

MDA LABOR DAY TELETHON MOVES TO TXA 21

DALLAS, Texas, June 28, 2011 -- Where will Jennifer Lopez, Lady Antebellum, Randy Jackson, Martina McBride, Darius Rucker and Steven Tyler be appearing on Sunday, Sept. 4? In the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, they and a dozen more of the entertainment industry's biggest names will be seen on the MDA Labor Day Telethon broadcast locally from 5 p.m. until midnight on TXA 21.

The new extended primetime Telethon represents a significant Telethon format change with many benefits explains MDA President and CEO Gerald Weinberg. "First, by offering exclusively primetime performance/appearance opportunities for celebrities on the 2011 MDA Labor Day Telethon, we're optimally poised to enjoy additional top talent commitments.

"Second, for the vast majority of ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX stations broadcasting our show nationwide, pre-empting six hours of local programming is easier than pre-empting the 21.5 hours associated with the Telethon in prior years.

"Third, our national sponsor representatives similarly appreciate primetime appearances on the MDA Telethon.

“Fourth, by being in primetime with outstanding talent, we could enjoy increased tune in for and contributions to our Telethon.”

Already confirmed as MDA 2011 national Telethon co-hosts are Nigel Lythgoe (executive producer of *American Idol* plus judge and executive producer of *So You Think You Can Dance*); Nancy O'Dell (*Entertainment Tonight* anchor); Allison Sweeney (host of *The Biggest Loser* and *Days of Our Lives* star); and Jann Carl (Emmy-winning journalist and executive producer of *SOLD – Ozark Auction* on the History Channel).

TXA 21's MDA Telethon coverage will begin with a one-hour local special on Sunday, Sept. 4 at 5 p.m., preceding the national broadcast at 6 p.m. News Anchor Karen Borta and Chief Meteorologist Larry Mowry will host the special and the local Telethon.

CBS 11 and TXA 21 President and General Manager Gary Schneider welcomes the new partnership with MDA and the Telethon. “The Telethon is a real piece of Americana, and we are pleased to take it into the future, “ Schneider said. “Community involvement is a cornerstone for our stations, so we are proud to support the MDA in North Texas. We have already begun airing stories on TXA 21 and CBS 11 about local families served by the MDA through camps, clinics and research, and we'll continue to do that in the months leading up to the show.”

The Telethon shifts to TXA 21 from KXAS-TV (NBC 5), which had broadcast the Telethon in Dallas for 38 years. The change comes because the time window proved to be problematic for NBC 5.

“As the Dallas Telethon now moves to TXA 21, it’s important to salute NBC 5 for its truly incredible year-round support of MDA,” Weinberg adds. “For decades, KXAS has been a part of our most significant events in Dallas-Fort Worth including the Muscle Walk at Cowboys Stadium, the Albertsons Muscle Team Bash, the Dallas and Fort Worth firefighters’ fill-the-boot campaigns.

“We are enormously grateful to NBC 5 general manager Tom Ehlmann and to all of his predecessors for their leadership in helping grow the Association’s service and research programs for almost four decades. With any luck, we’ll find some non-Telethon ways to keep KXAS involved with our lifesaving mission.”

About MDA

MDA is the nonprofit health agency dedicated to curing muscular dystrophy, ALS and related diseases by funding worldwide research. The Association also provides comprehensive healthcare and support services, advocacy and education. See the award-winning MDA “Make A Muscle, Make A Difference” PSA.

In addition to funding more than 300 research projects worldwide, MDA maintains a national network of some 200 hospital-affiliated clinics; orchestrates hundreds of support groups for families affected by neuromuscular diseases; facilitates extraordinary local summer camp opportunities for thousands of youngsters fighting progressive muscle diseases. Known globally for the MDA Labor Day Telethon, the Association is the first nonprofit organization to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Medical Association “for significant and lasting contributions to the health and welfare of humanity.”

In Dallas-Fort Worth, MDA provides excellent medical care to local families affected by any of 43 different neuromuscular diseases from the MDA clinics at Children’s Medical Center of Dallas; at Cook Children’s Medical Center; at Neurology Associates of Arlington; at Texas Neurology, P.A.; and at University of Texas Southwest Medical Center.

MDA currently is funding more than \$91.7 million in multi-year research projects around the globe, including 15 vital initiatives at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas; at Baylor College of Medicine, Methodist Neurological Institute, and University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston; at University of Texas Galveston; plus at University of Texas San Antonio.