

Enhancing the Profile of Writers

Throughout the year, the Public Affairs Department produced numerous high-profile writer events, providing members with key press opportunities, including Sublime Prime-time (a special evening with Emmy-nominated writers), Beyond Words: The Writers Talk (a panel featuring WGA- and Oscar-nominated writers), a summer reception with print and broadcast critics during the annual Television Critics Association press tour, plus the Honorary Service Awards luncheon, paying tribute to legendary WGAw members. Other events included a revamped Meet the Candidates night and the Guild's annual member holiday party.

As a full-service press office, the department is available to media 24/7. Fielding more than 1,000 press inquiries last year, the office worked closely with a wide range of international media outlets, placing stories promoting screen and television writers, their craft, and their Guild. During the Guild's recent MBA negotiations, the Public Affairs team took the lead on all WGAw press communications.

PUBLIC POLICY

The department led a coalition of entertainment guilds and industry unions to achieve a significant tax victory, reforming Los Angeles' city business tax code. As a result, writers earning up to \$300,000 in taxable gross receipts will no longer have to pay any city business tax.

THE 57TH WRITERS GUILD AWARDS

Working in conjunction with executive producer Cort Casady, the Public Affairs office produced the 2005 Writers Guild Awards held at the historic Hollywood Palladium, which



PHOTO BY LEROY HAMILTON

garnered coverage in major media outlets and WGA-themed special issues in both Daily Variety and The Hollywood Reporter. The department also coordinates a sponsorship program in connection with the show, which generates revenues for the Guild.

WRITTEN BY MAGAZINE

Written By, the Guild's flagship publication, continues to garner prestigious honors. In New York, the magazine was presented two 2004 Eddie Awards for editorial and design by the national journalism organization Folio. The magazine also earned four nominations from the Greater Los Angeles Press Club: outstanding "In House or Corporate Publication," entertainment feature (two nominations), and design. For 2004, the much-discussed summer "unproduced" issue concentrated on television scripts. The annual comedy issue included a complete script from Larry David. Cover portraits honored writers as celebrities, ranging from Bill Condon to Harlan Ellison and Tina Fey. The advertising revenue continues to grow; this fiscal year generated nearly \$300,000.



Written By and all other Guild publications and collateral material are designed and produced in-house. The Publications Department staff prepares all prepress materials, which generates a substantial cost savings.

MEMBER NEWS/MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Every month, *Member News* publishes up-to-the-minute business, legal and legislative news that affects WGAw members, plus profiles of Guild committees and staff departments as well as information about Guild and member activities. The *Member News* is also available in pdf format at www.wga.org.

On a monthly basis, an updated events calendar is sent by e-mail to all members who have provided e-mail addresses-currently about two-thirds of the Guild's active membership. The e-mail list is also used to inform members about updated news as needed.

THE GUILD WEBSITE

While the Guild's www.wga.org website remains an important link in promoting writers to the industry and the public-at-large, it has evolved into a more integral part of the Guild's daily business. This is a trend that will continue and accelerate, especially when the completely redesigned website is unveiled in September 2005. For both members and the media, the Guild has sought to use the website more regularly as an outlet for instant information dissemination. More routine forms and booklets are also readily available at no cost online. The site averages about three million hits per month. There are 13,000 subscribers to the website's *Now Playing* biweekly newsletter.