

PROFILE

An infoletter of the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc.

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PRISM *Generation Next* Makes Dean's List with Film Students

Highly praised by participating film and television students, PRISM Generation Next (PGN) completed its pilot Fall 1999 semester with honors. An extension of the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc.'s (EIC) annual PRISM Awards, *First Draft* consultation service and *Spotlight on Depiction* briefings for industry professionals, the PGN guest speaker program brings renowned writers and producers into classrooms to introduce the industry's future creators to the importance of accurate depiction of alcohol, drug and tobacco use and addiction in entertainment.

Representative professors and department heads at five film and television schools - **University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)**, the **American Film Institute (AFI)**, **California State University at Northridge**, **Loyola Marymount University** and **Emerson College (Los Angeles Center)** - welcomed PGN into their classrooms. At every PGN workshop, EIC's Director of Education, Kirwan Rockefeller, Ph.D., provided a brief overview of the work of EIC, followed by a presentation on the science of addiction, detailing the four phases of addiction (introductory, maintenance, disenchantment, disaster). Then, one of PGN's specially selected guest artists shared their own professional experiences with crafting characters and stories that accurately depict issues of substance abuse.

The PGN pilot program initiated with a visit to **Professor Martin Goldstein's** Seminar in Media Arts, at Emerson College's LA Center, on October 19. **Chris Abbott**, currently Executive Producer of *Diagnosis Murder*, spoke with 21 undergraduate students about the importance of accurate portrayals in television. Experienced in "the art of making a difference," Abbott won PRISM Award commendations in both 1998 and 1999 with her work on *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, "Lead Me Not" episode and *Legacy* episodes "Emma" and "The Search Party."



Showing clips from *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman's* "Lead Me Not" episode depicting the character of Jake, the town barber, on a drunken binge, Abbott described her creative process on the episode. "I was interested in showing Dr. Mike trying to rescue and save someone who has a drinking problem. For me the challenge

in writing the show was to have...Dr. Mike having to say, 'I can't save you.' When there is alcohol abuse involved, it's a shared dance. The difficulty of the shared dance is of being close to someone with an alcohol problem, and that sometimes the only thing one can do is step away from the dance."



PGN offers film and television students the unique opportunity to interact with professionals who are committed to the accurate portrayal of substance abuse in their work. Presentations like Abbott's lead to student questions and active discussion of the modern-day film artist's role in society. In the process, students become sensitized to the impact of the works they are going to be creating.

"[Chris Abbott] created an experience that was invaluable to the class...[She] raised the professionalism several notches. [She] made students take a hard look at themselves and gave them much to think about as future producers, directors and writers. [Chris is] a tremendous role model for [the students]." Geraldine P. Wallach, Ph.D., Executive Director, Emerson College LA Center.



Advancing and preserving the art of the moving image

PGN provided another tremendous role model for students on November 10, when *Party of Five* co-creator/writer/executive producer **Amy Lippman** spoke to twelve students at the American Film Institute/Sloan Foundation's "Television Writing Workshop."

Lippman and her creating/writing/executive-producing partner **Christopher Keyser** received the 1998 PRISM Award for the dramatic continuing storyline episodes, "Point of No Return," "The Intervention," and "Hitting Bottom."



Loyola Marymount University

"The amazing thing for us as writers is that when we

sat down to write these episodes, everyone in our whole crew knew someone who had been touched by alcohol. It was truly a universal experience," Lippman told AFI students.

Ted Kristian, writer of *No Laughing Matter*, and a 1999 PRISM honoree, joined Chris Abbott to speak at California State University, Northridge on November 17. The students of **Professor Robert Gustafson's** graduate course in Television Program Development attended PGN speakers Kristian and Abbott's presentation at CBS/Radford Studios in Studio City, where they learned about the incredible power of the writer's word.

Two other presentations with guest speaker Abbott, on November 29 at Loyola Marymount and November 30 at UCLA brought PGN's fall semester to a close. Return commitments to PGN

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Budding Screenwriters Awarded PGN Fellowships

schools have already been made for this spring, including a March visit to Emerson College's main campus in Boston, Massachusetts. By expanding its audience beyond the LA campus of Emerson College and other Southern California schools, PGN is going national, and will open its workshops to five more schools in the Fall 2000 semester. As more film and television schools seek to integrate EIC's program into their curricula, PGN can reach even more of tomorrow's creators today.

As an undergraduate student from Emerson College (LA) expressed, "We are the future of the entertainment industry. The EIC came to our class and opened our minds to something that most of us had not given thought to before."


"First Draft"
(800) 783-3421

EIC's First Draft service offers free, pre-production consultations on depicting accurately the science of addiction, available to all students enrolled in film and television departments.

Concurrent with this year's launch of PGN, EIC and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation initiated a PGN Fellowship for the pilot schools who participated in 1999. Seven students at UCLA and AFI met the stringent requirements of the fellowship application, submitting their original treatments, written specifically for the PGN Fellowship. Accompanying each entry were the required two letters of recommendation from professors in the applicant's major and with whom the student had studied, and 10-15 pages of a previously written script demonstrating storytelling abilities and an understanding of the mechanics of screenwriting.

Our Review Panel, comprised of selected individuals from EIC's Creative Professional Network, undertook the challenging task of evaluating the submissions, and is pleased to announce this year's two PGN Fellowship recipients. Congratulations to: Josefina Lopez, of UCLA, in the Full-Length Feature Film category, with her original treatment "Add Me to the Party," and Carla Robinson, of AFI, in the One-Hour TV Drama category, for her spec treatment for *ER*. The two students will be honored alongside the PRISM 2000 Award recipients on March 21, at the Beverly Hills Hotel, in the presence of over 500 industry executives and creators. Aaron Sorkin, Executive Producer/Creator of *Sports Night* and *The West Wing*, and a 1999 PRISM Award winner, will present the Fellowship awards.

Impressed with the high quality of all the students' entries, EIC thanks the following participants for submitting their outstanding work: AFI's Crystal Ann Taylor, and from UCLA, Catherine Cooper, Robert Davenport, Scott Kosar and Toni Lawrence. We encourage these and other students at our PGN schools to apply for next year's fellowship, Submission deadline: January 12, 2001.

Our Sincere Thanks to the Professional Educators Who Made PGN a Success

Martin M. Goldstein	Professor, Emerson College, Los Angeles
Robert Gustafson, Ph.D.	Professor, RTVF Dept., California State University, Northridge
Richard P. Hadley, Jr., Ph.D.	Graduate Advisor, Communication Arts, Loyola Marymount University
Jim Kearney	Professor, Communication Arts, Loyola Marymount University
Judith Marlane, Ph.D.	Chair, RTVF Dept., California State University, Northridge
Stephanie Moore	Coordinator, Professional Programs, University of California at Los Angeles
Joe Petricca	Associate Director, Workshops and Special Projects, American Film Institute
Geraldine Wallach, Ph.D.	Executive Director, Emerson College, Los Angeles Center
Richard Walter	Chairman, Screenwriting Department, University of California at Los Angeles

Our Sincere Thanks to the Professionals Who Served on the PGN Review Panel

Diane Walsh	Associate Professor, Screenwriting, University of the Arts, Philadelphia
Aaron Meyerson	Principal, Sandbox Development
Johnathan Fernandez	Screenwriter, <i>Y2K</i>
Ted Kristian	Screenwriter, <i>No Laughing Matter</i>

PRISM Generation Next Internships

Several intern positions are available for PRISM 2000 Awards show. Under the supervision of the executive producer and producer, interested college students will be able to obtain practical experience in television production. For more information contact the EIC West Coast office at (818) 955-6845.

The Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. is pleased to announce that the CD-Rom,

"The Art of Making a Difference"

is available, free of charge, to all students who attend PGN workshops.

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For additional information regarding EIC's PRISM Generation Next program, please contact Kirwan Rockefeller, Ph.D., Director of Education, at:

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"Encouraging the Art of Making a Difference"