Exceptional Minds Shares Stage with Apple, Sesame Workshop and Helen Hunt During FDR Award

Los Angeles, Calif. – October 10, 2017 – Exceptional Minds shared the spotlight with Apple, Sesame Workshop and Helen Hunt on Saturday when the school and working studio received the Excellence in Education Award at the 42nd annual FDR dinner at Fox Studios in Los Angeles. The annual event is hosted by the Disability Rights Legal Center to honor luminaries from entertainment, education, civil liberties and business communities.
Exceptional Minds vocational school and working studio for young adults with autism received the award for “empowering people with autism to achieve their full potential.”

Apple was honored for its innovative solutions for people with disabilities, and Sesame Workshop was honored for its educational programming celebrating inclusion. Oscar-winner Helen Hunt was given the evening’s most distinguished award, the DREAM award, for her roles in championing critical human rights issues.

Exceptional Minds was chartered in 2011 with a vision to create a world in which individuals on the spectrum are recognized for their talents and abilities, and are able to achieve their full potential. Currently, the majority of the nation’s 3.5 million people with autism are unemployed or underemployed, according to government statistics. More than 500,000 U.S. children impacted by autism will enter adulthood during this decade, with one in 68 children to follow.

Exceptional Minds is the only vocational school and working studio to prepare and successfully place young men and women with autism in careers in the fields of animation and visual effects.

*Photo: Honorees and participants at the 42nd annual FDR dinner by the Disability Rights Legal Center, shown left to right: Dr. Jeanette Betancourt, Sesame Workshop Senior Vice President for U.S. Social Impact; Ernie Merlán, Exceptional Minds Executive Director; Patricia Turney, Exceptional Minds board member and Vice President of Supply Chain for Amgen; actress Helen Hunt; Andrew Turney, Exceptional Minds student; and Sarah Herrlinger, Apple’s director of accessibility. Photo courtesy of Steve Dawson.*

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