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SUPERSTARS DESCRIBE WHY THEY'RE APPEARING ON MDA LABOR DAY TELETHON

LAS VEGAS, Nev., Sept. 1, 2011 — As the finishing touches are being finessed for the 46th annual Muscular Dystrophy Association Labor Day Telethon that will be broadcast nationwide from 6 p.m. to midnight in every U.S. time zone on Sunday, Sept. 4, mega star Celine Dion aptly described why the iconic show consistently attracts outstanding talent.

“It’s always a privilege to be part of the MDA Labor Day Telethon,” said Celine, who’ll be performing in the 2011 Telethon’s opening hour. “I hope by taking part in this great cause, I can help MDA in its mission to make life better for families who are fighting muscle diseases. From supporting scientists who are searching for treatments and cures, to helping children go to MDA summer camp, MDA provides love and care in so many ways.”

Celine’s motivation is shared by several artists who just confirmed their participation in Sunday’s primetime Telethon being broadcast by more than 150 television stations nationwide. For example, in a group message so typical of their harmonious sound, *Boyz II Men* members Shawn Stockton, Nathan and Wanya Morris said, "we’re excited to be part of the MDA Labor Day Telethon this year and lend our voices to a such a good cause. We remember watching it growing up and it's great to be a part of something so historic that benefits so many people everyday. Be sure to tune in to catch us on the Telethon this Sunday."

Also, Tony-winning choreographer Twyla Tharp, when confirming that *Come Fly Away* principal dancers would perform two Telethon dance segments to the legendary original vocals of Frank Sinatra, noted that "dance has the power to move people with nothing more than the flow of bodies and the expression of emotion. Progressive muscle diseases rob people of the power to move but not the experience of emotion or humanity. Hopefully, our dance performance will move us one step closer to preserving free motion for people with muscle diseases."

When people tune in to watch the primetime Telethon this Sunday, they'll immediately be engaged by the [“Make a Muscle, Make a Difference”®](#) show opening using dance, music and striking visuals of everyday people flexing their biceps muscles to immediately let America know how important it is to “Be the Next to Flex”® for MDA. Followed by the incredible magic of *Penn & Teller*, plus the intergalactic fun of music phenomenon *Voca People*, and an unforgettable performance by Celine, the show's first hour, which also introduces Telethon co-hosts Nigel Lythgoe (*American Idol* + *So You Think You Can Dance*), Nancy O'Dell (*Entertainment Tonight*), Alison Sweeney (NBC's *The Biggest Loser* and author of *The Mommy Diet*), and Jann Carl (Emmy-winning journalist and independent producer), has the potential to dominate its Sunday time slot.

Hour two of the MDA Labor Day Telethon will be full of many memorable moments, too. Darius Rucker will solo and also sing a duet with MDA National Goodwill Ambassador Abbey Umali of Redlands, Calif. Other must-see performances on the Telethon stage in the second hour will include the *JabbaWockeeZ*, winners of the MTV “America's Best Dance Crew” competition; the incredibly popular Italian trio *II Volo*; and Ellen DeGeneres protégé Greyson Chance. *The View*'s Barbara Walters, Whoopi Goldberg, Joy Behar, Sherri Shepherd, Elisabeth Hasselbeck, as well as NFL running back Reggie Bush will make special appeals.

Hour three of the Telethon will be chock full of extraordinary entertainers, too. *Lady Antebellum*, Jennifer Lopez, Michael Feinstein, as well as renowned Australian guitarist Tommy Emmanuel will appear to encourage even greater public support to help advance MDA's lifesaving mission. Plus, *One Step Away*, the teenage Boston band making their network television debut will rock the house for MDA. *One Step Away* is one of three winners of the second annual iHeartRadio.com “Get Discovered!” talent competition entered by more than 7,800 artists.

Hour four will present the exceptional musical stylings of Jimmy Webb, Richie Sambora, Jon Secada and Maureen McGovern, as well as the first of two *Come Fly Away* dance performances to the legendary original vocals of Frank Sinatra. These powerful performances will be reinforced by appeals from R&B singer/songwriter Smokey Robinson and NFL legend Kurt Warner, as well as by a high-energy performance by Universal Cheerleaders Association all-stars – 36 of the nation's best cheerleaders representing 17 states.

Sensational entertainers will continue to appear for MDA in hour five, with Grammy-nominated platinum recording artist Jordin Sparks, Martina McBride, Steven Tyler, Randy Jackson, and a second *Come Fly Away* dance performance to the sizzling vocals of “Ol' Blue Eyes.” General Hospital soap stars rock band *Port Chuck*, Tony Award-winning ventriloquist Jay Johnson, and *Brokedown Cadillac* (upbeat country group which also won 2011 iHeartRadio.com “Get Discovered!” competition to secure

its live network television performance opportunity on the Telethon), also will perform from the national Telethon stage at the South Point Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Four-time Grammy Award-winning group, *Boyz II Men*, will open the sixth and final hour of the 2011 primetime Telethon. They'll be followed by *Rootdown*, the Oregon-based "Get Discovered!"-winning band with a Reggae hip-hop sound. Then, Billy Ray Cyrus will sing his new single "Nineteen", and *GLEE*'s Max Alder will "Make a Muscle, Make a Difference" for MDA leading up a spectacular America tribute involving more than a hundred performers. Scored with a patriotic medley the finale will be anchored by Jordin Sparks, Jon Secada, Maureen McGovern, Richie Sambora, Tommy Emmanuel and 70 kids from the Clark County Children's choir.

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](#), as well as [MDA VNR](#) announcing Monday's launch of a 24-week Phase 2 clinical trial of a potential therapeutic for Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

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."

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