



## **VALEISHA BUTTERFIELD JONES AND PANOS A. PANAY NAMED CO-PRESIDENTS OF THE RECORDING ACADEMY® ACADEMY ACCELERATES CHANGE WITH DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM FOCUSED ON INNOVATION AND GROWTH**

**SANTA MONICA, CALIF. (JUNE 22, 2021)** — Recording Academy® President/CEO, Harvey Mason jr., has appointed Valeisha Butterfield Jones and Panos A. Panay as Co-Presidents, effective Aug. 16, 2021. They will join recently elevated Chief Operating Officer Branden Chapman and Chief Industry Officer Ruby Marchand as part of a modernized leadership team. This new structure is recognition that further progress and building of the organization requires exceptional leaders with different strengths and areas of focus to drive innovation and accountability. With the aim of better serving Recording Academy members and the music industry at-large, the team will work directly under Mason, whose title will shift to CEO.

As Co-President, Butterfield Jones will continue to oversee the Recording Academy's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts along with people and culture, membership, awards, advocacy, and related initiatives. Having developed and implemented world-class programs across multiple industries, Butterfield Jones brings global experience and a strategic rigor to her new role. She is an authentic, mission-focused leader known for leveraging data insights and delivering practical solutions to solve complex problems. She will also continue to infuse the highest standards of inclusion, belonging and representation throughout the Academy.

Panay will serve as Co-President and Chief Revenue Officer and will be tasked with driving business growth across the entire organization to further expand the service offerings for our members and the industry. With a focus on identifying new partnerships and opportunities, he will be instrumental in creating strategic plans and fostering a culture of innovation. An accomplished entrepreneur, Panay brings cross-functional expertise to the role that will help evolve the vision of the Academy.

"The successful evolution of the Recording Academy is dependent on strong and innovative leaders, and I'm thrilled to elevate Valeisha and welcome Panos as Co-Presidents to help drive the Recording Academy's continued transformation," said Mason. "Both Valeisha and Panos are incredible leaders who have a proven record of progress, and together with the rest of the team, will continue to push the envelope at the Recording Academy and shape the organization to better serve, protect and celebrate the music community."

Butterfield Jones is an award-winning and globally recognized business leader with proven impact at the intersections of technology, politics and entertainment. She currently serves as the Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer for the Recording Academy.

Prior to this role, Valeisha served as the global head of inclusion for Google, Inc., responsible for accelerating diversity, equity and inclusion outcomes for underrepresented communities internally and externally across the global brand. In this role, Valeisha led strategies and teams across the United States, EMEA, APAC, and LatAm, focused on access to quality education, growth for minority-owned businesses, global partnerships, and pathways into S.T.E.A.M. for historically marginalized groups. Key programs under Valeisha's leadership included TechExchange, Code Next, the State of Black Women at Google, Decoding Race and the Digital Coaches program.



She also served as the national youth vote director for the Obama for America campaign, helping to deliver one of the highest youth voter turnouts in American history, and in the Obama Administration as the deputy director of public affairs for International Trade. She also served as the national executive director and senior vice president of Rush Communications / the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network and as the national director of diversity and inclusion for the Alzheimer's Association. Her two decades-long career began at Home Box Office (HBO Sports).

In 2007, Butterfield Jones co-founded Women in Entertainment Empowerment Network (WEEN), a nonprofit, global coalition of people committed to the balanced, positive portrayal of women in the entertainment industry. Her leadership has been recognized by *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *Glamour*, and *Ebony* magazine's Power 100, The Root 100, *Billboard* magazine's 2021 Change Agents feature, *Essence* magazine's Top 40 Under 40, *Elle* magazine's Top 25 Most Inspiring Women, and others. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science from Clark Atlanta University.

Prior to joining the Recording Academy, Panay served as the senior vice president for Global Strategy and Innovation at Berklee College of Music and is a fellow at MIT Connection Science. At Berklee, Panay led the development and execution of the college's overarching strategic plan; founded the Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship; oversaw its campuses in New York City, Valencia (Spain) and Abu Dhabi, as well as the Music + Health and India Exchange Institutes; and steered new partnerships, program development and the incorporation of new technologies. He also led Berklee's expansion to China and the K-12 sector. Prior to Berklee, Panay was founder and CEO of Sonicbids, the leading platform for emerging artists to connect with music promoters, resulting in over 1 million gigs booked in over 80 countries around the world. He led the company for 13 years until after its successful acquisition in 2013. He started his career as a talent agent and vice president at The Kurland Agency, booking the international tours for GRAMMY®-winning artists such as Pat Metheny, Chick Corea and Branford Marsalis.

Panay has been recognized in *Fast Company's* Fast 50; *Inc Magazine's* Inc 500, Mass Hi-Tech All Stars, and *Boston Globe's* Game Changers. For his work with Sonicbids, Panay was also profiled in the book *Outsmart* by best-selling author Jim Champy and spoke at the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland as part of his work with Open Music. He has been a guest on programs such as CNBC's "Squawk Box" and a guest writer about entrepreneurship for *Forbes*, *Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, *Fast Company* and *Inc Magazine*, among others. He is a public speaker at many universities and events around the world. His first book *Two Beats Ahead: What Musical Minds Teach Us About Innovation*, co-authored with Michael Hendrix of IDEO, was released earlier this year and was named as a business book of the month of April by the *Financial Times*.

Earlier this month, the Recording Academy announced its newly elected national officers of the Board of Trustees. Tammy Hurt was elected as the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Rico Love will serve as Vice Chair. Om'Mas Keith was elected Secretary/Treasurer and Christine Albert continues her role as Chair Emeritus.

## **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, 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](#).

# # #

#### **CONTACTS:**

##### **Andie Cox**

Recording Academy

[andie.cox@recordingacademy.com](mailto:andie.cox@recordingacademy.com)

##### **Hailey Thompson**

Porter Novelli

[hailey.thompson@porternovelli.com](mailto:hailey.thompson@porternovelli.com)