



# SHINING STARS

WHAT COULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE IN THIS SEASON OF GIVING  
THAN HONORING SIX HEROES WHO HAVE MADE THE WORLD  
A MUCH BETTER PLACE WITH THEIR GOOD DEEDS?

They hail from different points on the globe (Illinois, Mexico, Ireland, the Bronx, N.Y.) and between them have worked in nearly every aspect of show business (film, television, theater, music). Still, this year's Shining Stars share one belief: That, clichés aside, it really *is* better to give than to receive. "The best feeling is when you allow those you're working with to make a difference in your life," says Salma Hayek, who for years has been committed to ending domestic violence. Pierce Brosnan, a longtime environmental activist dedicated to protecting endangered whales, seconds Hayek. "When you stand up and do something for the community it makes you feel happy," he says. "It gives you a certain confidence in what you believe in as a human being." If Brosnan's sentiments are true (and we sincerely believe them to be), then "courageous," "confident" and "happy" would be the words that best describe everyone in this, our seventh annual portfolio of celebrities whose philanthropic endeavors are laudable—and whose causes deserve a spotlight. We celebrate the efforts of Hayek and Brosnan, as well as those of Mary J. Blige, whose goal is to educate people on the ever present problem of HIV/AIDS; Gary Sinise, who made it his personal mission to provide students in Iraq with school supplies; Calista Flockhart, who works to spread the word about assaults against women; and Kyra Sedgwick, champion of a mentoring program for kids whose childhoods are turned upside down by HIV/AIDS. "It has taken me a long time to get to where I am as a man, an actor and an activist," says Brosnan. "But then, I've always been a late bloomer." Perhaps, but it is truly heartening how he and the five others we honor on these pages have blossomed for the good of many. —Robin Sayers, Cortney Pellettieri, Heidi Ernst

*photographed by Kurt Markus*



## MARY J. BLIGE

### MINORITY AIDS PROJECT

Kenny, a guy who wrote songs with me early on, was the closest person to me to get AIDS. He died a year after I got involved with the MAC AIDS Fund and would have been 29 or 30 now. I started working with AIDS awareness because of how people swept the disease under the rug, as if it didn't exist anymore. AIDS used to be all over the news, but you don't hear about it much these days. It takes a lot of money to get the best hospitals, the best clinics, the best whatever. So last year we did research into charities so we could give them proceeds of the ticket sales from my "Love & Life" concert tour. Minority AIDS Project [MAP] attracted us because the majority of my fans are minorities. MAP helps with emergency housing and case management for people with HIV and their families, and it has programs to warn young people that AIDS is still out there. It's important that people like me visit schools, because I know people who have died. You hit kids with the truth, and that helps. Knowledge is power.