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HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY

***Alcoholism, Autism and Breast Cancer Storylines Are Among Finalists for Hollywood, Health & Society's Sentinel for Health Awards; Spanish-Language Telenovelas Are Recognized for the First Time***

Los Angeles, August 22, 2005 – Hollywood, Health, & Society, a joint project of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI), announced nine finalists today for the sixth annual Sentinel for Health Awards. The awards recognize exemplary achievements in television storylines that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives. Storylines will be honored in five categories – daytime drama, prime time drama, prime time comedy, prime time minor storyline and telenovela. This year marks the first year that Spanish-language telenovelas will be recognized.

The nine finalists received the highest scores in a field of 31 eligible entries that were reviewed by topic experts from the CDC, its partner organizations, and NCI. *The Young and the Restless*, *7th Heaven*, *George Lopez*, *Without a Trace*, *All My Children*, *ER*, *House* and *Anita, no te rajes* are contenders for awards in the five categories. Topics to be recognized include alcoholism, autism, teen sex, breast cancer, pregnancy and cancer, gender reassignment and sickle cell anemia. All finalists will be recognized in an awards ceremony followed by a panel discussion with the writers on September 28, 2005, at the Writers Guild of America, west, 7000 W. Third St. in Los Angeles.

"The Sentinel for Health Awards applaud television writers who don't just entertain audiences, but educate them as well," says Martin Kaplan, associate dean of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and director of the Norman Lear Center. "This is a chance to celebrate writers and producers who take responsibility for the impact that their shows have on their viewers."

In addition to the awards activity, Hollywood, Health & Society works with CDC, NCI, and Annenberg and Keck School of Medicine faculty and students to study the content and impact of health storylines. "Research has shown repeatedly that viewers pay attention to health information in TV shows and may seek care for symptoms when they learn about them through a favorite character," explains Vicki Beck, director of the Lear Center's Hollywood, Health & Society. "Colleagues from the shows tell us that they see this evidence as well when viewers write to thank them for addressing an important health issue that was relevant to their own situation."

First-round judging for the Sentinel for Health Awards was conducted by topic experts who evaluated accuracy of health depictions. Fifteen expert panels participated in this activity at CDC and NCI. The nine finalists then were evaluated at USC by an expert panel

representing entertainment, academic and public health organizations. The second-round judges scored finalists on entertainment value and potential benefit to the viewing audience.

The Sentinel for Health Awards were established in 2000 and have recognized five daytime drama storylines as winners: "Viki's Breast Cancer," *One Life to Live* (2000); "Raul's Diabetes," *The Young and the Restless* (2001); "Tony's HIV," *The Bold and the Beautiful* (2002), "Neil's Alcoholism," *The Young and the Restless* (2003), and "Lily and Kevin: The Danger Within," *The Young & The Restless* (2004).

Last year's program was expanded to include new categories for prime time drama and comedy. First-place winners were: "Choice," *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* (NBC) for prime time drama, "Heartbeats and Deadbeats," *Strong Medicine* (Lifetime) for prime time drama minor storyline, and "No More Wire Hangers," *One on One* (UPN) for prime time comedy.

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. The project 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](http://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](http://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 1500 graduate and undergraduate students, USC Annenberg offers B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in journalism, communication and public relations. For more information, visit [www.annenberg.usc.edu](http://www.annenberg.usc.edu).

### *Sentinel for Health Awards: 2005 Finalists*

#### Daytime Drama

- *The Young & the Restless* (CBS): "Katherine Falls Off the Wagon" (Alcoholism)
- *All My Children* (ABC): "Autism Spectrum Disorder Storyline" (Autism)

#### Prime Time Comedy

- *George Lopez* (ABC): "Prescription for Trouble" (Teen Sex)

#### Prime Time Drama

- *Without a Trace* (CBS): "Volcano" (Autism)
- *House* (Fox): "Babies and Bathwater" (Pregnancy and Cancer)
- *Without a Trace* (CBS): "Transitions" (Gender Reassignment)

Prime Time Minor Storyline

- *7th Heaven* (WB): "Leaps of Faith" (Sickle Cell Anemia)
- *ER* (NBC): "You Can't Cut into Cancer" (Breast Cancer)

Spanish-Language Telenovela

- *Anita, no te rajes* (Telemundo): "Graciela Refuses to Have Cancer" (Breast Cancer)

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