



RECORDING ACADEMY®'S BLACK MUSIC COLLECTIVE AND AMAZON MUSIC SELECT "YOUR FUTURE IS NOW" SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

FIVE STUDENTS ACROSS FIVE SCHOOLS TO RECEIVE IMMERSIVE ROTATION PROGRAM OPPORTUNITY AND \$10,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

SANTA MONICA, CALIF. (MAY 22, 2023) — The Recording Academy®'s [Black Music Collective \(BMC\)](#) and Amazon Music selected **Joseph Michael Abiakam (Norfolk State University)**, **Langston Jackson (Hampton University)**, **Kennedi Amari Johnson (Clark Atlanta University)**, **Courtney Roberts (Texas Southern University)**, and **Caleb Wilkerson (Florida A&M University)**, as the recipients of the ["Your Future Is Now" scholarship](#), aimed for students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with the opportunity to learn and explore all facets of the music industry.

The returning scholarship, first launched in [February 2021](#), offers students the chance to receive \$10,000 for the 2023/2024 school year and the opportunity to be part of an immersive rotation program with Amazon Music and Recording Academy department leads, providing each student a detailed look at their particular field of work within the music industry. To coincide with these scholarships, the BMC and Amazon Music will also award two HBCUs a \$10,000 grant each for equipment for their music programs to be announced later this summer.

This diverse group of students represents five schools, across various stages and areas of focus in their higher education journey. Abiakam is a graduate student at Norfolk State University, interested in piano performance and music production; Jackson is a sophomore at Hampton University, interested in music marketing and audio production; Johnson is a sophomore at Clark Atlanta University, interested in A&R and marketing; Roberts is a freshman at Texas Southern University, interested in A&R and marketing; and Wilkerson is a junior at Florida A&M University, interested in music marketing. Headshots for the recipients are available [here](#).

"We are immensely proud to collaborate with Amazon Music in renewing this exceptional scholarship program for the third consecutive year," emphasized [Ryan Butler](#), Vice President of [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) at the Recording Academy. "The imperative of Black representation in the music industry cannot be overstated, and this scholarship is a tangible manifestation of our unwavering commitment to promoting the aspirations of future Black music leaders. We are delighted to provide Joseph, Langston, Kennedi, Courtney, and Caleb with this life-changing opportunity as they pursue their ambitions and contribute to the advancement of Black music."

"The 'Your Future Is Now' scholarship was created to foster an inclusive environment where Black creators can realize their career objectives. Since its launch in 2021, the program has grown to become a cornerstone of Amazon Music and the Black Music Collective's work supporting students at HBCUs," said Phylicia Fant, Head of Music Industry and Culture Collaborations at Amazon Music. "This year's class of students represents the



next generation of Black musicians and executives, and it's an honor to play a part in their development as individuals and future leaders."

In addition, as part of "Your Future Is Now," Amazon Music, The Same House and the Recording Academy are coming together to host the "Your Future is Now" Business Development Seminar for select members of the 2023 graduating class of Morris Brown College. Revealed this past weekend at Morris Brown's commencement by the Recording Academy's Chief DEI Officer, Zing Shaw, this new, half-day music business seminar taking place on June 17 will offer professional development expertise in music business, publishing and music production. Facilitators at the event will include Recording Academy Atlanta Chapter President Justin Henderson and Frankie Yaptinchay of Amazon Music.

Following the music business seminar, graduates will be treated to a suite experience at State Farm Arena for the annual ATL Birthday Bash Concert where they will have the opportunity to network with representatives from the Recording Academy and Amazon Music, as well as other key music industry executives.

For more information on the Black Music Collective and the "Your Future Is Now" scholarship, visit [here](#).

ABOUT THE BLACK MUSIC COLLECTIVE

The Black Music Collective is a hub for power players in Black music, across all genres, under the GRAMMY® roof, bringing together creative geniuses and business leaders to set unified goals, align on a shared agenda, and build community. For more information on the Black Music Collective, visit [here](#). For exclusive content, please join the Black Music Collective's social communities on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

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.recordingacademy.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](#), [TikTok](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

ABOUT AMAZON MUSIC

Amazon Music is an immersive audio entertainment service that connects fans, artists and creators through music, podcasts and culture. Amazon Music brings fans closer to what they love, with curated and personalized playlists, artist livestreams, artist merch, and Amazon Exclusive podcasts. Prime members get access to over 100 million songs in shuffle mode, All-Access playlists, plus the largest catalog of top ad-free podcasts, included with their membership. Customers can upgrade to Amazon Music Unlimited for full, on-demand access to 100 million songs in HD and a growing catalog of Ultra HD and Spatial audio. Anyone can



listen to Amazon Music by downloading the free Amazon Music app, or wherever they listen to music including Alexa-enabled devices. Learn more at www.amazonmusic.com.

#

CONTACTS

Recording Academy
Communications Department
communications@recordingacademy.com

Amazon
David Marek
davmarek@amazon.com