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Sep 4, 2025 1:00pm PT

Humanitas Reveals Starz #TakeTheLead Honoree, New Voices Fellows and College Screenwriting Award Winners (EXCLUSIVE)

By Michael Schneider ▾



Courtesy of Humanitas

“The Blacklist” co-executive producer [Taylor Martin](#) has been selected as the winner of [Humanitas’ 2025 Starz #TakeTheLead Award](#), the org was set to announce Wednesday. Humanitas also announced winners for its New Voices Fellowship and College Screenwriting awards, all of which will be handed out at The Humanitas Prizes Awards Show & Toast on September 7 at Avalon Hollywood.

The Starz #TakeTheLead award honors writers who amplify “narratives by, about and for women and underrepresented audiences.” The honoree is selected from people who have previously taken part in Humanitas’s New Voices Fellowship or was awarded a Humanitas College Screenwriting Award; Martin was the winner of Humanitas’s 2013 Carol Mendelsohn College Drama Award.

As honoree, Martin will receive a cash prize and professional development support from Starz executives for a year. “Taylor is a sharp and thoughtful writer, and any writers’ room would benefit from her passion and perspective,” said Kathryn Busby, president, original programming at Starz. “Her appreciation for nuanced and layered women’s stories was immediately clear, and given what we focus on at Starz, her commitment to telling those stories made a strong impression on the whole team. Taylor’s engagement and desire to collaborate will take her a long way, and for all of these reasons, it’s evident why she was chosen as this year’s recipient of our Starz TakeTheLead Award.”

Added Martin: “As a mother of three young children navigating society’s complex and often contradictory expectations, I’ve never felt more viscerally connected to the characters I write. It is my hope to continue to tell stories from the female perspective in spaces where women are often sidelined, silenced, and relegated to supporting roles. And with women being stripped of their rights all around us, this type of storytelling feels more relevant and urgent than ever.”

Other finalists included Eric Glover (“Star Trek: Starfleet Academy,” “Tom Swift”) playwright Chisa Hutchinson (“Three Women”).

Meanwhile, Humanitas revealed that its 2025-26 New Voices Fellows are Nicole Lynn Cohen, Meg Dudley, V Marks, Drew McInturff, and Ariana Newhouse. They will participate in a six-month mentorship program for early-career television and screenwriters, complete a workshop series and be paired with acclaimed writers for one-on-one mentorship focused on polishing the script submitted for fellowship consideration. The fellows receive a \$7,500 stipend and a free course from UCLA Extension Writers’ Program, among other things.

Past mentors include Jenny Bicks, Scott Z. Burns, Reggie Rock Bythewood, Steven Canals, Marissa Jo Cerar, Hart Hanson, Winnie Holzman, Jason Katims and Bill Lawrence, while past workshop participants include DJ Nash, Nkechi Okoro Carroll, Marshall Herskowitz and Jay Kogen.

Meanwhile, Humanitas’s College Screenwriting Awards winners include, Mohannad Salman (David and Lynn Angell College Comedy Award) and Yeajoon Cho (Carol Mendelsohn College Drama Award). Cho and Salman will each receive a \$20,000 cash prize and a professional script notes session with a writer in the Humanitas community.

“Welcoming the New Voices Fellows and College Screenwriting Award winners into our community is a highlight each year,” said Humanitas executive director Michelle Franke. “We’re particularly proud to run these programs, especially at a time where writers feel like opportunities for access are diminishing. Nicole, Meg, V, Drew, Ariana, Mohannad, and Joon are supremely talented individuals telling a range of important stories not often explored. We’re excited to work with them this year.”

Writer Emmylou Diaz will serve for a second year as the fellowship’s program advisor and present the artist development awards alongside Humanitas board member Erika Kennair, who serves as head of scripted, USA and Canada, at the Mediapro Studio.

People involved in both programs will also receive copies of Final Draft 13, one month of hosting two free valuations on The Black List, a gift from the Michael Wiese Productions book catalog and an NFMLA membership. New Voices Fellows also receive benefits from program partners Canva and Script Anatomy.

At the Humanitas event on Sept. 7, Lena Waithe is set to receive the Voice for Change Award, co-presented by Mara Brock Akil and Gina Prince-Bythewood. Comedian Leah Rudick is set to host.