



*****MEDIA ALERT FOR SEPT. 26, 2014*****

**25 SEMIFINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR MUSIC EDUCATOR AWARD™
PRESENTED BY THE RECORDING ACADEMY® AND THE
GRAMMY FOUNDATION®**

Recipient and Finalists to Receive Cash Honorariums, with Generous Support and Resources Provided by the GRAMMY Foundation®'s Education Champions: Converse, Disney Performing Arts, Ford Motor Company Fund, and Journeys

Second Annual Award will be Presented at the Special Merit Awards Ceremony & Nominees Reception on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, during GRAMMY® Week

WHO: A total of 25 music teachers from 25 cities across 17 states have been announced as **semifinalists** for the **Music Educator Award™** presented by **The Recording Academy®** and the **GRAMMY Foundation®**. In total, more than **7,000 initial nominations** were submitted from all **50 states**.

WHAT: The **Music Educator Award** was established to recognize current educators (K 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 their schools. A joint partnership and presentation of The Recording Academy and the GRAMMY Foundation, this special award will be presented at the Special Merit Awards Ceremony & Nominees Reception (honoring recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award, Trustees Award and Technical GRAMMY® Award) on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, during GRAMMY Week.

As announced on the 55th Annual GRAMMY Awards® by President/CEO of The Recording Academy and GRAMMY Foundation **Neil Portnow**, TV and radio host/producer and GRAMMY Foundation Honorary Board Chair **Ryan Seacrest**, and nine-time GRAMMY winner **Justin Timberlake**, the award is open to current U.S. music teachers, and anyone could nominate a teacher — students, parents, friends, colleagues, community members, school deans, and administrators. Teachers were also able to nominate themselves, and nominated teachers were notified and invited to fill out an application.

This fall, the school of each semifinalist will have the chance to earn an additional \$6,000 for their music program through the Ford Drive 4 UR School program. Since the program's launch in 2007, Ford has donated nearly \$25 million to schools around the country through its unique test-drive experience.

"Music education has such an important impact on our cultural fabric," said GRAMMY Foundation Honorary Chair Ryan Seacrest. "It's a privilege to join the GRAMMY Foundation and Ford Motor Company to applaud the efforts of our nation's top 25 music teachers and work with their schools to help raise awareness about the importance of music in schools."

One recipient is selected from 10 finalists each year, and will be recognized for his/her remarkable impact on students' lives. The winner will be flown to Los Angeles to accept the award, attend the GRAMMY Awards ceremony, and receive a \$10,000 honorarium. The nine finalists will each receive a \$1,000 honorarium, and the schools of all 10 finalists also will receive matching grants. The honorariums and grants provided to the finalists and schools are made possible by the generosity and support of the GRAMMY Foundation's Education Champions: **Converse, Disney Performing Arts, Ford Motor Company Fund, and Journeys**. Nominations for the 2016 Music Educator Award are now open at www.grammymusicteacher.com.

WHEN: A complete list of semifinalists is below. The finalists will be announced in December. For more information, please visit www.grammymusicteacher.com.

<u>Name</u>	<u>School Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>
Diane Abrahamian	Penfield High School	Penfield	N.Y.
Steven Acciani	Diamond Bar High School	Diamond Bar	Calif.
Phil Aguglia	Kenmore East High School	Tonawanda	N.Y.
William Bennett	Cane Bay High School	Summerville	S.C.
Jared Cassedy	Windham High School	Windham	N.H.
Caleb Chapman	Pioneer High School for the Performing Arts	American Fork	Utah
Josh Chodoroff	Highland Park High School	Highland Park	Ill.
Dr. Buddy Clements	Walnut High School	Walnut	Calif.
Charles Cushinery	Ed W. Clark High School	Las Vegas	Nev.
David Dehner	Monte Vista Christian School	Watsonville	Calif.
Jamal Dickerson	Creative Arts Morgan Village Academy	Camden	N.J.
Terry Eberhardt	Marriotts Ridge High School	Marriottsville	Md.
Krista Fanning	Caddo Middle Magnet	Shreveport	La.
Elizabeth Fortune	Washington Middle School	Seattle	Wash.
Vivian Gonzalez	South Miami K-8 Center	Miami	Fla.
Micah Haven	Meeker Middle School	Tacoma	Wash.
Aaron Hill Sr.	Smithfield High School	Smithfield	Va.
Stevi Marks	Glenbrook South High School	Glenview	Ill.
Richard Maxwell	Arcadia High School	Phoenix	Ariz.
Debra Reilly	Springhouse Middle School	Allentown	Pa.
Huber Smith	Maplewood Middle School	Sulphur	La.
Michael Smith	Nyack High School	Upper Nyack	N.Y.
James Story	Volunteer State Community College	Gallatin	Tenn.
Nancie Tobison	Barrington High School	Barrington	Ill.
Danny Yancey	Martin Gifted and Talented Magnet Middle School	Raleigh	N.C.

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. 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](https://www.getglue.com/TheGRAMMYS), [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).

The GRAMMY Foundation was established in 1988 to cultivate the understanding, appreciation and advancement of the contribution of recorded music to American culture. The Foundation accomplishes this mission through programs and activities that engage the music industry and cultural community as well as the general public. The Foundation works in partnership year-round with its founder, The Recording Academy, to bring national attention to important issues such as the value and impact of music and arts education and the urgency of preserving our rich cultural heritage. In recognition of the significant role of teachers in shaping their students' musical experiences, The Recording Academy and the GRAMMY Foundation partnered to present their first Music Educator Award in 2014. Open to current U.S. music teachers in kindergarten through college, the Music Educator Award will be presented at the Special Merit Awards Ceremony & Nominees Reception during GRAMMY Week 2015. For more information about the Music Educator Award, please visit GRAMMYSchools.com. For more information about the Foundation, please visit www.grammyfoundation.org. For breaking news and exclusive content, please like "GRAMMY in the Schools®" on

[Facebook](#), follow the GRAMMY Foundation on [Twitter](#) (@GRAMMYFdn) and join us on [Instagram](#) (@GRAMMYFdn),

Converse Inc., based in North Andover, Mass., is a wholly owned subsidiary of NIKE, Inc. Established in 1908, the Converse brand has built a reputation as "America's Original Sports Company"™ and has been associated with a rich heritage of legendary shoes such as the Chuck Taylor® All Star® shoe, the Jack Purcell® shoe and the One Star® shoe. Today, Converse offers a diverse portfolio including lifestyle men's, women's and children's footwear, apparel and accessories. Converse product is sold globally by retailers in over 160 countries and through 83 company-owned retail locations in the United States. For more information, visit media.converse.com.

Disney Performing Arts unlocks student potential and helps young people make their own dreams come true — whether it's performing in front of an international audience of thousands at Disney theme parks and resorts or honing their craft in enriching workshops and clinics taught by entertainment professionals. Every year, thousands of vocal, instrumental, and other ensembles travel from around the world to participate in Disney Performing Arts programs at the Disneyland Resort in Southern California and the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida. Disney delivers workshops and performance opportunities that enrich, inspire and often lead to life-changing personal achievement.

Ford Motor Company Fund & Community Services works with community partners to advance driving safety, education and community life. For more than 60 years, Ford Motor Company Fund has operated with ongoing funding from Ford Motor Company. The award-winning Ford Driving Skills for Life program teaches new drivers through a variety of hands-on and interactive methods. Innovation in education is encouraged through national programs that enhance high school learning and provide college scholarships and university grants. Through the Ford Volunteer Corps, more than 25,000 Ford employees and dealers work on projects each year that better their communities in more than 30 countries. For more information, visit www.community.ford.com.

Drive 4 UR School was developed as a fun, efficient way to help high schools raise money to support their sports and extracurricular activities while engaging with Ford vehicles. Ford dealerships partner with a local high school to conduct a test-drive fundraising event. For every valid test-drive completed, Ford Motor Company donates \$20 to the participating high school, up to \$6,000. Since 2007, Ford has donated nearly \$25 million to high schools nationwide.

Journeys is a leader in the teen specialty retail scene, with more than 800 stores in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Canada. Journeys uses fashion savvy and merchandising science to keep in step with the fast-paced footwear and accessories market for 13- to 22-year-old guys and girls. Journeys offers a wide variety of trendy, relevant brands that cater to teens that seek the hottest, new styles. However, the Journeys store is more than a retail environment — it's an extension of the teen lifestyle. From the plasma TVs playing exclusive content and the latest music videos, to the visual merchandising strategy and promotions, to the employees whose image and style reflect the customers' lifestyle and attitude. In addition, Journeys reaches its customers through www.journeys.com, a mobile website, catalog, national advertising, strategic cross-promotions, social media and grass-roots events like the Noise Tour. Journeys — An Attitude You Can Wear!
Journeys is a division of Genesco Inc.

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