# POZ Awards 2018 / Best Celebrity Advocate

Read about the nominees, then scroll down to vote for your favorite!

October 1, 2018

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Welcome to the 3rd Annual POZ Awards, which spotlight the best representations of HIV/AIDS in media and culture.

The POZ editorial staff selects the nominees, but POZ readers choose the winners.

Eligible nominees were active or were presented, published or produced between October 1, 2017, and September 30, 2018.

Be sure to vote for your favorite nominees by the World AIDS Day deadline: Saturday, December 1, 2018. DEADLINE EXTENDED: Saturday, December 8!

Here are the nominees:

## Prince Harry

Yes, we are wild about Harry, and our past nominee just keeps delivering the royal goods when it comes to HIV awareness and prevention. While many of us fondly remember his mother, Princess Diana, for her dedication to the cause, the ginger prince has taken her mantle and sprinted with it all the way to AIDS 2018 in Amsterdam, where he joined Elton John in the announcement of a multi-million dollar effort to reach out to men at risk around the globe. Even Meghan Markle, his glamorous new bride, has partnered with Prince Harry in appearances to promote HIV education and advocacy.

## Karl Schmid

Schmid won our hearts when the ABC newscaster came out as HIV positive via a heartwarming social media post. “For 10 years I’ve struggled with ‘do I or don’t I?’ For ten years the stigma and industry professionals have said, ‘don’t! It’ll ruin you,”’ he wrote. Far from being ruined, the newscaster inspired people with HIV the world over, and then carried the message that “undetectable means untransmittable” in media interviews. “I’m just like you,” Schmid wrote in

his posting. “I have a big heart and I want to be loved and accepted. I may be on TV from time to time, but at the end of the day I’m just an average guy who wants what we all want. To be accepted and loved by our friends and family and to be encouraged by our peers.” We might be a little bit in love ourselves.

### Laela Wilding

The grandchildren of activism goddess Elizabeth Taylor have been featured previously on our list of nominees, but Wilding, in particular, has emerged as a tireless advocate in her own right. Her work around HIV criminalization reform has taken her from the HIV is Not a Crime Training Academy in Indianapolis to the International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam. No one in her famed family has taken their activism heritage lightly, but Wilding has really put her commitment (and her travel miles) to the test.

### Courtney Act

The former RuPaul’s Drag Race contestant and winner of Celebrity Big Brother in the U.K. has devoted herself to being transparent about her sex life and HIV risk. After a sexual hookup in 2016 with someone she later learned was HIV positive, Courtney got tested and then took YouTube viewers with her for the HIV-negative results. This year, the drag star joined forces with the New Zealand AIDS Foundation in a video campaign to educate the public about U=U.

VOTING IS NOW CLOSED!

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