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SIMON ESTES' PHILANTHROPIC WORK HIGHLIGHTED AT 25th ANNUAL YANKEE DOODLE POPS CONCERT

The Iowa native and internationally-acclaimed singer wants to raise \$1 million for the United Nations Foundation's Nothing But Nets campaign

Des Moines, IA (July 3, 2018) – Last night, *Nothing But Nets* Executive Director, Margaret Reilly McDonnell, and world-renowned opera singer Simon Estes spoke about to a crowd of more than 100,000 about the funds that Estes – and the [Simon Estes Foundation](#) – have raised to help save lives across the globe.

Reilly McDonnell [introduced Estes](#) at the 25th Annual Yankee Doodle Pops concert on July 2 in Des Moines, about 100 miles from Estes' hometown of Centerville. Estes, the grandson of a slave and son of a coal miner, is deeply grounded in his Iowan roots. He is also a strong advocate in the fight to end malaria. When he sang at the World Cup in South Africa in 2010 and learned that every 30 seconds a child died from malaria, Estes jumped to action, raising money to send bed nets that prevent malaria transmission.

"If you know Simon, you know that his heart and his mind are as deep, as powerful, and as true as his beautiful voice," Reilly McDonnell said in her introduction. Simon's experience in South Africa inspired him to embark on what would become a lifetime mission: to protect **children in Africa from malaria**. "Only \$10 can produce a bed net and provide it to a family in need and protect them from malaria. Simon decided to partner with the United Nations Foundation's [Nothing But Nets campaign](#), and we are forever grateful."

At the concert, Reilly McDonnell shared the impact of Estes' contributions to malaria prevention. Through personal donations, portions of concert ticket and CD sales, and fan donations, Simon has raised already over \$500,000 for *Nothing But Nets*. His goal is to reach the \$1 million mark.

"Iowans have donated \$532,000 to help protect children and families," Reilly McDonnell continued. "These funds have protected a staggering number of children in Africa, equal or perhaps greater than the number of people attending the concert tonight. That's incredible."

The Des Moines Symphony Conductor, Joseph Giunta, partnered with Estes in 2013 to host a Benefit Christmas Concert with the Des Moines Youth Symphony Orchestra and choirs from across the state. That concert raised an incredible \$100,000. This year, Maestro Giunta invited Reilly McDonnell to introduce Estes at the Yankee Doodle Pops concert and [told Radio Iowa](#) that Estes' work with the

campaign is "one of the many examples of not only his wonderful artistry but the way he thinks about life, and helping people, and his philanthropic means."

Many Americans don't often think about the impact of malaria – particularly around the Fourth of July. However, the effects are still devastating. A child dies every 2 minutes from malaria.

"You may be wondering: 'why are we talking about malaria?' Independence Day is a celebration of patriotism as well as of American values," Reilly McDonnell said. "The example that Simon has set – and that lowans have set forth – speaks to the best of America. Our capacity to be generous and good and to help people around the world."

Estes is available this week for interviews: for more information or if you'd like to interview Estes or Reilly McDonnell, email Paige Glidden at pglidden@unfoundation.org.

About Nothing But Nets:

Nothing But Nets is the world's largest grassroots campaign to save lives by preventing malaria, a disease which claims the life of a child every two minutes. Inspired by sports columnist Rick Reilly, hundreds of thousands of people have joined the campaign that was created by the United Nations Foundation in 2006. Nothing But Nets has raised over \$65 million to help deliver 12 million bed nets to families in need, along with other crucial malaria interventions. In addition to raising funds for its UN partners, Nothing But Nets raises awareness and voices to advocate for critical malaria funding for the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. It only costs \$10 to help save lives from this deadly disease. Visit www.NothingButNets.net to defeat malaria

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