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May 28, 2008 4:00 pm US/Eastern

TV Networks Join Forces To Fight Cancer

CBS, ABC, NBC Unite For Fund-Raising Special

NEW YORK (CBS) — In an unprecedented network partnership, CBS, ABC and NBC will donate one hour of commercial-free primetime for a nationally televised fundraiser to fight cancer. The event, which will air on Sept. 5, 2008 (8 p.m. EDT and PDT), supports "Stand Up To Cancer," a new initiative aimed at raising dollars and ending cancer's reign as a leading cause of death.

Cancer claims one person every minute of every day in the United States. Worldwide, the disease kills more than 6 million people annually.

Network evening news anchors Charles Gibson, Katie Couric and Brian Williams will announce the initiative together during live appearances Wednesday on CBS's "The Early Show," ABC's "Good Morning America," and NBC's "TODAY show."

"For people struggling with this disease, or those who will be diagnosed, scientific breakthroughs can be a matter of life or death -- literally. We want everyone to know that they can make a difference in this fight," said Couric. "Television is a notoriously competitive business. For the three major broadcast networks to join forces is a wonderful example of the power of working together, and we're very grateful to have the opportunity to reach people all over the country through this show."

The Stand Up To Cancer special will feature live performances by legendary recording artists. Stars from film and television will perform and present filmed content giving viewers insight into cancer.

"Katie, Charlie and Brian will report on potentially life-saving research, speaking with both patients and scientists. We hope to entertain you, educate you, move and inspire you," said Laura Ziskin, who will produce the September 5th broadcast. Ziskin is a cancer survivor.

In addition to the nationally televised event, other key elements of the initiative include: Standup2cancer.org, which will foster an online community for everyone affected by cancer; and a series of TV, radio and print PSAs featuring celebrities and members of the general public.

"Not only has cancer touched all of our media organizations in profound ways, but it has touched each of us personally. This extraordinary broadcast will serve a number of purposes - we'll share vital information with our viewers and hopefully raise funds that are so critical in the fight against this insidious disease," said Brian Williams.

Stand Up To Cancer's approach to research is to enable the best and brightest investigators from leading institutions across the country and internationally to work together. These collaborative "Dream Teams" will pursue the most promising research, accelerating the discovery of new therapies for patients.

"There has been progress on both the research and awareness fronts; as a result, there are over ten million cancer survivors in the U.S. today," Charles Gibson said. "More work urgently needs to be done so that more people will survive."

Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) was established by a group of media, entertainment and philanthropic leaders, whose lives have all been affected by cancer in significant ways.



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AP

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The SU2C leadership team includes Katie Couric; the Entertainment Industry Foundation, represented by Board of Directors Chairperson Sherry Lansing (who is Founder of the Sherry Lansing Foundation) and CEO Lisa Paulsen; Laura Ziskin; the Noreen Fraser Foundation and its executives Noreen Fraser (who is also a cancer survivor), Woody Fraser, Rusty Robertson and Sue Schwartz; and nonprofit executive Ellen Ziffren.

"Television is a uniquely powerful medium and the networks joining forces offer an unparalleled opportunity to communicate loud and clear that we all have a stake in the fight against cancer," said Leslie Moonves, President & Chief Executive Officer, CBS Corporation.

"Through the unity of broadcasters, entertainers and cancer groups alike, and the giving spirit of the audience at home, this television event has the potential to make a profound impact on our society's ability to understand and battle this terrible disease," he added.

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