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OFFICIAL SELECTION  
OMNI CULTURAL TV  
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WITH NATPE



# BUDS

“

What the f\*\*\*  
is an Ombudsman?

- LITERALLY EVERYONE

”



WINNER  
42ND ANNUAL  
TELLY AWARDS

BRONZE  
USE OF COMEDY



OFFICIAL SELECTION  
AUSTIN FILM  
FESTIVAL  
DIGITAL SERIES  
2021



A NEW SERIES CREATED BY ANNIE C. WRIGHT



## LOGLINE:

### Old people, new show!

BUDS (short for Ombudsmen) is a workplace comedy about the administrative underdogs who spend their days fielding the complaints of senior citizens in long-term care facilities. Made up of mostly mediocre volunteers, Ombudsmen lack the authority (and the respect) that their rivals in Licensing possess, but like security guards on a power trip, they tackle even trivial injustices with the utmost conviction.



**National Ombudsman  
Resource Coalition**  
*"We care about your care"*





# TONE

BUDS is a single-camera comedy that follows 3 Ombudsmen in their day-to-day investigations at various long-term care facilities throughout LA County.

**(Think: Parks and Rec. meets Scrubs.)**

Arcs will be episodic, but open-ended investigations leave room to revisit storylines and meet recurring characters (read: cameos of our favorite stars from sitcoms past!).

Overall, BUDS aims to shed light on the sometimes dramatic, often comedic industry of aging in America.





# SYNOPSIS

Over three million Americans live in nursing homes, assisted living, and retirement communities, and it's likely that most of them have, at some point, had a complaint.

## Enter the Ombudsman!

Stunted by a combined lack of public interest and government funding, the Ombudsmen program is almost as flawed as the senior care system itself. They're advocates that have zero respect and zero authority (they're basically professional tattletales, but somebody's gotta do it!).

They're in a game they can't seem to win, but we love to watch them try, because the BUDS and their clients, just the kind of underdog characters we want to root for.





HELLO  
my name is

RANDY KIM  
OMBUDSMAN

**Age:** 39

**Physical:** Nico Santos all day.

**Sexual Orientation:** Gay.

**Children:** No, but wants them some day.

**Relationship History:** Can't quite quit his ex... yet!

**Attitude:** Optimistic with a history of disappointment.

**Fears:** Dying alone.

**Habits:** Eats his feelings, over-thinks.

**Want:** To find love, to help people.

Always heart-driven and often heart-broken, Randy is in the 1% of people who are in this industry for the right reasons. He loves what he does, even though most of the people in his life have no idea what an Ombudsman is. Despite never having been able to advocate for himself, Randy can do it for his clients without a doubt.

**HELLO**  
my name is

**CAROL  
MCKENNA**

**DISTRICT OMBUDSMAN**

**Age:** 53

**Physical:** A hybrid of Jane Lynch and Rhea Pearlman.

**Sexual Orientation:** We're not totally sure.

**Children:** Don't be ridiculous.

**Relationship History:** Divorced. Don't ask.

**Skills:** Micromanagement, sarcasm.

**Attitude:** Annoyed.

**Fears:** Losing.

**Habits:** Smoking (and don't you dare bring it up).

**Want:** To be seen as a winner.

You could pluck her out of her job advocating for seniors in long-term care and put her in a job where she's selling poison to toddlers and she'd go at it just as hard. Carol treats every day like it's game day, and it doesn't matter what game she's playing... she's in it to win it.



**HELLO**  
my name is

**HARVEY  
BLANCHETT**  
VOLUNTEER OMBUDSMAN

**Age:** 65

**Physical:** Richard Kind vibes.

**Sexual Orientation:** Straight shooter.

**Children:** 2 adult children that he knows about.

**Relationship History:** Widowed. Playing the field.

**Talents/Skills:** Finding freebies, working loopholes.

**Attitude:** Doesn't care what anyone thinks of him. It's truly a gift.

**Fears:** Nothing.

**Habits:** Flirting, meditating, brewing weed tea.

**Want:** To get the most that life has to offer.

Harvey's a walking, talking Hawaiian shirt; life is a cruise ship, and he's here for the buffet. If Carol's concerned with optics, and Randy's worried about breaking the rules, Harvey's not worried about a damn thing. He's so positive that he looks at a spill and sees a mopportunity. He's never on time, but he's always there when you need him.



# EPISODES

## 1 - Pilot: We Help Old People!

Meet the BUDS and their... interns? There's a lot to learn on the first day, and it definitely shouldn't count for school credit.

## 2 - P.S.A.

Carol wants to bring their office into the 'digital age' by filming a PSA for their website, but their over-the-top production plans make for a video that goes viral for all the wrong reasons.

## 3 - Title 22, Section 72321: Outbreak

Randy goes on a date for the first time in months, and wakes up with an itch he can't scratch. After an embarrassing visit to the clinic, Randy realizes that he's got scabies. He puts himself in quarantine and makes the interns find the outbreak source by backtracking every facility he visited.



# ... CONTINUED

## 4 - Nana Nana Poo Poo

Harvey and Randy attend a seminar about Senior Bullying. Randy starts to suspect that he's being bullied by Carol.

## 5 - Emotional Support Parrot

Carol thinks that emotional support animals (ESA's) are for the birds, until a pet parrot offers key evidence in one of her investigations.

## 6 - You Say Gala, I Say Gayla

Carol, Randy, and Harvey attend the annual Alzheimer's Association gala in hopes of mingling with some Funding Committee members. Despite it being a black tie affair, the BUDS display some colorful behavior.



# EPISODES



We meet **Randy Kim** at the precipice of forty. A dramatic mid-life crisis isn't really Randy's style - he'd much prefer sweatpants and self loathing to flashy gifts - but this birthday is enough to make him take a certain inventory of his life. His past relationship failure with Jason is illustrated in the pilot, and it seems like Randy's ready to stand up for himself even if the world keeps knocking him down (literally).

Despite this major victory, Randy will continue to make bad relationship choices during season one, and will still be single by the end of it. His newfound self-respect will wane as he repeats old dating habits, but his ability to stand up for the rights of his clients never falters. Professionalism on the job remains intact... for the most part. One of Randy's main arcs is a steady progression from rule-lover to rule-bender as he tries to find a happy medium between doing what's best for his clients and upholding their rights. The cases he investigates expose cracks in the healthcare system that require him to look the other way, and it's this sense of responsibility for his clients that drives him to do the work he does.



**RANDY'S ARC**





In an off-handed comment made at the end of the pilot episode, we find out that **Carol** became an Ombudsman because she “got fired” from Licensing. This comment gives some weight to her seemingly one-sided rivalry with Community Care Licensing (CCL), which will continue to be a driving force for her throughout the series.

After a series of defeats, she meets a client who reminds her why she got into this field in the first place - to enforce justice!



**CAROL'S ARC**

This encounter is what plants the tiny fork in the road for Carol, which is used as a jumping-off point for the rest of the first season. While her desire to get her old job back seems to always be simmering in the back of her mind throughout the first season, she is, with each episode, learning to see her clients as people rather than cases. By the finale, Carol will have to choose between taking her old job back or continuing to stick with the Ombudsman Program that so desperately needs help.





## HARVEY'S ARC

Many of the issues investigated stem from the industry model of senior care as for-profit rather than for-patient. The BUDS, especially **Harvey**, have learned to be con-artists in a way that helps them bend the bureaucratic side of healthcare in favor of their clients. Harvey is not bothered by this - it's something he seems to do very well.

And the interns! Harvey teaches them more than anybody bargained for (and none of it will count for school credit, but it should!).

Overall, Harvey's character doesn't change much throughout the first season, but he affects change in those around him, whether accidentally or on purpose.



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## GUEST STARS

**Pilot:** Tillman (80's) is an Army vet who traded in his Humvee for a Rascal Scooter. On the James Earl Jones scale, he's somewhere between Darth Vader and Mufasa.

**2:** Twin sisters (80's) vie for a cameo spot in the PSA. DoubleMint BUDS, anyone?

**3:** We finally meet Carol's mentor, Barb (80's), and this explains... a lot. Did you know she was one of the first women in the PGA? Don't worry if you missed it, she'll mention it a few times.

**4:** Gene, one of the untrusty interns, drives Uber and picks up a guy who looks a whole lot like Judd Hirsch, but the humor lost on Gene. Gene is also lost, despite having GPS... Taxi!

**5:** Mrs. Locke is in her 90's, but she's sharp as a tack and sweet as could be. Seriously, there's no joke here. She's just a really nice lady. Try not to disappoint her.

**6:** A retired professional athlete treats every day like game day, and he's in his 90's. What's your excuse?



Originally hailing from Rhode Island, Annie C. Wright is a comedy writer based in Los Angeles. She is a proud, card-carrying member of the Dramatists Guild of America and she still feels weird writing about herself in the third person.

Annie is a three-time Telly Award winner and has probably written some of the streaming ads you've opted to skip. She's been a finalist in the Sundance Episodic Lab, a Jury Award Finalist at the Austin Film Festival (and a handful of other accolades that might not be worth the real estate in this tiny box).

After several years spent working in the long-term care industry, Annie wrote BUDS based on her experiences in that world. She writes character-driven comedies aimed at amplifying untold stories from characters who are often overlooked but always unforgettable.



**HELLO**  
my name is  
**ANNIE C. WRIGHT**  
CREATOR





**HELLO**  
my name is

**JONATHAN  
FISHMAN**

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

Jonathan is a founding member of the New York International Fringe Festival, and has collaborated on hundreds of projects for both stage and screen. Most notably, Jonathan produced and co-starred in the award-winning UK premiere of 'Enterprise' by Brian Parks at the 2017 Edinburgh Fringe Festival and continued with the Off-Broadway production at the SoHo Playhouse in NYC.

Last year, Jonathan was commissioned to direct and co-produce a short film sponsored by BASF and Filmaka. In addition to life in theatre & film, Jonathan has enjoyed success providing corporate executive leadership as a process improvement expert, experience which he continues to leverage as a TV/Film Producer aligning the necessary resources to ensure meticulous project execution, delivery, and creative success.

📞 917.754.1095





**HELLO**  
my name is

**AMY KERSTEN**  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Amy is the in-house producer for the Geena Davis Institute (and yes, we're very proud of her). Her growing list of film credits include Sandy Wexler starring Adam Sandler, The Spy Who Dumped Me starring Kate McKinnon, and The Week Of, directed by Robert Smigel.

Amy has also served as an Associate Producer on several projects for the small screen, including Lady Parts Justice, run by Daily Show creator Lizz Winstead, three seasons of the award-winning digital series HOT MESS, In Case of Emergency, as part of the Amazon All Voices Festival, and the forthcoming Roku series from Powderkeg starring Lisa Kudrow and Niecy Nash.

In 2020, Amy was selected to join the Entertainment/Media #50WomenCan Cohort, with women across the industry working together towards parity in Hollywood by 2025. She is a founding member of Clutch Productions a non-profit devoted to producing new female voices with gender balanced casts. Amy joined Exec. Producer Margaret Bramwell Doyle to form MUCH ADO, an entertainment development company.