round of judging is conducted by health topic experts from CDC and NCI, and the second round of judging is conducted by entertainment professionals and health communications experts in Los Angeles. This year's finalists and winners will be recognized in an awards ceremony on September 28, 2005, at the Writers Guild of America, west, in Los Angeles.

Last year, the NBC prime time drama *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* took home two awards – first place in prime time drama for “Choice,” a storyline on fetal alcohol syndrome, and third place in the same category for a storyline titled “Shaken,” about shaken baby syndrome. The CBS soap opera *The Young & The Restless* won for the third time since 2001, taking first place in daytime drama for a storyline about a teen with chlamydia, “Lily and Kevin: The Danger Within.” The Lifetime drama *Strong Medicine* took first place for prime time minor storyline with “Heartbeats and Deadbeats,” a storyline about HIV/AIDS in the elderly. The UPN show *One on One* took first place in prime time comedy for a storyline about alcoholism, “No More Wire Hangers.” The 2005 Sentinel for Health Awards will mark the sixth year of the competition.

Amanda Green, supervising producer on *Law & Order: SVU*, expressed the importance of including accurate health information in storylines during last year's panel discussion following the awards ceremony. “Research shows that viewers get health information through our storylines and that's an awesome responsibility,” said Green. “Millions of people are watching our shows each week, so we have an obligation to be accurate with

the health information we include. We're teaching people about health issues and we need to be accountable."

"Expanding the Sentinel Awards to include telenovelas," said Martin Kaplan, associate dean of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and director of the Norman Lear Center, "enables us to recognize the dramatic increase in Spanish-language programming in this country and its impact on viewers."

Vicki Beck, director of the Lear Center's Hollywood, Health & Society project, points out that "television has an especially powerful impact on Hispanic viewers. We know that these viewers are watching more television each week than African Americans or general US households," said Beck. "They also report more often than other groups that they learn about health topics and take action after seeing them addressed in a telenovela."

Funded by the CDC and NCI, Hollywood, Health & Society provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate and timely information for health storylines, including free consultations and briefings with CDC and NCI experts. Hollywood, Health & Society 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, go to the Hollywood, Health & Society Web site at www.usc.edu/hhs.

The Norman Lear Center is a multidisciplinary research and public policy center exploring implications of the convergence of entertainment, commerce and society. Based at the USC Annenberg School for Communication, 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.

Located in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California, the USC Annenberg School for Communication 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 1,700 graduate and undergraduate students, USC Annenberg offers BA, MA and PhD degrees in journalism, communication and public relations. For more information, visit www.annenberg.usc.edu.

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