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DAVID CONRAD APPOINTED EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF A&R FOR MERCURY RECORDS & MCA NASHVILLE

Nashville, Tennessee, October 2, 2002...David Conrad has been appointed Executive Vice President of A&R for Mercury Records and MCA Nashville, it was announced today by Luke Lewis, Chairman & CEO of Mercury/MCA Nashville/Lost Highway.

In this capacity, Conrad will direct all aspects of A&R for the Mercury and MCA labels, seeking out and developing new talent while working closely with the labels' existing rosters.

"As country music continues to re-center itself back on singer-songwriters, David stands as one of the industry's most talented and driven creative executives," stated Lewis. "He has helped discover and shape the careers of an amazing array of innovative songwriters and artists. His extensive track record of success and undisputed reputation make him the perfect candidate to head up all of our Mercury/MCA A&R activities."

"Luke has always been the pioneer who goes against the grain and builds successful companies known for great music, a keen sense of focus, hard work and tremendous team spirit," added Conrad. "That special combination is a true rarity in our business. So the decision to come aboard was an easy one."

Prior to joining Mercury and MCA Nashville, Conrad served as Senior Vice President of Almo/Irving Music, the highly regarded publishing company of Jerry Moss and Herb Alpert's A&M Records. Charged with launching the company's Nashville operation, Conrad discovered, nurtured or developed such hit-making songwriters and artists as Paul Kennerley, Anthony Smith, Nanci Griffith, Gillian Welch, Annie Roboff, Marty Stuart, Patti Griffin and Emmylou Harris, among many others. He successfully expanded the Nashville division of Almo/Irving to encompass all genres of music, including country, pop, R&B and adult contemporary.

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With over thirty years in the music industry, Conrad's passion for music began at an early age with classical guitar, later moving into more contemporary styles. After graduating from the University of North Carolina, he moved to Nashville and immediately found session work with good friend Chet Atkins, and the Army Special Services Show which toured for two years. He was later hired as General Manager for Charley Pride's Pi-Gem/Chess music company, where he nurtured such award-winning songwriting talent as Dennis Morgan, Kye Fleming and Archie Jordan. He was also involved in the careers of Ronnie Milsap, Barbara Mandrell and Steve Wariner. Conrad segued to Almo/Irving next, spending over two decades building the Nashville division into a market leader.

Conrad is committed to the country music community, having served as President of the Country Music Association, where he remains a member of the Board. He is also a trustee of the Board of the Country Music Foundation, and member of the Board of the Nashville Songwriters Foundation.

Mercury Records and MCA Nashville are divisions of Universal Music Group, the world's leading music company with wholly-owned record operations or licensees in 63 countries around the world. Its businesses also include Universal Music Publishing Group, one of the industry's largest global music publishing operations.

Universal Music Group consists of record labels Decca Record Company, Deutsche Grammophon, Interscope Geffen A&M Records, Island Def Jam Music Group, Lost Highway Records, MCA Nashville, MCA Records, Mercury Records, Motown Records, Philips, Polydor, Universal Records, and Verve Music Group as well as a multitude of record labels owned or distributed by its record company subsidiaries around the world. The Universal Music Group owns the most extensive catalog of music in the industry, which is marketed through two distinct divisions, Universal Music Enterprises (in the U.S.) and UM3 (outside the U.S.). Universal Music Group also includes eLabs, its division dedicated to strategy, business development, and management of new businesses in the online and advanced technology space.

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