TEGNA Station WXIA Wins Prestigious 2026 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award for Groundbreaking Investigation, ‘Help that Harms’

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TYSONS, Va., Jan. 29, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- TEGNA Inc. (NYSE: TGNA) today announced that WXIA (11Alive), the local news and technology company’s NBC affiliate in Atlanta, has received a 2026 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award, which honors excellence in broadcast, online and documentary journalism. The station won for “Help That Harms,” a groundbreaking investigation exposing how families across Georgia were swept into devastating child abuse allegations when bringing infants into the emergency room with unexplained injuries.

“Our journalists work tirelessly to shine a light on systems that profoundly affect the lives of the people we serve,” said Adrienne Roark, chief content officer at TEGNA. “The team’s courage, rigor, and deep commitment to accountability reporting brought urgent reforms to Georgia’s child welfare system. This recognition is incredibly well-deserved.”

Over several months, investigative journalist Rebecca Lindstrom, along with executive producer Kristine Anderson, investigative producers Ciara Frisbie and Gabriella Nunez, and photojournalists Darrell Pryor and Michael Botsford, examined the frequency with which parents rushing infants to the emergency room with unexplained injuries were accused of abuse. The investigation revealed a pattern: families who brought infants to the ER with unexplained injuries were swiftly separated and suspected of abuse, even in cases where parents and independent medical experts raised doubts about the diagnoses.

“Help That Harms” uncovers systemic and discriminatory barriers that made it nearly impossible for families to obtain independent medical evaluations. The series sparked statewide dialogue, influenced court decisions, and empowered both families and physicians to challenge questionable abuse allegations. Lindstrom and the 11Alive team’s reporting also prompted significant statewide reforms. The Georgia legislature passed Ridge’s Law, granting parents the legally protected right to seek a second medical opinion, and the Department of Family and Children Services improved its review process for abuse cases, increasing oversight and consistency.

“‘Help That Harms’ reflects our mission as journalists: to serve our communities by holding powerful institutions accountable, and driving reform,” said Todd Spessard, content director, 11Alive. “I am proud of the work our team does every day to ensure everyone in our community has a voice and an opportunity to be heard.”

About TEGNA

TEGNA Inc. (NYSE: TGNA) helps people thrive in their local communities by providing the trusted local news and services that matter most. With 64 television stations in 51 U.S. markets, TEGNA reaches more than 100 million people monthly across the web, mobile apps, streaming, and linear television. Together, we are building a sustainable future for local news. For more information, visit TEGNA.com.

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