

For Release: August 23, 2006

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HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY

Organ Transplant and Breast Cancer are Popular Storyline Topics Among Finalists for 2006 Sentinel for Health Awards

Los Angeles, August 23, 2006 – 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 13 finalists today for the Sentinel for Health Awards. In its seventh year, the awards program recognizes exemplary achievements of television storylines that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives. Five categories of storylines will be recognized – daytime drama, primetime drama, primetime comedy, primetime minor storyline and Spanish-language *telenovela*.

The 13 finalists received the highest scores in a field of 29 eligible entries that were reviewed by topic experts at the CDC, its partner organizations, and NCI. Health storylines from *As The World Turns*, *Guiding Light*, *Days of Our Lives*, *Scrubs*, *George Lopez*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *ER*, *Numb3rs*, *Without A Trace*, *Huff* and *Amarte Así* are contenders for top awards in the five categories. Health topics addressed in the storylines include organ transplantation, breast cancer, obesity, HIV and pregnancy, diabetes, alcoholism, drug abuse, veteran's health and kidney disease. All finalists will be recognized in an awards ceremony followed by a panel discussion with the writers on September 27, 2006, at the Writers Guild of America, west, 7000 W. Third St. in Los Angeles.

"The Sentinel for Health Awards applaud television writers who take the extra step to help inform their viewers by telling accurate stories," says **Martin Kaplan**, associate dean of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and director of the Norman Lear Center. "This is a chance to recognize those who take seriously the impact their shows have on viewers."

Hollywood, Health & Society works with experts throughout the country to consult with TV writers on health issues in storylines. They also work with colleagues at the CDC and NCI, and with faculty and students at Annenberg, Keck and other schools to study the content and impact of health storylines. "We know through our research that viewers learn about health from TV shows, and that some even act on this information," explains **Vicki Beck**, director of the Lear Center's Hollywood, Health & Society. "Television writers have remarkable power at their fingertips; when they harness that power to explore timely health issues and provide accurate information, they should be recognized for their accomplishments."

First-round judging for the Sentinel for Health Awards focused on accuracy of health depictions. Fourteen expert panels participated in this activity at CDC, NCI and partner

organizations. The 13 finalists were reviewed for entertainment value and potential benefit to the viewing audience by two panels of judges representing entertainment, news media, academic and public health organizations.

In the past six years, six daytime drama, six primetime drama and comedy, and one *telenovela* storyline have received first-place honors from the Sentinel for Health Awards program.

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.

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 1,900 graduate and undergraduate students, USC Annenberg offers Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral degrees in journalism, communication, public diplomacy and public relations. For more information, please visit www.annenberg.usc.edu.

Sentinel for Health Awards: 2006 Finalists

Daytime Drama

- ***Days of Our Lives*** (NBC): "Surviving and Learning to Live as an Amputee" (Veteran Health)
- ***As The World Turns*** (CBS): "Lucinda's Breast Cancer" (Breast Cancer)
- ***Guiding Light*** (CBS): "Billy Takes a Drink" (Alcoholism)

Primetime Comedy

- ***George Lopez*** (ABC): "George Helps Ernie See the Cellu-Light" (Obesity)
- ***George Lopez*** (ABC): "The Kidney Stays in the Picture" (Kidney Disease)
- ***Scrubs*** (NBC): "My Chopped Liver" (Liver Transplant)

Primetime Drama

- ***Grey's Anatomy*** (ABC): "Let It Be" (Breast and Ovarian Cancer)
- ***Grey's Anatomy*** (ABC): "Waiting for a Heart Transplant" (Heart Transplant)
- ***Numb3rs*** (CBS): "Harvest" (Organ Transplant)
- ***Without a Trace*** (CBS): "Expectations" (HIV and Pregnancy)

Primetime Minor Storyline

- *Huff* (Showtime): "So...What Brings You to Armageddon?" (Drug Abuse)
- *ER* (NBC): "BRCA – Breast Cancer Risks" (Breast Cancer)

Spanish-Language *Telenovela*

- *Amarte Así* (Telemundo): "Don Pedro's Diabetes" (Diabetes)

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