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Cancer Issues

ABC, CBS, NBC Announce Historic Collaboration to "Stand Up to Cancer"

By

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Stars from film, television, sports, journalism and music come together for September 5 prime time television event to raise funds for cancer research



(HealthNewsDigest.com) - NEW YORK, NY/LOS ANGELES, CA: Stand Up To Cancer ([www.standup2cancer.org](http://www.standup2cancer.org)), a new initiative to raise philanthropic dollars for accelerating ground-breaking research, launches today through an unprecedented collaboration uniting the major television networks, entertainment industry executives, celebrities and prominent leaders in cancer research and patient advocacy. ABC, CBS and NBC will donate one hour of simultaneous commercial-free prime time for a nationally televised fundraising event to air on September 5, 2008 (8 pm EDT and PDT), aimed at rallying the public around the goal of ending cancer's reign as a leading cause of death.

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

"As a motion picture and television producer, I've learned how incredibly powerful these mediums can be in generating public discourse, sometimes almost overnight. Our goal with this initiative and TV show is to 'tip' the conversation in this country about cancer – to get people riled up, so they want to do something about the fact that it still takes so many lives," said Laura Ziskin, who will produce the September 5 broadcast. Ziskin is a cancer survivor. Her film credits include the Spider-Man trilogy, As Good As It Gets, and Pretty Woman, and she also produced the 74th and 79th Annual Academy Awards.

The Stand Up To Cancer special will feature live performances by legendary recording artists and stars from film and television who will perform as well as present filmed content giving viewers insight into cancer. Various screening tests will be demonstrated in novel and entertaining ways. "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," Ziskin said.

Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) is a program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and was established by a group of media, entertainment and philanthropic leaders, whose lives have all been affected by cancer in significant ways. Stand Up To Cancer is bringing industry resources – people, as well as mediums such as television and the web – to bear in the fight against cancer as never before.

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.

“The statistics are staggering,” Gibson said. “Cancer claims one person every minute of every day in the United States. Every year in this country, it takes the lives of more than half a million people...worldwide, cancer kills more than six million people annually. There has been progress on both the research and awareness fronts; as a result, there are over ten million cancer survivors in the US today. More work urgently needs to be done so that more people will survive,” he said.

“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 Williams.

New developments in the laboratory are revealing the way cancer begins, progresses and spreads. Stand Up To Cancer is founded on the belief that now, more than ever, there is sufficient knowledge of the basic science of cancer, and that the technologies are finally available to translate this knowledge into real advances in treatment and prevention. Today’s cancer scientists are on the verge of life-saving discoveries. But what they desperately need are the funds required to mount an all-out assault. Stand Up To Cancer is dedicated to providing this much needed new source of cancer research funding.

Co-Chair of the Disney Media Networks and President of the Disney-ABC Television Group Anne Sweeney, CBS Corporation President and Chief Executive Officer Leslie Moonves, and NBC Universal President and Chief Executive Officer Jeff Zucker commented on their companies’ decisions to collaborate.

“Everyone in our country has been touched by cancer in some way, shape or form. The thought that we could, in one hour of television, make a true difference in the fight against this disease was both exciting and inspiring,” Sweeney said.

“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 Moonves. “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.”

“We’ve gone to the moon and pioneered a technology that revolutionized the way the world communicates. Applying that same innovation and commitment, scientists are on the cusp of making enormous strides in their efforts to combat cancer, but they need additional funding to do that. Through Stand Up To Cancer, and the September 5 broadcast, people all over the country can help,” said Zucker, who is a cancer survivor.

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