

TWO FILM-BASED PROJECTS FROM A NEW ORLEANS-BASED NON-PROFIT WIN 2024 ANTHEM AWARDS

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Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies Announced As a Silver Medal Winner in the Health - Education or Literacy Platform and Health - Media Impact Campaign Categories for the The 3rd Annual Anthem Awards.

New Orleans, LA — January 30, 2024 – The Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies (IWES) announced today that it has been named a Winner in The 3rd Annual Anthem Awards for two projects — an entertainment education intervention and a film-based HIV stigma reduction campaign. The Anthem Awards was launched in response to the prevalence social good has taken within the national conversation and cultural zeitgeist in recent years. Winners were selected from a pool of over 2,000 submissions from 44 countries by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences (IADAS), which has membership representing a wide-range of distinguished mission-driven organizations such as The Innocence Project, (RED), the NAACP, NRDC, and GLAAD.

“The Anthem Awards were born out of the desire to amplify and celebrate the voices that are creating sustainable change and to inspire others to take action,” said Patricia McLoughlin, Anthem Awards General Manager. “In a year where so much is at stake, it is incredibly important to recognize impact work and celebrate the progress happening globally. Congratulations to all of this year’s Winners.”

Out of over 2,000 entries from 44 countries, *Are You Ready? An Entertainment Education Pregnancy Prevention Program* and *New Nickels: A Film-Based HIV Stigma Reduction Campaign* were selected as Finalists in December, and selected as Silver Medal winners. *Are You Ready?* is a program for youth in or at risk of joining the juvenile justice system. It is based around a narrative short film, *Happy Birthday*,

Leonard, which shows youth confronting challenges related to family, school, mental health, and sexual health. The film was created following extensive research & guidance by youth advisory boards and was piloted at three sites in Louisiana in March 2023. IWES is currently a recipient of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Population Affairs Tier 2 Teen Pregnancy Prevention grant where it is rigorously evaluating *Are You Ready?* for effectiveness at increasing perceived risk of pregnancy & STI transmission, knowledge about pregnancy & contraceptives, & condom use/negotiation with youth in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Michigan. *Are You Ready?* also aims to help youth see the connection between mental health & decision-making, especially regarding reproductive health & healthy relationships.

New Nickels is a documentary short film about the healing journeys of Black women living with HIV (BWLWH) in the South. The film was commissioned by the New Orleans Film Festival (NOFF) in 2021 and supported by funding from Gilead Sciences. It premiered at the 2021 NOFF and since has enjoyed multiple screenings at other sites around the country. In 2022, supported by the *Black Women First* initiative from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health and Resources Administration (HRSA), the film was paired with data collected from interviews of BWLWH & HIV service providers to create a discussion guide & print materials for an HIV stigma reduction campaign to improve service provision for cis- and transgender BWLWH. The campaign was piloted at 10 sites nationally, and findings and recommendations from the campaign have been share at multiple conferences, such as this year's US Conference on HIV/AIDS. IWES is currently seeking new opportunities to further distribute the film nationally and internationally, in conjunction with other IWES documentary shorts about BWLWH.

"It is an absolute honor to be recognized for these two narrative change projects that depict the richness and complexities of honest, often untold stories of Black people in the United States," says Iman Shervington, IWES' Sr. Director of Media & Communications and the creator of both films. "As I mentioned in my Anthem acceptance speech, Black healing often comes through the arts, and I want to thank the folks that opened their hearts to me to create these projects so that they can catalyze healing for so many others, Black and beyond."

Winners for the 3rd Annual Anthem Awards were publicly announced today, January 30th, 2024. Winners will be celebrated online through the Winners Gallery, which will display the impactful work of this year's winners, and there will also be an in-person Winners Event in New York City this evening. For more information about either of these two projects, please contact Iman Shervington at iman@iwesnola.org.

About The Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies:

Founded in 1993, IWES is a national, nonprofit health organization that creates initiatives to heal communities, especially those facing adversity. Through community-driven research programs, training, advocacy, and partnerships, IWES helps to build emotional and physical well-being, resilience and capacity among women, their families and communities of color, especially those which are disadvantaged. IWES creates culturally proficient programs, activities, and research to address and advocate for the emotional and physical well-being, resilience, and capacity of women of color, their families, and communities to heal and create sustainable change. IWES works in the following areas: Resilience, Well-Being, and Mental Health; Adolescent Health; Healing Justice; Maternal and Child Health; and STI/HIV Prevention & Care.

About The Anthem Awards:

Launched in 2021 by The Webby Awards, The Anthem Awards honors the purpose & mission-driven work of people, companies and organizations worldwide. By amplifying the voices that spark global change, we're defining a new benchmark for impactful work that inspires others to take action in their own communities. The Anthem Awards honors work across seven core causes: Diversity; Equity & Inclusion; Education; Art & Culture; Health; Human & Civil Rights; Humanitarian Action & Services; Responsible Technology; and Sustainability, Environment & Climate. Founded in partnership with the Ad Council, Born This Way Foundation, Feeding America, GLAAD, Mozilla, NAACP, NRDC, WWF, and XQ.