



# MICKEY SMITH JR. IS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2020 MUSIC EDUCATOR AWARD™ PRESENTED BY THE RECORDING ACADEMY® AND GRAMMY MUSEUM®

SMITH AND NINE FINALISTS TO RECEIVE CASH HONORARIUMS WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES PROVIDED BY THE GRAMMY MUSEUM®'S EDUCATION CHAMPION FORD MOTOR COMPANY FUND

**WHO:** Mickey Smith Jr. of Maplewood Middle School in Sulphur, Louisiana, is the recipient of the 2020 Music Educator Award™ presented by the Recording Academy® and GRAMMY Museum®. In addition, nine music teachers have been announced as finalists for the award. Initial nominations were submitted from all 50 states. Nominations and applications for the 2021 Music Educator Award are now open via [www.grammymusicteacher.com](http://www.grammymusicteacher.com). A complete list of the winner and finalists is below.

Music Educator Award Recipient	School Name	City	State
Mickey Smith Jr.	Maplewood Middle School	Sulphur	La.
Finalists	School Name	City	State
Elizabeth Bennett	Buffalo Grove High School	Buffalo Grove	Ill.
Stephen Cox	Eastland High School	Eastland	Texas
Victor de los Santos	Santa Ana High School	Santa Ana	Calif.
Geoffrey Gould	Swift River Elementary School	Belchertown	Mass.
Elizabeth Hering	Churchill High School	Livonia	Mich.
Jason Majerczak	Drexel Hill Middle School	Drexel Hill	Pa.
Chris Maunu	Arvada West High School	Arvada	Colo.
Lynne Ruda	Lancaster High School	Lancaster	N.Y.
Kokoe Tanaka-Suwan	Bronx Global Learning Institute for Girls	Bronx	N.Y.



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**WHAT:**

A partnership and joint presentation of the Recording Academy and GRAMMY Museum, the **Music Educator Award** was established to recognize current educators (kindergarten through college, public and private schools) who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the field of music education and who demonstrate a commitment to the broader cause of maintaining music education in schools.

The award is open to current U.S. music teachers, and anyone can nominate a teacher—students, parents, friends, colleagues, community members, school deans, and administrators. Teachers are also able to nominate themselves, and nominated teachers are notified and invited to fill out an application.

Each year, one recipient is selected from 10 finalists and recognized for their remarkable impact on students' lives. The 2020 honoree will be in Los Angeles, the host city of the GRAMMY Awards®, and will be recognized during GRAMMY® Week. The recipient will also attend the 62nd Annual GRAMMY Awards ceremony on Jan. 26 and a range of GRAMMY Museum events. The winner will receive a \$10,000 honorarium with a matching school grant. The nine additional finalists will receive a \$1,000 honorarium, and their schools will also receive matching grants.

The grants provided to the finalists and schools are made possible by the generosity and support of the GRAMMY Museum's Education Champion **Ford Motor Company Fund**. In addition, the American Choral Directors Association, National Association for Music Education, NAMM Foundation, and National Education Association support this program through outreach to their constituencies.

**BIO:** **Mickey Smith Jr.**'s mission is to reach every student who enters his classroom. Smith serves as the lead band director at Maplewood Middle School in Sulphur, Louisiana. Under his direction, the band has grown more than 500 percent and now encompasses nearly 50 percent of the total school population. His goal is to help provide a quality education to each child in his classroom and throughout his community by promoting positive learning experiences where children not only grow musically, but personally too. Smith sees music and education as opportunities for all to discover the best in others and themselves. Through his nonprofit, MusicMakers2U, Smith provides instruments to children in the community. Throughout the school year, Smith conveys a message to students that each one of them has a "sound." Smith describes his personal "sound" as his ability to entertain, educate and elevate everyone to excellence. This is made evident as he demonstrates the power of music by emotionally connecting with students, educators and audiences throughout his entire community and across the country.

### **ABOUT THE GRAMMY MUSEUM**

Established in 2008, the GRAMMY Museum is a nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating a greater understanding of the history and significance of music through exhibits, education, grants, preservation initiatives, and public programming. Paying tribute to our collective musical heritage, the Museum explores and celebrates all aspects of the art form—from the technology of the recording process to the legends who've made lasting marks on our cultural identity.

For more information, visit [www.grammymuseum.org](http://www.grammymuseum.org), "like" the GRAMMY Museum on Facebook, and follow @GRAMMYMuseum on Twitter and Instagram.

### **ABOUT THE RECORDING ACADEMY**

The Recording Academy represents the voices of performers, songwriters, producers, engineers, and all music professionals. Dedicated to ensuring the recording arts remain a thriving part of our shared cultural heritage,



## RECORDING ACADEMY GRAMMY MUSEUM®

the Academy honors music's history while investing in its future through the GRAMMY Museum, advocates on behalf of music creators, supports music people in times of need through MusiCares®, and celebrates artistic excellence through the GRAMMY Awards — music's only peer-recognized accolade and highest achievement. As the world's leading society of music professionals, we work year-round to foster a more inspiring world for creators.

For more information about the Academy, please visit [www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com). For breaking news and exclusive content, follow @RecordingAcad on [Twitter](#), "like" Recording Academy on [Facebook](#), and join the Recording Academy's social communities on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

### **About Ford Motor Company Fund**

*As the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company, Ford Fund's mission is to strengthen communities and help make people's lives better. Working with dealers and nonprofit partners in more than 60 countries, Ford Fund provides access to opportunities and resources that help people reach their full potential. Since 1949, Ford Fund has invested more than \$2 billion in programs that support education, promote safe driving, enrich community life and encourage employee volunteering. For more information, visit [www.fordfund.org](http://www.fordfund.org) or join us at @FordFund on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*

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