



Stand UP To Cancer - New Initiative To Raise Money For Research

28 May 2008

[Click to Print](#)

Stand Up To Cancer, 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.

An Innovative Research Model

Stand Up To Cancer's innovative approach to research is designed to eliminate barriers that have traditionally inhibited creativity and collaboration by enabling 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 cancer patients and advancing efforts in cancer prevention research. *Stand Up To Cancer* monies will also be used for some high-risk, high-impact cancer research proposals, which are often not supported by conventional funding sources.

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) will conduct expert scientific review of the research projects and administer funds raised through the initiative under the direction of a Scientific Advisory Committee. Nobel Laureate Phillip A. Sharp, Ph.D., Institute Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the David H. Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT chairs

the Committee, which includes highly accomplished clinical investigators, senior laboratory researchers and physician-scientists. "This project has tremendous potential to change the face of cancer research," said Sharp. "Our goal is to rapidly move new research discoveries out of the lab and into the clinic to save lives from cancer."

"I am pleased that AACR is a partner in the *Stand Up To Cancer* initiative," said Raymond N. DuBois, M.D., Ph.D., AACR President and Provost and Executive Vice President at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. "The *Stand Up To Cancer* model is distinctive because it emphasizes collaboration among scientists and will accelerate translational research on the verge of breakthroughs as well as provide an additional revenue stream to encourage novel, high-risk proposals that have great potential in making inroads against cancer."

A *Stand Up To Cancer* Advocate Advisory Council is being formed, and will include leaders from approximately 25 organizations. Additionally, representatives from the advocacy community will work side-by-side with the scientists on the "Dream Teams," so the perspectives of the patients and survivors they represent will be integrated into the direction of the research.

Initiative Details

In addition to the nationally televised network fundraising event, other key elements of the initiative include:

- Standup2cancer.org - With both interactive applications and rich content, the SU2C website will foster an online community for everyone affected by cancer, utilizing the same approach as the televised special: it will move, educate and even entertain users. Features include: The Constellation: For a dollar donation or more, users can launch a star in honor of anyone who has received a cancer diagnosis. The Stand: An interactive facebook application to illustrate that the 'cancer community' encompasses everyone and that we are all connected by this disease. SUTV: Features video segments rich in scientific and research information, as well as ones that confront the personal and human side of cancer's impact. SU2C Magazine: Offers seven sections of diverse content written by leading voices in every field.

- Public Service Announcement (PSA) Campaign - A series of TV, radio and print PSAs featuring celebrities and members of the general public to mobilize support for the campaign will begin to air and appear in publications soon.

"I have lost beloved family members and friends to this dreaded disease," said Sherry Lansing. "Sometimes I feel as if cancer is an epidemic that will never end. But then I am reminded of diseases such as tuberculosis, smallpox and polio that used to cause fear... and then I know that just like those other diseases, cancer can and will be defeated, too."

Major League Baseball was the first donor to contribute to Stand Up To Cancer. "This initiative has presented an historic and unique plan to fight this deadly disease, and it is a privilege for me and Major League Baseball to join this magnificent effort," said Baseball Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig. "We have pledged many of our valuable resources in an attempt to assist in every way we can."

Many other leading organizations have joined in supporting its mission, including AARP, Alliance for Global Good, AOL, Condé Nast Media Group, Def Jam Recordings, Lee Jeans, The Paley Center for Media, Philips, Playphone, Revlon, Ronald Perelman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Stonyfield Farm, and Steve Tisch, as well as media partners Hearst Magazines, Los Angeles Times, The Meredith Publishing Group, The New York Times and Time Inc.

Cancer advocacy and support groups collaborating with Stand Up To Cancer include: The Lance Armstrong Foundation, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Breastcancer.org, C-Change, CancerCare, Colon Cancer Alliance, C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition, Friends of Cancer Research, Intercultural Cancer Council, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Lung Cancer Alliance, The Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation, National Breast Cancer Coalition, National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, The Prostate Cancer Foundation, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, The Wellness Community and others.

About AACR

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) is the oldest and largest scientific organization in the world focusing on every aspect of high-quality, innovative cancer research. Its reputation for scientific breadth and excellence attracts the premier researchers in the field. By accelerating the growth and spread of new knowledge about cancer, the AACR is on the front lines in the quest for the prevention and cure of cancer.

[American Association for Cancer Research \(AACR\)](#)

About the Entertainment Industry Foundation

The Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), as a leading charitable organization of the entertainment industry, has distributed hundreds of millions of dollars to support programs addressing critical health, education and social issues.

[Entertainment Industry Foundation](#)

About the Noreen Fraser Foundation

The Noreen Fraser Foundation utilizes film, television and web technologies to raise money as well as to educate and raise awareness about women's cancers. The funds raised will be used to provide large grants to uniquely qualified cancer researchers.

[Noreen Fraser Foundation](#)

Article URL: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/108906.php>

Main News Category: Cancer / Oncology

Save time! Get the latest medical news headlines for your specialist area, in a weekly newsletter e-mail. See <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/newsletters.php> for details.

Send your press releases to pressrelease@medicalnewstoday.com