The Sentinel for Health Awards

The Sentinel for Health Awards recognize exemplary achievements of daytime and prime time TV shows that inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives. For many loyal viewers, TV dramas and comedies provide both entertainment and incidental information about disease, injury and disability. Through their portrayals of characters’ lives, writers and producers have a unique opportunity to touch viewers’ lives. The way a popular character deals with a personal health decision can influence audience members to think about their own choices. A compelling storyline that demonstrates risky behavior and consequences, or shows how to avoid risk, can benefit millions of viewers and their loved ones.

The awards program is administered by Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S), a project of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center that is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Judging

Screening: Each storyline entry is screened by Hollywood, Health & Society for eligibility.

First Round Judging: Each storyline entry is reviewed by health topic experts for accuracy of depictions. The review panel considers how the storyline addresses the following:
- How the health problem can be prevented.
- How a character’s choices affect his/her health or safety.
- What causes the health problem and how it impacts the lives and relationships of characters.
- Common myths about the health issue.
- Characters at greatest risk for the health problem.
- Professional standards and practices observed by health care providers.

Second Round Judging: Finalists from the First Round Judging are reviewed by a panel of experts from public health, academic, advocacy and entertainment organizations. The finalists are evaluated for entertainment value and potential benefit to the viewing audience.

Eligibility

TV dramas, comedies and telenovelas that address public health topics and air in the United States are eligible to enter the awards competition. The storyline entry must air between May 31, 2004 and May 31, 2005. If a storyline continues past May 31, 2005, it may be entered either this year or next, but not both years.

Daytime Drama: The storyline may air in one or more episodes during the period of eligibility.

Prime Time Drama: The storyline may air in one or more episodes during the period of eligibility.

Prime Time Comedy: The storyline may air in one or more episodes during the period of eligibility.

Spanish-Language Telenovela: The storyline must air for at least six episodes during the period of eligibility.

Application Rules and Procedures

A single TV show may submit up to three different storylines with three different health topics for award consideration. For a list of topics, refer to Health Topics A-Z on the CDC Web page (www.cdc.gov) and to Types of Cancer on the NCI Web page (www.cancer.gov/cancerinfo/types).

Entries must include an application form, a 30-minute composite of the storyline arc for daytime drama and telenovela submissions, the entire episode or a 30-minute composite for prime time drama or comedy submissions, and a one-page, double-spaced synopsis of the storyline.

The application form should be completed and mailed to the address listed under Application Checklist on this form. Additional entry forms may be downloaded from the HH&S Web site (http://www.entertainment.usc.edu/hhs).

If the storyline aired with an 800 number or other PSA, you may include this at the end of your video entry. Letters from viewers also may be submitted for consideration at the judges’ discretion.

A letter confirming eligibility will be sent to the contact person named on the application within 30 days of receipt of the application. The finalists and winners will be announced in Fall 2005.

Application Checklist

Please include the following items in your entry submission package:

- APPLICATION FORM: Please complete all information requested in the form.
- VIDEOTAPE: Include a Beta SP format videotape composite of the storyline arc or the entire episode along with two VHS dubs. Outside Label: The storyline, show, network and broadcast air date(s).
- Slate the Reel: The storyline, show, network and broadcast air date(s).
- Spanish-language telenovelas: Video entries must include English subtitles to be considered eligible.
- SYNOPSIS: Include a one-page, double-spaced summary in English of the story arc with major beats of the storyline and relevant details about the depiction of the health topic.
- SUPPORTING MATERIALS (optional): Note and include additional materials that support the storyline entry, e.g. PSAs, print or broadcast news clips or letters from viewers.

Please mail all materials to:

Mandy S. Berkowitz
Hollywood, Health & Society
USC Norman Lear Center
8383 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 650
Los Angeles, CA 90211

Deadline for Entries: June 30, 2005

Hollywood, Health & Society
Fast, Free Research for Writers
www.entertainment.usc.edu/hhs
(800) 283-0676
hhs@usc.edu
The approximate length of the entire storyline (all scenes): ___________________________ minutes.

Writers to be listed for Awards recognition:

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