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## **RYAN SEACREST TO HOST ATLANTA RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES HEARTS AND HANDS GALA OCTOBER 24TH**

**ATLANTA, July 16, 2009** – Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities (ARMHC) announces its **Hearts and Hands Gala** at 7pm on **Saturday, October 24**, at the World of Coca-Cola. Atlanta's own **Ryan Seacrest** of "**American Idol**" will serve as host of the black-tie dinner which will feature live entertainment and a silent auction. **The Coca-Cola Company** is the event's presenting sponsor. The Event Chair is **Javier Goizueta**, Vice President, The Coca-Cola Company and President of the McDonald's Division Worldwide. **Muhtar Kent**, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, The Coca-Cola Company is Honorary Chair. For information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Shannon Murphy Courtney at 678.704.8086 or visit [www.armh.com](http://www.armh.com).

"The Ronald McDonald House is a cause that is very dear to the hearts of us at The Coca-Cola Company. We are committed to supporting the mission of Ronald McDonald House Charities, as we strive to help improve the health and well-being of children and families in need," says **Javier Goizueta**.

Proceeds from the Hearts and Hands Gala will support operations of Atlanta's two Ronald McDonald Houses. "We are grateful for the generosity and ongoing support of The Coca-Cola Company. And we are thrilled Coca-Cola's longtime ambassador, **Ryan Seacrest**, will host the evening. Despite a tough economy, we expect this inaugural event will be successful in raising funds to support families in need at our two local Ronald McDonald Houses. This year marks our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this new event is a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness for Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities and the organization's important work throughout the area," says **Linda M. Morris**, President/CEO of Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Increased demand led to the recent expansion of the local Ronald McDonald House programs. Last year, Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities opened a new state-of-the-art 50-bedroom \$15.7 million Ronald McDonald House near Emory University and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Egleston to meet the growing need. An 11-bedroom Ronald McDonald House on Peachtree Dunwoody Road continues to operate at full capacity to serve families of children receiving medical treatment at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Scottish Rite. Combined, the two local Houses serve more than 2,000 families a year.

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### **About Ryan Seacrest**

**Ryan Seacrest**, originally from Atlanta, Georgia, began his career in broadcasting at the age of sixteen when he applied for an internship at Atlanta's top radio station, WSTR-STAR 94. Today, Seacrest continues to rule the radio air waves with the nationally syndicated *On Air with Ryan Seacrest* and *American Top 40* which can also be heard on Star 94 in Atlanta. Ryan Seacrest can also be seen on television daily co-hosting the entertainment news show **E! News** and as host of Fox's highly acclaimed program "**American Idol**." As a television producer, Seacrest's projects under his RSP banner include "Denise Richards: It's Complicated," "Momma's Boys," "Bromance," "Keeping Up With the Kardashians" and he is working on two new shows with Kourtney and Khloe Kardashian and celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver.

### **About The Coca-Cola Company**

The Coca-Cola Company is the world's largest beverage company, refreshing consumers with nearly 500 sparkling and still brands. Along with Coca-Cola, recognized as the world's most valuable brand, the Company's portfolio includes 12 other billion dollar brands, including Diet Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Coca-Cola Zero, vitaminwater, POWERADE, Minute Maid and Georgia Coffee. Globally, we are the No. 1 provider of sparkling beverages, juices and juice drinks and ready-to-drink teas and coffees. Through the world's largest beverage distribution system, consumers in more than 200 countries enjoy the Company's beverages at a rate of nearly 1.6 billion servings a day. With an enduring commitment to building sustainable communities, our Company is focused on initiatives that protect the environment, conserve resources and enhance the economic development of the communities where we operate. For more information about The Coca-Cola Company, please visit [www.thecoca-colacompany.com](http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com).

### **About Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities**

Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to serving the needs of children by providing temporary housing and support services to families of critically ill and injured children being treated at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Scottish Rite and Egleston. **ARMHC has served more than 35,000 families in its 30-year history.**

Atlanta's first Ronald McDonald House, the fourth in the world, located at 792 Houston Mill Road featured 16 bedrooms and hosted more than 24,000 families since opening in 1979. This facility closed May 1, 2008 as the new 50-bedroom Gatewood Ronald McDonald House opened on June 9, 2008 less than a mile away. In June of 1994, the second house opened at 5420 Peachtree Dunwoody Road, which includes 11 bedrooms and has hosted more than 8,000 families.

At the Ronald McDonald House, families can enjoy many of the comforts of home, receive nutritious meals prepared and served by volunteers and obtain emotional support through contact with other families experiencing similar situations. No family is turned away if they cannot afford the small \$20 requested contribution and many of these families stay at the Ronald McDonald House for weeks, and sometimes months, while their children receive treatment at local children's hospitals.

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