

WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT A STAR-STUDED AWARDS CEREMONY

HOSTED VIRTUALLY BY SONY PICTURES &
POWERED BY DELL TECHNOLOGIES &
STAGEDGE

Winner & Finalist Films are Now Featured
on the Site and APP Homepages of IMDb

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*Nic Novicki, Founder of the
Easterseals Disability Film
Challenge*

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Last evening, a virtual “orange” carpet was rolled out by
Sony Pictures for the [Easterseals Disability Film Challenge:
Home Edition Awards Ceremony](#).

The annual Film Challenge empowers filmmakers, with or
without disabilities, to tell unique a stories, providing opportunities for inclusion and
representation for the world’s largest minority group.

In response to the pandemic, filmmakers were challenged to make a documentary short, all
from the safety of their homes. Challenge participants had five days to craft their film, with the

flexibility to incorporate previously shot footage in order to tell the story of what disability means to them.

“This is a record-setting year for entries, with steep competition. Each film is poignant and personal ... and so well told, it was difficult for judges to determine our winners,” said Nic Novicki, Actor and Founder of the Easterseals Disability Film Challenge & Easterseals Southern California board member.

“The timing to tell these diverse stories of disability is perfect -- especially where we are, during a global pandemic, with an overwhelming number of people taking to our streets demanding justice, equality, inclusion and an end to systemic racism. And, as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act this year,” Novicki added. “The result: these authentic documentary shorts showcase outstanding creativity in storytelling and introduce us to important, new voices and talent.”

The evening opened with Jocko Sims and Danny J. Gomez (New Amsterdam, NBCUniversal) welcoming guests. Novicki served as master of ceremonies, entertaining the virtual audience with his stand-up comedy routine.

Alie B. Gorrie (Able: a Series, Amazon) and Cassidy Huff (DreamWorks Spirit Riding Free, Netflix) introduced a new video showcasing how Easterseals Disability Film Challenge partners across entertainment are portraying disability in storylines, and authentically casting for it, while at the same time, opening doors to meaningful careers in entertainment and media.

Presenters and winners included:

- Lauren Ash and Nicole Lynn Evans (Superstore, NBCUniversal) presented the WarnerMedia Best Awareness Campaign Award to Rachel Handler for “How Much Am I Worth?”
- Nicholas Gonzales and David Renaud (The Good Doctor, ABC/Sony Pictures Television) presented the WarnerMedia Best Editor Award to Scott Klumb for [“Autism Ability”](#)



• CJ Jones (Baby Driver, and upcoming Avatar 2, VIACOMCBS) and Jillian Mercado (The L Word Generation Q, Showtime Original Series/VIACOMCBS) presented the Adobe Best Film Award to Jennifer Msumba for [“The Fish Don’t Care When It Rains”](#)

Additional finalists featured during the virtual awards include:

Best Awareness Campaign presented by WarnerMedia

- Regina Saldivar (Natalie’s Point of View)
- Patrick Ivison (In Dependence)
- Miriam Revesz (Voices from the Invisible)

Best Editor presented by WarnerMedia

- Nathan Cox (Hyper Active)
- Matthew Placencia (2nd Act: Danny J.Gomez)
- Shawn Lovering (Expectations)

Best Film presented by creativity partner Adobe

- Alexandria Cree (Aine)
- Rachel Handler (How Much Am I Worth?)
- Santa Muha (Full Picture)

Novicki created the Film Challenge in response to under-representation of talent with disabilities in the entertainment industry, giving filmmakers the opportunity to highlight their work and provide them with meaningful exposure. The disability community makes up nearly 25 percent of the U.S. population, but is only seen in less than 3 percent of on-screen roles.

Judges for this year’s Film Challenge were: Col Needham, IMDb Founder and CEO; Sheri Linden, film critic for The Hollywood Reporter; filmmakers Jim Lebrecht (Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution), Alice Austen (Give Me Liberty), Kat Coiro (Marry Me) and Jenni Gold (Cinemability) and Steve Martini; actors Danny Woodburn, R.J. Mitte, and Mark Povinelli; comedian Kevin Jordan; disability activists Lawrence Carter-Long and Richard Propes; Nicole Castro, HollyShorts Film Festival Managing Director, and Jenn Wilson, Film Independent Nominations Manager.

Winners of the Film Challenge will receive a one-hour consulting opportunity with Gena Desclos, SVP Post Production HBO, Tiffany Smith-Anoa’i, EVP Entertainment Diversity & Inclusion West Coast ViacomCBS, and a diverse team of executives at NBCUniversal. Directors of the 11 winner and finalist films will receive a one-year membership to IMDbPro, the essential resource for entertainment industry professionals, to help them continue achieving success in their careers. Today, a video playlist of the 11 winner and finalist films is featured on the site and app homepages of IMDb, the world’s most popular and authoritative source for information on movies, TV shows and celebrities, and on imdb.com/awards-central. After today, each film will continue to be available on its IMDb title page.

Other prizes include the latest in computer technology from Dell Technologies; a \$2,500 production grant provided by NBCUniversal; a Sony Alpha a6000 camera; a full-year subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud; as well as invaluable industry networking and exclusive professional development opportunities.

Sponsors and partners for the 2020 Challenge include: Adobe, Bentonville Film Festival, ViacomCBS Global Inclusion, Deadline, Dell Technologies, Dow Jones, Film Independent, HBO, Heartland Film Festival, HollyShorts Film Festival, IMDbPro, Molly & David Pyott Foundation, New Filmmakers LA, SAG-AFTRA, Sony Electronics, Sony Pictures, Sundance Institute, The Hollywood Reporter, NBCUniversal, WarnerMedia, and WeScreenplay. Additionally, Dell Technologies and StagEdge Productions provided technical and production support for the virtual event.

ABOUT THE EASTERSEALS DISABILITY FILM CHALLENGE

As someone with a disability, actor, comedian and producer Nic Novicki launched the Disability Film Challenge in 2013 in response to the under-representation of talent with disabilities both in front of and behind the camera. Novicki created the challenge to give aspiring filmmakers the opportunity to showcase their work and provide them with meaningful exposure. In 2017, Novicki joined forces with Easterseals Southern California – the nation’s leading nonprofit supporting people and families with disabilities – to expand the event, now known as the Easterseals Disability Film Challenge. Learn more at www.DisabilityFilmChallenge.com and join the conversation at [Facebook.com/DisabilityFilmChallenge](https://www.facebook.com/DisabilityFilmChallenge).

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