

MONTEL WILLIAMS Biography

Daytime Emmy Award-winner Montel Williams begins his tenth season as host of the daily, hour-long THE MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW. Since his debut in 1991, he has established himself as a top player in the competitive daytime talk show arena.

An honorably decorated former naval intelligence officer and a renowned motivational speaker, Montel is a talk show host with an incredibly non-traditional background.

In 1999, Montel faced his most challenging year to date, with the announcement of his diagnosis with MS (multiple sclerosis), a debilitating autoimmune disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. Since then, Montel has openly shared his struggles with the disease hoping to raise awareness, educate viewers and encourage research efforts towards finding a cure for the disease.

For his unwavering commitment to finding a cure and serving as a positive role model to others, the Seventh Annual Race to Erase MS, hosted by the Nancy Davis Foundation, honored Montel with the first ever “Man of Courage” award. Nancy Davis, Founder of The Race to Erase MS, fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger and actress Lola Falana have appeared on THE MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW to aid in Montel’s efforts towards finding a cure for MS.

Currently, almost 2.8 million people in the U.S alone have been diagnosed with MS and, to date, there is no cure. In response to these startling statistics and his own personal battle with the disease, Montel recently joined forces with Paramount to create a series of public service announcements to build awareness and educate the public on MS.

This year Montel created Mountain Movers Press, a publishing company that will publish the thoughts and views of today’s forward thinkers. All of the royalties from the company’s first release, Montel’s own *Life Lessons and Reflections* (available September 2000), will go towards finding a cure for MS. Says Williams of his new publishing venture, “It provides me with an opportunity to give back to society by creating books and audios that help create a better tomorrow.”

Montel is the author of the New York Times bestseller, *Mountain, Get Out Of My Way*, an autobiographical/motivational book that discusses his version of the “Three R’s: Respect, Restraint and Responsibility.” In the book, Montel discusses such topics as racism, affirmative action, mentoring and the importance of family.

In June 2000, Montel and THE MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW were recognized with the “Beacon Award” from the New York State Psychological Association (NYSPA) for taking a leadership role in promoting the advancement of psychology as a socially responsible profession.

The NYSPA granted Montel the award for his “commitment to bring psychological information to a large audience of real people, your enlightened use of psychologists on the show and your initiative in hiring [a] psychologist ... to assure appropriate crisis intervention and aftercare (something other talk shows were not doing)...”

In 1999, Montel was presented with a PRISM Award, receiving the Larry Stewart Leadership and Inspiration Award from the Entertainment Industries Council for serving as a role model to the entertainment industry.

Entertaining, spontaneous and always challenging, Montel encourages provocative discussions while maintaining his own point of view. Montel continues to address familial issues and conflicts, troubled youth and relationships in jeopardy.

Montel’s concern for the welfare of his guests is evidenced by his dedication to the show’s After-Care Program. Since its inception in 1992, the program has arranged for many guests to attend psychological

counseling sessions and/or weight-loss programs, drug rehabilitation centers, motivational camps and treatment for eating disorders.

As part of his ongoing commitment to increase awareness and reduce the spread of adolescent drug use, Montel joined forces with the Office of National Drug Control Policy, in the Executive Office of the President, to produce and direct two anti-drug Public Service Announcements.

Montel is a recurring guest star on the hit series "JAG" as the character Lt. Curtis Rivers. Montel starred in and executive produced the CBS series "Matt Waters" and has had guest starring roles on "Touched by An Angel" and "Dave's World." He also co-starred in the action adventure film "Peacekeeper" with Dolph Lundgren.

Additionally, Montel has an exclusive first look development deal with Paramount Television Group. His production company Letnom Productions will develop and produce projects for series television and feature film. Montel recently made his directorial debut with "Little Pieces," a full-length independent film for which he is currently seeking distribution.

THE MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW is a Mountain Movers production in association with Paramount Domestic Television. Montel Williams and Diane Rappoport are executive producers. The Paramount Television Group is part of the entertainment operations of Viacom Inc.