

THE NORMAN LEAR CENTER | USC ANNENBERG
HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY
Entertainment Education for Television, Movies & New Media

For Immediate Release

Contact:
Armine Kourouyan
(323) 782-3314
akourouy@usc.edu

2015 Sentinel Awards to Honor Top Achievements in
TV Storylines That Address Health, Climate Change

*Hollywood, Health & Society Announces Call for Entries for Broadcast,
Cable and Streaming Network Storylines That Impact Audiences*

LOS ANGELES, March 31, 2015—Writers and producers are now eligible to submit entries for the annual Sentinel Awards, which since 1999 have honored TV shows and movies that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives. This year, original streaming network shows are now eligible in addition to broadcast and cable programs.

The awards are sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and presented by Hollywood, Health & Society, a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center. Storylines will be recognized in the following categories: Drama, Comedy, Serial Drama, Climate Change, Reality/Talk/Documentary, Children's Programming and Spanish-language.

"TV writers and producers not only entertain audiences, but they affect them as well," said Martin Kaplan, director of The Norman Lear Center. "We know this both from our research, and from stories that viewers tell. This award recognizes the responsible and creative use of that power by television writers and producers."

Kate Folb, director of Hollywood, Health & Society, added that "writers know that accurate and realistic portrayals make for more compelling stories. They contact us because they know we will provide them with information and access to credible experts—fast and for free. We work with dozens of shows across all genres, networks and cable channels on just about any health or climate change topic you can imagine. This year, we're thrilled to be adding original streaming network shows to the mix."

The 2015 winners will be selected through two rounds of judging. Subject matter experts from the CDC and other partner organizations will review entries for accuracy. Judges from entertainment and public health organizations will review finalists in each category for entertainment value and benefit to the viewing audience to determine the winners. The deadline for this year's entries is May 29, 2015. Information for applicants can be found at www.usc.edu/hhs.

Last year, the NBC series *Parenthood* received first place in the Primetime Drama category for its story about Hank, played by Ray Romano, who learns he may have Asperger's Syndrome. *The Normal Heart* on HBO won for Drama TV Movie with a powerful story about HIV/AIDS activism in the early 1980s. Disney Junior's *Doc McStuffins* took top honors in the Children's Programming category for a storyline that stresses the importance of wearing a helmet when riding a bike.

The first place award for comedy was presented to the HBO series *Getting On* for its dark humor in dealing with the health-care system in an extended-care hospital ward, while Showtime's *Years of Living Dangerously* won in the Climate Change category for an episode featuring Matt Damon on how rising temperatures are becoming a public health emergency. HBO's *Life According to Sam* took first place in the Reality/Talk/Documentary category for the topic of progeria, a genetic condition in which symptoms related to aging appear at an early age.

Funded by the CDC, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and The California Endowment—and with past support from ClimateWorks, the Grantham Foundation, the Skoll Global Threats Fund and the Barr Foundation—Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S) provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate and timely information for storylines dealing with health and climate change through consultations and briefings with experts. Based at The Norman Lear Center, HH&S is a one-stop shop for writers, producers and others in search of credible information on public health and climate change topics. For more information about resources for writers, go to 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. From its base in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the Lear Center builds bridges between faculty who study aspects of entertainment, media and culture. Beyond campus, it bridges the gap between 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 Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism 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 2,200 graduate and undergraduate students (as of Fall 2011), USC Annenberg offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in journalism, communication, public diplomacy and public relations. For more information, visit www.annenberg.usc.edu.

###