



DATE: December 8, 2008

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WEDU LOCAL PROGRAMS WIN 6 EMMY® AWARDS *The Latest Accomplishment in Awards Season*

Tampa, FL — Recently nominated for **15** Suncoast Regional **Emmy® Awards** for two of its local series and two special documentaries, **WEDU** was the winner of **six** prized statuettes – representing programming excellence – at a gala awards ceremony held last week in Orlando. More than 500 guests attended the ceremony representing the Suncoast Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences which consists of television and cable stations throughout Florida and Puerto Rico, and parts of Alabama, Louisiana and Georgia.

Led by WEDU Vice President of Content, Jack Conely who serves as Executive Producer on all local station productions, WEDU staff and special guest hosts, photographers, producers and editors garnered the following accolades: In its sixth season, ***A Gulf Coast Journal with Jack Perkins*** received seven Emmy® nominations and **two wins** including one for **Best Magazine Program**; the other for **Best Photography** in a segment on a model railroad club. The WEDU series ***Smart Health*** had five Emmy® nominations and **two wins** for **Best Public-Current-Community Affairs Program**; the other for its *Journey of Faith* segment. The station's hour-long documentary ***The Florida Dream*** received two nominations and won for **Best Cultural Documentary**, and the special WEDU World War II documentary ***Heroes from the Bay*** won for **Best Historical Documentary**.

The acknowledgment at the Suncoast Regional Emmy® Awards came on the heels of the Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists' Griot Drum Awards banquet in Saint Petersburg [Nov. 20, 2008] where WEDU was honored with two 'drum' wins highlighting the station's excellence in programming covering issues relating to people of color.

The complete list of Emmy® and Griot Drum Award nominations, wins, program sponsors and the individuals that contributed to this award-winning programming include:

Suncoast Regional Emmy® Awards:

Exclusively underwritten by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, ***A Gulf Coast Journal with Jack Perkins*** highlights the people and places that make Sarasota and west central Florida a rich and varied community. *A Gulf Coast Journal with Jack Perkins* received two Emmy® wins and seven nominations in the following categories:

WINNER: BEST Magazine Program

A Gulf Coast Journal with Jack Perkins, June 2008

Jack Perkins, Jen Noble, Matt Zodrow, Brad Clore

WINNER: Photographer-Program

On the Right Track (AGCJ-model railroad club-Dec. 2007)

Alex Gazio

Nominations Included:

Documentary – Cultural

For the Love of the Game (AGCJ-Buck O’Neil profile-June 2007)

Jen Noble, Matt Zodrow, Alex Gazio

Human Interest-Program

Life Lessons (AGCJ-Gabe Ortiz profile-March 2008)

Jen Noble, Brad Clore, Alex Gazio

Human Interest-Program

On the Right Track (AGCJ-model railroad club-Dec. 2007)

Matt Zodrow, Alex Gazio

Sports-Program Feature

Knock ‘n Roll Rugby (AGCJ)

Tracy MacDonald, Alex Gazio

Photographer-Program

Water Colors (AGCJ-artist Jean Blackburn profile-Feb. 2008)

Brad Clore

Smart Health, a WEDU health series dedicated to sharing advances in medical science and introducing the inspiring and courageous people behind them, and underwritten in part by the Joy McCann Foundation, received two Emmy® wins and five nominations in the following categories:

WINNER: Public/Current/Community Affairs - Program

Drug Treatment: A Family Affair (Smart Health)

Angie Moreschi

WINNER: Religion - Program

Journey of Faith (Smart Health)

Angie Moreschi, Alex Gazio

Nominations Included:

Human Interest-Program

Wounded War Vet Yoga (Smart Health)

Angie Moreschi

Health/Science/Environment – News

Heart Vet (Smart Health)

Colleen Hamilton

Health/Science/Environment – Program

Smart Health

Angie Moreschi

From backwater to boomtown, *The Florida Dream* documents the great social, cultural and economic forces that drove the dramatic transformation of Florida – from the smallest state in the South on the eve of Pearl Harbor, to the fourth largest in the country post World War II. Based on Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida, written by historian and USF professor Gary Mormino, *The Florida Dream* was produced in partnership with the Florida Humanities Council and was presented statewide after its premiere in the Tampa area. Additional funding for this one-hour program was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities' Frank E. Duckwall Foundation; The Saunders Foundation and the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs. *The Florida Dream* received one Emmy® win and two nominations in the following categories:

WINNER: Documentary – Cultural

The Florida Dream

Larry Elliston, Dax Bedell, Matt Zodrow, Steve Snead, Alex Gazio

Nominations Included:

Writer – Program

The Florida Dream

Larry Elliston

Before World War II, the Bay area was largely a collection of small to medium sized towns with a distinctively Southern character. The War changed everything, and everyone. It resulted in hundreds of military bases being built in the state and the start of a new direction for Florida. And residents of West Central Florida were called to serve. Both on the battlefield and on the home front, they served with distinction. The half-hour WEDU documentary *Heroes from the Bay*, underwritten by University Village and the Florida Chapter of the U.S. Navy Veteran's Association, told their story and won an Emmy® Award in the following category:

WINNER: Documentary – Historical

Heroes from the Bay

Spencer Briggs, Matt Zodrow

Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists' Griot Drum Awards

WINNER: Best Television, Community/Public Affairs Program

A Gulf Coast Journal: Buck O'Neil profile

Jen Noble, Producer

WINNER: Best Television, Documentary

Central Avenue Remembered

Spencer Briggs, Producer

In the 50 year history of WEDU the station has been the recipient of more than 50 Emmy® awards and numerous other program honors. Encore performances of these award-winning WEDU programs can be seen on the station's website, wedu.org, along with information about WEDU programming, TV schedules, channel guides, special events, outreach efforts and community partnerships. WEDU, a 501(c)(3) organization, is West Central Florida's primary PBS station serving 16 counties including the Tampa, St. Petersburg, Pasco, Polk and Sarasota areas through multiple media platforms including on-air broadcasting and online experiences. WEDU, recently received its fourth consecutive four-star national rating by Charity Navigator, is financially supported by its local community, and provides the highest quality education, information, and entertainment programming.