

STORY QUEST CHILDRENS BOOKS

For Immediate Release

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Florida Author Wins Prestigious National Children's Picture Book Awards

*Parents, teachers and librarians concerned about lack of diversity in children's books will welcome *I Want Cake!* – an intergenerational picture book featuring three precocious siblings as they venture through their multicultural neighborhood seeking cake for breakfast.*

MIRAMAR, Florida – Dr. Daniel Kairys is pleased to announce his children's book *I Want Cake!* has won two prestigious national children's picture book awards:

- Foreword Reviews' INDIEFAB Book of the Year Awards (Finalist)
- Mom's Choice® Children's Picture Book Award

The story, for children ages 4-8, begins with six-year-old Leen telling her older sister, YaYa, she wants cake for breakfast. Though at first YaYa resists the idea, together they quickly rope in their little brother Jaden. They try to get help from their Haitian mother and grandmother, American Jewish father and grandfather, and their Cuban neighbor. Each adult disagrees with the cake request and urges them instead to eat one of their own, culturally-preferred breakfast delicacies. Undeterred, the cake-for-breakfast team perseveres, even as the adults secretly delight in their escapade.

FOREWORD REVIEWS AWARD – Each year, *Foreword Reviews* shines a light on a select group of indie publishers, university presses, and self-published authors whose work stands out from the crowd. “The 2015 INDIEFAB finalist selection process is as inspiring as it is rigorous,” said Victoria Sutherland, publisher of *Foreword Reviews*. “The strength of this list of finalists is further proof that small, independent publishers are taking their rightful place as the new driving force of the entire publishing industry.”

MOM'S CHOICE Award® – Having been rigorously evaluated by a panel of MCA evaluators, “*I Want Cake!*” is deemed to be among the best children's books for families. “Our aim to introduce families and educators to best-in-class children's books,” explains Dawn Matheson, Executive Director of the *Mom's Choice Awards*. “We have a passion to help families grow emotionally, physically and spiritually. Parents and educators know that books bearing our seal of approval offer the highest quality.”

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Daniel Kairys, M.D., of Florida – a Dartmouth Medical School graduate and general surgeon in South Central Florida – wrote the book with his mother, Jo Ann Kairys, a diversity expert and award-winning author and illustrator. Every night when he gets home, he sits down with his two daughters and son and conducts a science experiment with them or reads them a book. But before they embark on the night's activity, Kairys asks them in English, Haitian Creole or Spanish where they are going to college. Every night, the answer is the same: Dartmouth.

Jo Ann Kairys, MPH, of New Jersey – a professional medical science writer – was inspired to write the book by her son Daniel's storytelling. "He dreamed up five original stories for kids during long drives through lonely Florida sugar cane fields on his way to the hospital where he serves as the only surgeon." Jo Ann also illustrated the book and wove the rich visual diversity of three generations of their family into the vibrant, eye-popping scenes.

"Because the children featured in *I Want Cake!* are part of our nuclear family, our focus was not on their cultural or racial identity, but rather on writing a fun story that reflects the rich diversity of our extended family's background, personalities and spirit. Unfortunately, only one in ten children's books published each year in the U.S. includes children of color. Frankly, we just trust that grandparents, parents and children of all backgrounds will delight together in this family adventure."

The Kairys' first book, *Sunbelievable*, released in October 2011, won five national book awards for storytelling and illustration, including the Mom's Choice Gold Award®.

I Want Cake! is available from Barnes and Noble: <http://bit.ly/IWantCakebn> and Amazon: <http://bit.ly/IWantCakeamzn>

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Daniel Kairys, M.D. and Jo Ann Kairys are available for media interviews and can provide background and story ideas for the media.