POZ Awards 2021 / Best Reason to Keep Acting Up

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

October 18, 2021

Welcome to the 6th Annual POZ Awards, spotlighting the best of HIV 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, 2020, and September 30, 2021.

This year's POZ Awards are a little different, since many of our regular categories went unfilled due to challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Stage, movie theaters, music venues, and artists of all kinds were affected by this newest virus, and cultural awards reflect that. Even the Tony Awards had to eliminate categories this year. So, in that regard, you can think of this year's POZ Awards as being just like the Tonys.

Be sure to vote for your favorite nominees by the World AIDS Day deadline: Wednesday, December 1, 2021.

VOTING IS CLOSED

Here are the nominees:

HIV Criminalization

Despite the fact that HIV is considered a chronic, manageable condition, it is still a crime in the majority of US states to expose someone to the virus, with or without motive, intent, or any transmission taking place. Thirty-seven states still have laws on the books that ridiculously mainly target poorer populations, people of color, trans folk, and sex workers. Prosecution of these outdated and biased laws cause irreputable harm to the accused, whether convicted or not. Although great strides have been made some states, with Illinois, Virginia, California, Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada and North Carolina modernizing the language in their laws, so much work needs to be done to get these unfair laws completely off the books.

The Right to Choose

With Texas leading the way and many other red states following, a woman’s right to choose is being outlawed and threatened. Abortion has always been a controversial issue, but the current challenges to a woman getting to control her own body and make choices that are right for her seem aimed more at political pandering to constituents than saving babies. Banning abortion is simply a way for the government to control people with less means and therefore less choices. Fighting for a woman’s right to choose is fundamental to the equal rights that all people deserve, and it’s an uphill battle.

Health Care Inequity

If there’s one thing the coronavirus pandemic has done, like HIV before it, is put a spotlight on the disparities in healthcare among vulnerable populations. Healthcare is a human right, and everyone has the right to quality and affordable access to medicines and medical treatment. It is unfathomable that this is something we have to fight for, but fight we must, until everyone can access life saving and life extending care.

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