

# CNN Heroes: An All-Star Tribute 2015

CNN and Data Display choose Christie MicroTiles visual display technology



▲ Bird's-eye view of the CNN Heroes' awards at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City

## Ordinary people, extraordinary contributions

'CNN Heroes: An All-Star Tribute', an annual awards show now in its ninth year, shines a spotlight on ordinary people making extraordinary contributions in the field of humanitarian aid. The show features videos about each of the Top 10 CNN Heroes. Each Hero receives a cash prize and is introduced by a celebrity who actively supports that Hero's cause. The top winner—the CNN Hero of the Year—receives an additional cash prize to continue their good work.

One of this year's Top 10 CNN Heroes, Monique Pool, is perhaps best known as 'The Sloth Lady' for her work in rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing sloths back into the wild. Show host Anderson Cooper fulfilled one of his life-long dreams when he held a sloth—one of Pool's rescues, a real show-stealer named Snooki—during the event.

Actor Victoria Justice presented the top prize of CNN Hero of the Year to 28-year-old Maggie Doyne, whose Kopila Valley

School provides both health care and education to more than 350 students. Many are the first in their families to attend school. And perhaps even more amazing is Doyne's Kopila Valley Children's Home, where she is the legal guardian of more than 50 children without family to take care of them. The children also attend Doyne's Kopila Valley School.

And behind it all, a massive 256-square foot display wall of Christie® MicroTiles®—installed by Data Display Audio Visual, a division of ON Event Services—served as a visual backdrop for dynamic graphics, photos and video.

*"Christie MicroTiles look great on camera. Great performance in high ambient light is an asset on set, so they aren't washed out by television studio set lighting."*

**Mark Swanson,**  
Data Display Audio Visual

### Customer:

CNN

### Location:

New York City, NY

### Industry/Market:

Rental staging  
Television broadcast

### Partners:

Data Display Audio Visual, a division of ON Event Services

### Requirements:

- Super-fine resolution
- Extreme reliability for live, televised event
- High brightness

### Summary:

Data Display Audio Visual provided the high-resolution display solution CNN needed for their CNN Heroes award show. They built a 12 foot by 21 foot wall of Christie MicroTiles that would provide a dynamic visual display behind presenters and award winners.

### Products:

- Christie® MicroTiles®

### Results:

The high-resolution Christie MicroTiles not only performed flawlessly during the live event but also provided a stunning and dynamic backdrop for the awards show.

Recorded live in front of an audience that included celebrities Sharon Stone, Kelly Ripa and Neil Patrick Harris at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, the award show was broadcast two weeks later to millions of television viewers.

"While the show wasn't broadcast live, it's still CNN—a very high-profile network—and the pressure to make it look perfect was definitely there," explains Mark Swanson, technology director, Data Display. "The audience was live; they weren't edited in. It was a live event in the room, just not immediately live on TV."

### Why Christie MicroTiles?

"The main reason CNN chose MicroTiles is that for their last awards show they used a 5-by-5 array of 60-inch LCD displays to create a video wall, and apparently the installation was very tricky, among other issues," shares Swanson. "This time they wanted something that would go together more easily and look better to the TV viewer. Once we got there and tested it, did the color balance and showed them on camera, CNN like it so much they chose Christie MicroTiles."

"CNN developed the content and we created four walls of MicroTiles, each with 1920 x 1080 content, and stitched them together to make one huge 12 foot by 21 foot wall, to deliver the 4K content across the whole thing," Swanson continues. "CNN then sent us the graphics signal from their production truck out in the street. The MicroTiles had so much more resolution than CNN was able to achieve with LCD panels."

Swanson said he dialed back the brightness of the MicroTiles to make them compatible with the set lighting. "They look great on camera. Great performance in high ambient light is an asset on set, so they aren't washed out by television studio set lighting," he added.

After using Christie MicroTiles at two other CNN live broadcasts in 2015—October's CNN Democratic Party presidential debate and the Republican Party presidential debate in December—both Swanson and Data Display vice president Shawn Rockefeller agree that Christie MicroTiles make a big impact because of their on-camera performance.

"We never intended to use MicroTiles for broadcast, but then we said, 'Why not?' and kind of fell into it. Their limitless resolution capability is a huge factor for large-scale video backdrops because we can run everything at a 1080p level. And MicroTiles' shallow depth helps with space issues because they're only taking up a foot or two of space on these sets," says Rockefeller. "We've been involved with MicroTiles almost from their inception, so we have a lot of experience with them in a staging environment. We have more MicroTiles than any other stager and Mark has so much experience, he eats, drinks and breathes them. We try to squeeze MicroTiles in everywhere!"

Swanson laughs in agreement and adds, "Whenever we can."

### Contact Christie

Contact us today to find out how your organization can benefit from Christie solutions.



▲ CNN Heroes' massive visual display, made up of Christie MicroTiles



▲ Host Anderson Cooper poses with CNN's Top 10 Heroes of 2015

Photo credits: CNN

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