POZ Awards 2019 / Winners

Here are the winners as voted by POZ readers!

December 9, 2019

Best Celebrity Advocate:

Prince Harry

Prince Harry continues to demonstrate his rightful place as heir to Princess Diana's legacy of HIV awareness and compassion. His royal calendar remains packed with engagements that focus on his commitment to HIV, and his most recent embrace of rugby star Gareth Thomas is just the latest example of Harry going above and beyond his exalted station to deliver important HIV education to the world.

Best in Film or Television:

5B (Verizon Media)

This documentary chronicling the first AIDS ward at San Francisco General Hospital has already become required viewing, with screenings at events and conferences all over the country. The tears it elicits are well earned, but the film doesn't begin and end with tragedy alone. There is such humanity on display here, along with inspiration and, yes, even optimism amid the dying patients and exhausted providers. 5B is urgent, crucial filmmaking and a testament that will stand the test of time.

Best Actor or Actress in Film or Television:

Chauntae Pink (POZ ROZ)

As the lead performer of the YouTube comedy POZ ROZ, actress Chauntae Pink anchors the short-form series with charm and strength by the truckload. Her character, Rozzlyn Mayweather, leads a carefree life filled with gay BFFs, sorority soirees, Black Twitter arguments and "woke" posts on her social media—before an HIV diagnosis crashes the party. We related completely to Rozzlyn's initial anger and shock and then found ourselves cheering her on as she bulldozes through life without apology or regrets. You're going to love Rozzlyn (and Chauntae) too.

Best Video Series:

PrEP Works (Prepster)

London-based PrEPster has been producing creative, cheeky advocacy content for years

now—which is a critical mission, given the slow governmental uptake of PrEP in the United Kingdom. Their “PrEP Works” series is notable for its global content. Advocates, health care providers, and people using PrEP, many from various corners of the world, share their experiences with PrEP’s use, efficacy and societal reputation. The result is a compelling tapestry of the awesome power and promise of this HIV prevention strategy.

Best in Performing and Visual Arts:

Transformation Tunnel (John Burnette, Lisette Correa, Ajmal Millar, Maite Nazario and Ash Walsh)

On the Atlanta Beltline, an urban walking trail and park project, passersby are confronted by a gorgeous mural, located at the heart of an area of Atlanta hit hard by the epidemic. “We Are All Thriving with HIV!” the mural proclaims, and the colorful and joyous artistry that surrounds those words serves as an illustration of its bold announcement. The popular trail will most certainly inspire conversation among the many joggers, pedestrians and families that visit it, and that’s the best kind of advocacy art. All five of the mural’s artists are impacted by HIV in some way, and their personal commitment is evident in the artwork, which was developed by the CDC’s “Start Talking. Stop HIV.” campaign in partnership with Living Walls Atlanta.

Best in Literature:

Nurses on the Inside: Stories of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in NYC (Ellen Matzer and Valery Hughes)

We are all about any project that gives nurses their due, and Nurses on the Inside is a prime example. It is written by two nurses who witnessed the early years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic from the front line. Some of the story is raw and sometimes graphic, but the sights, sounds and smells of their workplace will be familiar to any of us who have been there. Have you thanked a nurse today?

Best Reason to Keep Acting Up:

#BREAKTHEPATENT and #PrEP4ALL

This activism has produced no less than a House of Representatives congressional hearing, at least one major lawsuit, and an ongoing skirmish between the powerful pharma complex and grassroots activists. What is at stake? The profits and patents from the development of Truvada and Descovy as PrEP, and the not-so-wild chance that billions could end up returned to CDC and used for HIV treatment and prevention programs. People underestimated #PrEP4All when they started questioning the system. People don’t do that anymore.

Congratulations to the winners!

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