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HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY

Autism, Cancer, Teen Sex: Television Writers Honored for Scripting Tough Issues

Los Angeles, September 29, 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, today announced the winners of the sixth annual Sentinel for Health Awards. Winning storylines tackled prominent and sometimes controversial health issues, such as autism, cancer and teen sex. The awards were presented at an evening ceremony held at the Writers Guild of America, west, Wednesday night in Los Angeles.

"These TV writers and producers are not only entertaining audiences," says Martin Kaplan, associate dean of USC Annenberg and director of the Norman Lear Center, "they are educating them too. Their shows are a powerful channel to reach viewers with important health information, and this award celebrates their responsible and creative use of that power."

The CBS prime time drama *Without a Trace* received first place in the prime time drama category for "Volcano," a storyline on autism. Another one of the show's storylines, "Transitions," which addressed gender identity and hate crimes, was recognized as a finalist in the same category.

The ABC soap opera *All My Children* took first place in daytime drama for a storyline about a teen with autism. The WB drama *7th Heaven* took first place for prime time minor storyline with "Leaps of Faith," a storyline about sickle cell anemia. And ABC's *George Lopez* took first place in prime time comedy for a storyline about teen sex, "Prescription for Trouble."

A new Sentinel award, for the Spanish-language telenovela category, went to Telemundo's *Anita, no te rajes* for its breast cancer storyline, "Graciela Refuses to Have Cancer."

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. First-round judging was conducted by more than 100 topic experts who evaluated accuracy of health depictions. Twenty expert panels participated in this activity at the CDC and NCI. The nine finalists were then evaluated at USC by an expert panel representing entertainment, academic and public health organizations. 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 previously recognized four daytime drama storylines as winners: "Viki's Breast Cancer," *One Life to Live* (ABC, 2000);

"Raul's Diabetes," *The Young and the Restless* (CBS, 2001); "Tony's HIV," *The Bold and the Beautiful* (CBS, 2002); "Neil's Alcoholism," *The Young and the Restless* (CBS, 2003) and

"Lily and Kevin: The Danger Within," *The Young & The Restless* (CBS, 2004). The 2004 awards also acknowledged achievement in prime time drama and comedy categories. Winners included "Choice," *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* (NBC); "Heartbeats and Deadbeats," *Strong Medicine* (Lifetime) and "No More Wire Hangers," *One on One* (UPN).

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 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, 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 B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in journalism, communication and public relations. For more information, visit www.annenberg.usc.edu.

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2005 Sentinel for Health Awards

DAYTIME DRAMA

1st Place: "Autism Spectrum Disorder Storyline," *All My Children* (ABC)

2nd place: "Katherine Falls Off the Wagon," *The Young & the Restless* (CBS)

PRIME TIME COMEDY

1st Place: "Prescription for Trouble," *The George Lopez Show* (ABC)

PRIME TIME DRAMA

1st Place: "Volcano," *Without A Trace* (CBS)

2nd Place: "Babies and Bathwater," *House* (FOX)

Topic: Pregnancy and cancer

Finalist: "Transitions" *Without a Trace* (CBS)

PRIME TIME MINOR STORYLINE

1st Place: "Leaps of Faith," *7th Heaven* (WB)

Topic: Sickle cell anemia

2nd Place: "You Don't Cut Into Cancer," *ER* (NBC)

SPANISH-LANGUAGE TELENOVELA

1st Place: "Graciela Refuses to Have Cancer," *Anita, no te rajes* (Telemundo)