MICHAEL L. NEELLY NAMED PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER OF WDSU-TV, NEW ORLEANS

NEW YORK, N.Y. and New Orleans, LA, October 18, 2021 – Michael L. Neelly, a longtime Hearst Television executive, most recently serving as president and general manager of WAPT-TV, the company's ABC affiliate in Jackson, MS, has been named president and general manager of WDSU-TV, the Hearst Television NBC affiliate serving the New Orleans, LA, TV market.

The appointment, effective immediately, brings Neelly to his fourth Hearst Television market. In addition to Jackson, where he has served as a general manager since 2016, he was a news executive with Hearst stations WLKY-TV, Louisville, and WLWT-TV, Cincinnati. At WDSU he succeeds Joel Vilmenay.

"Mike has done outstanding work at WAPT, leading the station in making significant contributions to the local community," said Jordan Wertlieb, Hearst Television president. "New Orleans is an extraordinary television market with an audience that appreciates a commitment to impactful local journalism. Mike brings a great depth of experience and a proven record of success to the role. He and the WDSU team are well positioned to grow the station to new heights."

Under Neelly's management, the WAPT team added newscasts on both the primary station and its MeTV digital station; launched a new public affairs program, "Mississippi Matters"; renovated and expanded the facility and news set; and propelled "16WAPT News at 6pm" to the most watched newscast in Jackson.

His 2016 move to WAPT marked a return to Jackson for Neelly, an Ole Miss alumnus who was a photojournalist and producer in Jackson during the early 1990s. Before WAPT, he was news director at WLWT-TV, the Hearst Television NBC affiliate in Cincinnati, OH. While there, he led a rejuvenation of the news operation, overseeing staff expansion and creating an investigative unit. WLWT ascended to the top of Cincinnati newscast ratings in key demographics and earned a 2014 Regional Emmy Award for Special Achievement: News Excellence – the market's first station to receive the award.

Before WLWT, Neelly served for a dozen years as news director at WLKY-TV, Hearst's CBS affiliate in Louisville, KY. During his tenure, WLKY became Louisville's news leader, achieving unprecedented ratings growth and earning more than 135 national and regional journalism awards. Between his time at WLWT and WLKY, Neelly himself was honored with five regional Emmy Awards for News Excellence. He joined WLKY in 1997 as assistant news director.

Prior to Hearst, Neelly was an executive producer at stations in Fort Myers, FL, and Portland, ME. He began his television journalism career in 1989 in Jackson. He holds a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Mississippi at Oxford.

Neelly serves on the boards of directors of the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters and the Mississippi Food Network and has served on advisory boards for the Jackson Salvation Army and Jackson State University.

Neelly's successor at WAPT will be named at a later date.

About Hearst Television

Hearst Television owns and operates 33 television and two radio stations serving 26 media markets across 39 states reaching over 22 million U.S. television households. Through its partnership with nearly all of the major networks, Hearst Television distributes national content over nearly 70 video channels including programming from ABC, NBC, CBS, CW, MY Net, MeTV, Estrella and more. The radio stations are leaders in Baltimore news/talk and rock music listenership. Hearst Television is recognized as one of the industry's premier companies and has been honored with numerous awards for distinguished journalism, industry innovation, and community service. Hearst Television is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hearst.

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