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Press contact: John Zollinger, 213.740.9514; Cari Sanders, 818.506.7887

**USC SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS 8<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL 'FIRST PITCH' SET FOR MAY 4**

**Class of 1997 Writer/Producer Brian Peterson (*But I'm A Cheerleader, Smallville*) to Host**

**April 27, 2009, LOS ANGELES** – Undergraduate and graduate writing program students at USC's School of Cinematic Arts will bring their latest stories directly to the entertainment industry's leading agents, managers, and production companies at the 8<sup>th</sup> annual First Pitch event at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 4 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills. Writer/Producer Brian Peterson, class of '97, will serve as event host, it was announced by Jack Epps, Jr., SCA associate professor and chair of the Division of Writing for Screen & Television.

First Pitch gives graduating M.F.A. and B.F.A. screenwriting students from the school the opportunity to "pitch" their film and television scripts to invited members of the industry's top production companies, management firms and agencies. The format allots students five minutes each to discuss their story ideas with the industry veterans who are positioned at separate tables throughout the hotel's ballroom. This year's event will feature 52 students, who will each make up to 15 pitches throughout the night.

Says Epps: "First Pitch is the perfect segue as our writers transition from USC to the profession. In addition to pitching specific projects, the event enables students to begin relationships with industry representatives who can assist them in taking the next steps in their careers."

Peterson graduated with an M.F.A. in writing for screen & television in 1997. He went on to write and executive produce the CW's long running series *Smallville* in addition to writing the independent feature cult favorite *But I'm a Cheerleader*. A sampling of past First Pitch participants who parlayed their experience into professional trajectories includes Caroline Dries (*Smallville*), Christina Kim (*Lost*), Kam Miller (*Law & Order SVU*), Brad Riddell (*American Pie Band Camp*), and Aaron Rahsaan Thomas (*Numb3rs*).

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual First Pitch is sponsored by the A/H Foundation and Albert and Andrea Friedman. Since its inception, First Pitch has drawn representatives from some of the entertainment industry's most prestigious companies, including CAA, William Morris, ICM, UTA, Paradigm, Endeavor, Fuse, Management 360, Sony, Paramount, Miramax, Universal, and Thunder Road, to name but a few.

**About the USC School of Cinematic Arts      [cinema.usc.edu](http://cinema.usc.edu)**

Founded in collaboration with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1929 and now celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the USC School of Cinematic Arts has fueled and mirrored the growth of entertainment as an industry and an art form. The school offers comprehensive programs in directing, producing, writing, critical studies, animation and digital arts, production, and interactive media, all backed by a broad liberal arts education and taught by leading practitioners in each field. Its more than 10,000 alumni are among the world's most distinguished animators, scholars, teachers, writers, directors, producers, cinematographers, editors, sound experts and industry executives. Since 1973 not a year has passed without an alumnus or alumna being nominated for an Academy Award.