

# Celebrities Unite for Holiday Benefit Concert to Promote Mental Health & Well-Being During a Difficult Season for Many

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Hope for the Holidays - An Evening with Louis York & Friends, is a star-studded benefit concert slated to take place on Saturday, December 16th at 7:00pm at The Fisher Center at Belmont University in Nashville, TN.

Louis York, R&B duo comprised of Chuck Harmony and Claude Kelly, will serve as the centerpiece of the Hope for the Holidays concert event. These powerhouse performers, writers and producers have accumulated scores of gold and platinum albums for their work with Whitney Houston, Rhianna, Bruno Mars, Myley Cyrus, Ne-Yo, Brittny Spears, Kelly Clarkson, and many others.



The concert will be hosted by WSM/Amazon Music's Kelly Sutton and will include a variety of performances by music artists Ari Afsar, Jay Allen, Charles Esten, Megan Linsey, The Shindellas and Twinnie with special appearances by Spoken Word Poet Steve Connell, music and media icon Kathie Lee Gifford, and U.S. Olympian and philanthropist Scott Hamilton.

“

It's going to be an evening of excitement, hope and unity. We want our community to feel stronger and more resilient when they leave.”

*David Fischette, Event Founder & Executive Producer*

The event, presented by True West Foundation, is sponsored by First Bank, The Inspire Foundation, and Aetna, and will benefit four local charities to include Nashville Peacemakers, Alzheimer's Association, The

Onsite Foundation, and The Scott Hamilton Cares Foundation.

This unique benefit concert will not only include a variety of music and storytelling, but important access to on-site resources that will promote healing and inclusion during a season that is often difficult for many. The goal for this interactive holiday event is to have the audience feel seen, valued, and cared for at a time where so many may be hurting. For many individuals the realities of life do not cease during the holiday season. Whether it's an ill family member, lost loved one, an aging parent or broken relationships and financial stress – all of these heartbreaking experiences can add a layer of burden that may feel insurmountable during this time of year. We believe that with community and connectivity, there is hope and healing.

Hope for the Holidays was created by award-winning executive producer, writer and director, David Fischette, who has been creating unique charitable events for years to help raise funds and awareness for local and national charities. Fischette launched the True West Foundation earlier this year as a vehicle to allow others to not only donate to charities, but to get more involved in a personal and

meaningful way. Hope for the Holidays is their biggest expression of this concept so far. The idea for the Hope for the Holidays project was born out of his own struggles during the holidays.

"Too often, I've seen firsthand the pain and sadness that people experience during the holiday season," says David Fischette, Hope For the Holidays Event Founder & Executive Producer. "So many of us feel obligated to plaster on a happy face or suit up with a false sense of strength when holiday events and parties are in full swing. In contrast, we wanted to create a special holiday event that invites the audience to come as they are and experience an opportunity to



Louis York



Charles Esten



feel both seen and valued. We also felt it was important to provide on-site resources for audience members to connect with to find the hope and healing they deserve. We're all in this together, and, through engaging storytelling and beautiful music, there's no better time to connect than during the holidays. We want this community to feel loved."

And while Fischette wants to acknowledge that the holidays can be difficult for many, he has created a vibrant show that is designed to foster love, inspire, encourage, and celebrate the season as a community.

"It's going to be an evening of excitement, hope and unity," says Fischette. "We want our community to feel stronger and more resilient when they leave."

Tickets start at just \$49 and are on sale now at The Fisher Center box office and online. For more information about this event, visit <https://hope4holidaysnash.com>.

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS & SPECIAL GUESTS

Louis York: R&B duo Louis York (comprised of Chuck Harmony & Claude Kelly) and their band will be the centerpiece of Hope for the Holidays. These powerhouse performers, writers and producers have accumulated scores of gold and platinum albums for their work with Whitney Houston, Rhianna, Bruno Mars, Myley Cyrus, Ne-Yo, Brittny Spears, Kelly Clarkson and others.



Kathie Lee Gifford



David Fischette, Event Founder & Executive Producer

**Ari Afsar:** Ari Afsar is a singer, songwriter, and storyteller. She is the composer of the new musical *We Won't Sleep* and she originated the role of Eliza in Chicago's "Hamilton". She was a finalist on *American Idol* season in 2009 and placed in the top 10 at Miss America 2011. She is the co-founder of "Until We Do It" which provided 1 Million masks to communities disproportionately affected by Covid-19 in 2021.

**Jay Allen:** After seeing his mother suffer from Alzheimer's, Allen wrote "Blank Stares." A video of him performing the song with his mother on stage in Iowa went viral causing Allen to become known around the world. His mother has since passed, but he continues to tour internationally as an advocate for the Alzheimer's Association, and the song has gone on to raise over \$100 million dollars to help fight the disease.

**Steve Connell:** Steve Connell is an acclaimed spoken word artist, celebrated improv comic, and sought after speaker and entertainer. His work has been seen on ABC, HBO, and MTV, and he has performed live at Sundance, the Kennedy Center, the White House, and most recently at the NFL hall of fame induction ceremony. Earlier this year Steve's father lost his battle with Parkinson's disease. This will be his first holiday without his hero.

**Charles Esten:** Charles "Chip" Esten is an American actor, singer, and songwriter. Esten is best known for his roles as Deacon Claybourne on CMT's *NASHVILLE* and as Ward Cameron on NETFLIX's *OUTER BANKS*. Beyond his acting career, Charles is an active board member and volunteer for Musicians On Call. He regularly performs for patients and caregivers in hospitals, hospice centers, and VA facilities.

**Kathie Lee Gifford:** Kathie Lee Gifford is the four-time Emmy award winning former co-host of the fourth hour of "TODAY," alongside Hoda Kotb. Prior to NBC News, Gifford served as the co-host of "Live with Regis and Kathie Lee" for 15 years. She was inducted into the Broadcast & Cable Hall of Fame and was recently awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Kathie Lee lends support to numerous children's organizations including Childhelp, the International Justice Mission, and the Association to Benefit Children.

**Scott Hamilton:** Olympic Gold Medalist, philanthropist, and national speaker Scott Hamilton knows a thing or two about maladies and struggles, and how they have shaped, empowered, and allowed him to become one of America's most respected figure skaters. What Scott has accomplished with his life with those second chances is truly remarkable. Scott has experienced the highs and lows of life - from a debilitating childhood disease, to losing his mother to cancer as well as others close to him, to the glory of an Olympic gold medal, to his own diagnosis of testicular cancer, followed by three brain tumors. Scott embodies the idea that when you fall down, you get back up, inspiring those facing health challenges and life in general.

**Meghan Linsey:** Formerly half of the country-soul duo Steel Magnolia, she scored a Top-5 Billboard hit with their debut song "Keep on Lovin' You". She has toured with superstar acts including Brad Paisley, Bob Seger and Reba and appeared on *The Late Show* with David



Letterman and Jimmy Kimmel Live. An Alumni of Season 8 of the Voice, Meghan scored a Billboard Number 1 hit on the Christian Charts for her version of Amazing Grace. As a songwriter and a singer, Linsey finds inspiration from women with powerful voices and stories to tell such as Tanya, Dolly, Aretha and Whitney.

Twinnie: International crossover artist Twinnie, now based in Nashville has received critical acclaim from BBC Radio, People and Billboard. Known for her effervescent pop productions, powerhouse vocals, and storytelling lyricism, Twinnie's boundary pushing blend of pop is centered on inclusivity. Fresh to Music City, she recently made her Grand Ole Opry debut alongside her US Radio and TV debuts. Her work as a philanthropist has been recognised by Forbes. Passionate about mental health within the music industry for creatives, her non-profit I Know A Woman contributed to standardization for therapy for artists in the pandemic within label and publishing deals.

The Shindellas: Louis York's latest creation is the R&B Girl Group, The Shindellas. The Nashville-based trio consisting of Tamara Chauniece, Stacy Johnson and Kasi Jones is currently at the top of the Billboard R&B charts with their hit "Tonight Was Good for My Soul", from their latest album, Shindo.

Kelly Sutton, Emcee: Emmy-nominated TV Anchor and Media Personality, Kelly Sutton is the host Nashvillian's have loved since 2001. With over 16 years of live television experience, she has interviewed stars like Dolly Parton, Garth Brooks, Blake Shelton, Miranda Lambert, Carrie Underwood and Tim McGraw and Faith Hill. Kelly continues to volunteer with several local and national charities.

## ABOUT THE CHARITIES

Alzheimer's Association: The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. For more information, visit [www.ALZ.org](http://www.ALZ.org).

Nashville Peacemakers: The Mission of Nashville Peacemakers is twofold—to give youth in distressed neighborhoods the basic life skills and self-worth to choose peaceful alternatives to violence, and to support the mothers whose child has been victimized. Our Vision is to be the catalyst of change on a worldwide scale, so all children live to be adults who lead productive and meaningful lives. For more information, visit [www.nashvillepeacemakers.org](http://www.nashvillepeacemakers.org).

The Scott Hamilton Cares Foundation: The Scott Hamilton CARES Foundation is dedicated to changing the future of cancer by treating the cancer while sparing the patient. Established as a national identity in 2014, CARES

True West Foundation: True West Foundation is a new 501c3 founded by the Hope for Holidays creator and producer, David Fischette. For years, Fischette has been hosting unique charitable

events to help raise funds and awareness for local and national charities. The idea has always been that his own financial resources could only go so far, so instead of just writing checks to charities, he created a vehicle to allow others to donate to charities, and possibly even get involved in a personal and meaningful way with the organizations. Hope for the Holidays is our biggest expression of this concept so far. For more information, visit [www.truewestfoundation.com](http://www.truewestfoundation.com).

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