

## American Idol Viewers Give Back to America's Children

### Idol Gives Back Charity Event to Benefit Save the Children's U.S. Programs

Westport, Conn. (April 10, 2008) — For a second consecutive year, Save the Children is proud to be one of the nonprofit organizations benefiting from *Idol Gives Back*, FOX's Emmy Award-winning charity event., which aired on Wednesday night, April 9.

As of Thursday afternoon, an estimated \$60 million had been raised from individual and corporate donors, with the total likely to rise over the next few days. In addition, during the program British Prime Minister Gordon Brown pledged \$200 million in the form of 20 million mosquito nets for Africa, worth \$10 each.

Prominent celebrities including *American Idol* judges Randy Jackson and Paula Abdul, Superbowl winning quarterbacks (and brothers) Peyton and Eli Manning and teen sensation Miley Cyrus all visited Save the Children programs in different parts of the United States and urged viewers to support the agency's work.

Last year's *Idol Gives Back* raised over \$76 million to serve children living in poverty in Africa and the United States. Save the Children received \$14.5 million of those donations, allowing the agency to reach thousands of children in need through health, education and disaster response programs in Africa and the United States.

This year, *Idol Gives Back* donations will benefit Save the Children's US Programs. In addition to Save the Children, *Idol Gives Back* will provide support to the Children's Defense Fund, the Children's Health Fund, The Global Fund, Make It Right and Malaria No More.

*American Idol* star and Grammy Award-winning producer Randy Jackson has visited Save the Children programs in his home state of Louisiana and more recently in Goshen, California, with Paula Abdul. Working with Save the Children has inspired him to become the agency's first-ever United States Programs Ambassador.

"I am proud to be an ambassador for Save the Children's U.S. Programs, and I am thrilled that Save the Children's U.S. Programs will benefit from *Idol Gives Back*," said Jackson. "I visited their programs in New Orleans last year and visited Goshen, California in March. Save the Children is doing terrific work in the poorest communities in America, teaching kids to read and to lead healthy lives. I am happy to be helping them help kids."

"We are delighted to have Randy Jackson as our first-ever U.S. Programs Ambassador," said Mark Shriver, Vice President and Managing Director of Save the Children's US Programs. "When Randy visited our New Orleans programs he was terrific with the kids, and his warmth, compassion and sense of humor put families, who are still coping with the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, at ease. We are excited to be working with him to bring attention to the needs of poor children in rural America as well."

Last year's *Idol Gives Back* donations are supporting early childhood development, literacy, physical activity and nutrition programs in some of the poorest rural communities in the United States. In addition, *Idol Gives Back* funds are touching the lives of America's children impacted by natural disasters, including children affected by the devastating wildfires in Southern California last fall and the tornadoes that tore through the South Central United States in February.

In Africa, *Idol Gives Back* helped provide critical health, nutrition and early childhood development services to thousands of children living in six of the poorest African countries. Donations are also being used to help reduce common and preventable illnesses such as pneumonia and diarrhea, which are the leading causes of death for children under age 5. Funds also go to provide early educational support, with a particular focus on children orphaned

or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. In addition, Save the Children is helping ensure that children in school have clean water, sanitation facilities and health services to address students' well-being and school attendance.

"Save the Children is thrilled to be chosen again to participate in *Idol Gives Back*," said Shriver. "FOX and *American Idol* deserve so much credit for raising awareness and challenging us all to get involved in the effort to eradicate poverty here in the United States and in Africa."

#### **ABOUT SAVE THE CHILDREN'S U.S. PROGRAMS**

Save the Children's U.S. programs benefit more than 35,000 children a year, providing them with the tools and support they need to break the cycle of poverty. Today, when 2.6 million children in rural America are still living in poverty, and one-third of U.S. children and adolescents are either obese or at risk of becoming obese, Save the Children continues its work in some of the nation's poorest rural communities providing literacy, physical activity, nutrition and early childhood support to children in need. In addition, when a disaster strikes and significant numbers of children are at risk, Save the Children is there, responding to the needs of children and families, as well as working to promote emergency preparedness and response measures that focus on children.

#### **ABOUT *IDOL GIVES BACK***

The brainchild of Simon Fuller, *Idol Gives Back* has been recognized as a life-changing program, earning praise from many of the world's best known figures including President George W. Bush, HRH Prince Charles and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Last season, *Idol Gives Back* garnered a prestigious Governor's Award Emmy and raised more than \$76 million for charity. The star-studded special featured performances from the *American Idol* stage, where Ryan Seacrest hosted alongside judges Randy Jackson, Paula Abdul and Simon Cowell.