

The Norman Lear CENTERTAINMENT

Studying and Shaping the Impact of Entertainment & Media on Society

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WORLD'S LARGEST FILM INDUSTRIES USING ENTERTAINMENT TO IMPROVE LIVES

New Global Centers in Nigeria and India Partner with Hollywood for Social Impact

LOS ANGELES, November 1, 2013 — India's Bollywood and Nigeria's Nollywood film industries are leveraging the power of entertainment in an effort to prevent disease and improve the quality of life for the hundreds of millions of viewers of their TV shows and films. A two-year, \$2.5 million grant from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** to Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S) is supporting a groundbreaking partnership across the world's leading entertainment industries to increase visibility of pressing social and health issues.

HH&S is a program of the Norman Lear Center at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. As research by the Lear Center and others has shown, entertainment has a profound impact on people's knowledge, attitudes and behavior. That's why, since 2001, the U.S.'s Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other funders have enabled HH&S to connect Hollywood's creative community, including the writers of *Homeland*, *Mad Men*, *House*, *CSI*, *The Good Wife*, *Breaking Bad* and scores of other shows, with experts on the full range of public health issues, for free.

Now HH&S is going global, teaming up with new centers in Lagos, Nigeria and Mumbai, India that will conduct sustained and systematic outreach to their entertainment industries in order to increase the accuracy, accessibility and frequency of health and other socially-relevant topics in television, film and new media.

In Lagos, HH&S is partnering with Nollywood Workshops, directed by Bond Emeruwa and Aimee Corrigan, to launch the Gist program. Gist will support independent filmmakers in Nollywood's thriving entertainment scene who are working to inspire and inform a growing audience across Africa. In early 2014, Gist will host at a high-profile industry event in Nigeria, where leading Hollywood writers will join their Nollywood counterparts and top medical experts in a series of workshops and site visits.

In Mumbai, HH&S and the Asian Center for Entertainment Education have created The Third Eye, which will produce original content dealing with pressing public health and development issues, and will also provide free expert resources on a wide variety of medical and scientific topics. Long known for its entertaining musicals and comedies, Bollywood is now seeing the rise of a "parallel cinema" featuring more serious and provocative stories. Vinta Nanda, founder and managing director of The Third Eye, is a writer and producer known for her pioneering work as creator of the popular Indian TV series, *Tara*. HH&S trips bringing *Grey's Anatomy* co-executive producer Zoanne Clack and Writers Guild of America, West president Chris Keyser to Mumbai laid the groundwork for the Third Eye collaboration.

"We're thrilled to be able to bring what we've learned about social impact in the U.S. to our partners in Nollywood and Bollywood, which are even bigger industries than Hollywood," said USC Annenberg professor Martin Kaplan, the Lear Center's founding director and principal investigator of HH&S since its inception.

HH&S's Chris Dzialo will manage the global centers program from the Norman Lear Center in Los Angeles.

Hollywood, Health & Society, a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, recognizes the effects that entertainment media have on individual knowledge, attitudes and behavior and provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate information about public health, health care coverage and climate change. HH&S offers free resources to writers and producers, including briefings and consultations with experts, panel discussions at the Writers Guild of America, West, customized site visits, screenings, tip sheets, a newsletter and web links to health information and public service announcements. The program also conducts studies of the impact on storylines on audiences. For more information, visit usc.edu/hhs.

The Norman Lear Center is a multidisciplinary research and public policy center that has been studying and shaping the impact of entertainment and media on society since 2000. From its base in the University of Southern California's [Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism](http://annenberg.usc.edu), 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 learcenter.org.

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett. For information, visit gatesfoundation.org.

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