



MUSICARES®  
*For Immediate Release*

**FOUR-TIME GRAMMY® WINNER LIONEL RICHIE  
TO BE HONORED AS  
2016 MUSICARES® PERSON OF THE YEAR AT  
26TH ANNUAL TRIBUTE**

*Confirmed Performers To Date Include Luke Bryan, Lady Antebellum, and Pharrell Williams*

*Annual Gala Benefiting The MusiCares Foundation® and Its Vital Safety Net of Health and Human Services Programs for Music People Will Be Held During GRAMMY® Week on Saturday, Feb. 13, 2016*

**SANTA MONICA, Calif. (Aug. 18, 2015)** — **Lionel Richie** will be honored as the **2016 MusiCares® Person of the Year** on **Saturday, Feb. 13, 2016**, it was announced today by Neil Portnow, President/CEO of the MusiCares Foundation® and The Recording Academy®, and Bill Silva, Chair of the MusiCares Foundation Board. Proceeds from the **26th annual benefit gala** dinner and concert — to be held in Los Angeles during GRAMMY® Week two nights prior to the 58th Annual GRAMMY Awards® — will provide essential support for MusiCares ([www.musicares.org](http://www.musicares.org)), which ensures that music people have a place to turn in times of financial, medical and personal need.

To date, confirmed tribute concert performers include multi-GRAMMY winners **Lady Antebellum** and **Pharrell Williams**, as well as singer/songwriter **Luke Bryan**, reigning Academy of Country Music and Country Music Association Entertainer of the Year. **Rickey Minor**, current music director for "American Idol" and past two-time music director for the GRAMMY Awards, will be the evening's **musical director**. **Additional performers will be announced shortly.**

Richie is being honored as the 2016 MusiCares Person of the Year in recognition of his significant creative accomplishments as well as his career-spanning charitable work, which has included support for an impressive range of causes over the years, ranging from AIDS and human rights to famine, poverty, human trafficking and women's issues. He is also a longtime contributor to the United Negro College Fund.

"Each year our MusiCares Person of the Year tribute honors an extraordinary artist and humanitarian who lends their considerable time and talents to raising the funds necessary to continue to meet the ever-increasing need for our programs and services," said Portnow. "And it is truly a privilege to be paying tribute to Lionel, whose musical gifts and philanthropy have touched millions of people around the world."

"Lionel's artistry is a genuine blend of emotional connection and poignant lyricism, and we look forward to a truly magical evening that will highlight his astonishing and inspiring body of work," said Silva.

"I'm really very proud of this," said Richie. "As far as I'm concerned, this is the highest honor in our music business because it means you have a career. You've survived the journey, if you will. The people who have been there defy categories. When you say Barbra Streisand, Bob Dylan and Paul McCartney — are you kidding me? When I got in this business I wanted to be like them. When you get recognition like this, it's everything. It really is the top of the mountain when it comes down to what your industry gives as recognition for great work, and the opportunity to help raise funds to sustain MusiCares' critical safety net of programs for members of the music community is momentous to me."

The 2016 MusiCares Person of the Year gala will begin with a reception and silent auction offering an exclusive and unparalleled selection of luxury items, VIP experiences and one-of-a-kind celebrity memorabilia for bidding guests. The reception and silent auction will be followed by a dinner, the award presentation and a tribute concert featuring renowned musicians. The MusiCares Person of the Year tribute

ceremony is one of the most prestigious events held during GRAMMY Week. The celebration culminates with the 58th Annual GRAMMY Awards at STAPLES Center on Monday, Feb. 15, 2016. The telecast will be broadcast live on the CBS Television Network at 8 p.m. ET/PT.

While Lionel Richie's career includes such accolades as selling more than 100 million albums and achieving countless honors, from an Academy Award to four GRAMMY Awards, one of the accomplishments he is most proud of is his bachelor's degree in economics from Tuskegee University.

In the Commodores, he developed a groundbreaking style that defied genre categories, penning smashes such as "Three Times A Lady," "Still" and "Easy." The diamond-certified Album Of The Year GRAMMY winner *Can't Slow Down* followed in 1983, giving the world classics such as "All Night Long (All Night)," "Penny Lover," "Stuck On You," and "Hello." His music continued to push boundaries and unite listeners worldwide. It's because he wasn't afraid to break genre barriers and craft something singular and timeless.

The next year he performed at the historic 1984 Summer Olympics closing ceremony. In 1985 he joined forces with Michael Jackson to write one of most important pop songs in history, GRAMMY-winning "We Are The World," for USA For Africa and the album *We Are The World*. A decade later, in 1996 he began a run of powerful, personal albums that commenced with the gold-certified *Louder Than Words*, followed by 1998's *Time* and 2001's *Renaissance*.

In addition to a total of four GRAMMY Awards, he won ASCAP's "Golden Note Award" and "Lifetime Achievement Award," as well as 14 American Music Awards, five People's Choice Awards, a World Music Awards Legend Award, TV Land Icon Award, Germany's Echo Award for lifetime achievement, Hong Kong's Rojo Award, Goldene Kamera Award, Italy's San Remo Festival Lifetime Achievement Award, and The Recording Academy Los Angeles Chapter Governors Award, among others. He received the Peter J. Gomes Humanitarian Award presented at Harvard University. He's been inducted to both the Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Alabama Music Hall of Fame and knighted in France, receiving the Légion d'Honneur.

Always giving back, his charity work extends from the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, City of Hope and Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center to UNICEF and the Art of Elysium.

In 2012 the trailblazer creatively returned home with his 10th full-length album, *Tuskegee*. It would mark his third No. 1 debut on the Billboard 200 and attain platinum status. Now, in 2015, he receives one of his biggest honors yet being named MusiCares Person of the Year.

The **MusiCares Foundation** offers programs and services to members of the music community, including **emergency financial assistance** for basic living expenses such as rent, utilities and car payments; medical expenses including doctor, dentist and hospital bills; psychotherapy; and treatment for HIV/AIDS, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, hepatitis C, and other critical illnesses. MusiCares offers nationwide **educational workshops** covering a variety of subjects, including financial, legal, medical, and substance abuse issues, and **programs** in collaboration with health care professionals that provide services such as flu shots, hearing tests, and medical/dental screenings. The **MusiCares MAP Fund**<sup>®</sup> allows access to addiction recovery treatment and sober living resources for members of the music community. Staffed by qualified chemical dependency and intervention specialists, MusiCares offers **Safe Harbor Room**<sup>®</sup> support to provide a network to those in recovery while they are participating in the production of televised music shows and other major music events. MusiCares holds **weekly addiction support groups** for people to discuss how to best cope with the issues surrounding the recovery process. The **MusiCares Sober Touring Network** is a database of individuals across the United States who can take music people to recovery support meetings while on the road.

Established in 1989 by The Recording Academy, MusiCares provides a safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need. MusiCares' services and resources cover a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies, and each case is treated with integrity and confidentiality. MusiCares also focuses the resources and attention of the music industry on human service issues that directly impact the health and welfare of the music community. For more information, please visit [www.musicares.org](http://www.musicares.org). For breaking news and exclusive content, please "like" MusiCares on [Facebook](#), follow @MusiCares on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Established in 1957, The Recording Academy is an organization of musicians, songwriters, producers, engineers and recording professionals that is dedicated to improving the cultural condition and quality of life

for music and its makers. Internationally known for the GRAMMY Awards — the preeminent peer-recognized award for musical excellence and the most credible brand in music — The Recording Academy is responsible for groundbreaking professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education and human services programs. The Academy continues to focus on its mission of recognizing musical excellence, advocating for the well-being of music makers and ensuring music remains an indelible part of our culture. For more information about The Academy, please visit [www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com). For breaking news and exclusive content, follow @TheGRAMMYS on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/TheGRAMMYS), "like" The GRAMMYS on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/TheGRAMMYS), and join the GRAMMYS' social communities on [Foursquare](https://www.foursquare.com/TheGRAMMYS), GetGlue, [Google +](https://www.google.com/+TheGRAMMYS), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/TheGRAMMYS), [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/TheGRAMMYS), [Tumblr](https://www.tumblr.com/TheGRAMMYS), and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/TheGRAMMYS).

For information on purchasing tables and tickets to the event, please contact **Dana Tomarken** at **MusiCares, 310.392.3777**.

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