For Immediate Release

International Survey UnCOVERS “Voices of Family Members” as the Number One Sound Americans Would Miss if They Lost Their Hearing

MED-EL USA Celebrates Connecting People with Hearing Loss and their Families on Mother’s Day with Social Media Giveaway May 6-12

May 2, 2019 – (DURHAM, NC) – MED-EL USA announced today the results of an international survey that revealed the voices of family members or partners (67%) was the sound Americans would miss the most if they could no longer hear. Conversations with friends and loved ones (81%) was the highest mentioned everyday situation that would be affected by hearing loss.

The survey findings illustrate the significance of hearing on families and life events: 64% of respondents said that hearing “I love you” from a partner or family member would not be the same if they couldn’t hear; this was the most mentioned life-event. Additionally, respondents indicated their baby's first words (42%) and their baby's first giggle (40%) were life events that would not be the same if they lost their hearing.

May is an important time for family connections, with an estimated 122 million phone calls made in the US on Mother's Day. However, for people living with hearing loss, making that phone call – a daily occurrence that most people take for granted – can be challenging.

“MED-EL’s mission is to end hearing loss as a barrier to communication around the world,” said Raymond Gamble, CEO & President of MED-EL North America. “We recognize the role that hearing technology plays in helping to maintain vital connections among family members, on Mother’s Day and every day. If a mother or child finds that making a phone call has become difficult, we want to encourage them to get in touch with MED-EL to see if we have resources that can help.”

MED-EL HearPeer Scott Murray reflected on his emotional experience with his mother during his cochlear implant activation: “There were three people at my activation besides me, including my audiologist. My mom was there. We were going around the room and

-more-
they were talking one at a time. At first, I was very confused because everything sounded discombobulated. We got to my mom and she started talking, and she sounded the most normal. And I said ‘everyone sounds strange and you sound normal.’ And she started crying right there.”

To celebrate the importance of access to sound and family connections, MED-EL USA will be giving away #MEDELmom ceramic tumblers daily from May 6-12 to people who have connected with their mothers, children or grandchildren by sharing an inspirational post from MED-EL USA's Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/medel.unitedstates.

May is also recognized as Better Hearing and Speech Month as an annual observance to raise awareness of issues surrounding hearing loss, as well as interventions that can help restore access to the world of sound.

About Hearing Loss in America
About 20% of Americans, or 48 million people, report some degree of hearing loss from mild to profound. According to the Hearing Loss Association of America, hearing loss has been shown to negatively impact nearly every dimension of the human experience, including physical health, emotional and mental health, perceptions of mental acuity, social skills, family relationships, and self-esteem, as well as work and school performance. There are numerous causes of hearing loss, ranging from heredity, birth complications, viral infections, and exposure to loud noises. Hearing loss is also associated with aging, as the tiny hairs of the inner ear that process sound die over time and do not regenerate. The World Health Organization recommends a range of interventions to improve communication once hearing loss has occurred, including hearing implants.

Survey Background
An online survey was conducted by Atomik Research among 1,001 adults aged 18+ living in the USA from January 7-11, 2019. Atomik Research is an independent creative market research agency that employs MRS-certified researchers and abides to MRS code.

About MED-EL
MED-EL Medical Electronics, a leader in implantable hearing solutions, is driven by a mission to overcome hearing loss as a barrier to communication. The Austrian-based, privately owned business was co-founded by industry pioneers Ingeborg and Erwin Hochmair, whose groundbreaking research led to the development of the world's first micro-electronic multi-channel cochlear implant (CI), which was successfully implanted in 1977 and was the basis for what is known as the modern CI today. This laid the foundation for the successful growth of the company in 1990, when they hired their first

-more-
employees. To date, MED-EL has grown to more than 2,000 employees and 33 subsidiaries worldwide. The company offers the widest range of implantable and non-implantable solutions to treat all types of hearing loss, enabling people in 123 countries to enjoy the gift of hearing with the help of a MED-EL device. MED-EL's global portfolio of hearing solutions includes cochlear and middle ear implant systems, a combined Electric Acoustic Stimulation hearing implant system as well as bone conduction devices. www.medel.com

# # #

#BHSM, #MEDELMom

CONTACT:
Rebecca Novak Tibbitt
Rebecca@RNTCommunications.com
PH: (704) 341-1544