



RECORDING ACADEMY® HONORS PRESENTED BY THE BLACK MUSIC COLLECTIVE RETURNS, CELEBRATING GRAMMY® AWARD-WINNING ICONS PHARRELL WILLIAMS, BRANDY AND KIRK FRANKLIN

**GRAMMY® WEEK EVENT TO BE HELD THURSDAY, JAN. 29, 2026, AT
THE FAIRMONT CENTURY PLAZA**

SANTA MONICA, CALIF. (DEC. 17, 2025) – The Recording Academy®'s [Black Music Collective](#) (BMC) will host the fourth annual **Recording Academy Honors**, celebrating the illustrious careers of music legends [Pharrell Williams](#), [Brandy](#) and [Kirk Franklin](#) on **Thursday, Jan. 29, 2026**. The GRAMMY® Week event will take place at the Fairmont Century Plaza, just days before [Music's Biggest Night®](#).

Williams will be presented with the **Dr. Dre Global Impact Award**, recognizing not only his musical achievements but also his entrepreneurial innovation, philanthropic efforts and far-reaching cultural influence worldwide. Brandy will receive the **Black Music Icon Award**, recognizing Black music creators whose artistry, innovation and service have shaped the industry and inspired generations around the world. Franklin will also receive the Black Music Icon Award.

Since its inception, the BMC has remained dedicated to championing and empowering Black music creators and industry leaders. Past honorees include Alicia Keys, Dr. Dre, JAY-Z, John Legend, Lenny Kravitz, Lil Wayne, Mariah Carey, Missy Elliott, and Sylvia Rhone. In further support of its mission to cultivate the next generation of Black leaders in music, the BMC awarded \$85,000 in scholarship grants last year to Black college students and HBCU music programs.

"Pharrell, Brandy and Kirk are true visionaries and masters of their craft. Each has built a legacy that transcends genre, defies convention and shapes culture. Their artistry continues to inspire generations of artists around the world. I'm thrilled to join the Black Music Collective in honoring three of music's brightest stars in January and celebrating their immeasurable contributions to the industry," said Harvey Mason jr., CEO of the Recording Academy.

Williams is a 13-time GRAMMY Award-winning, Academy Award-nominated musician, filmmaker, philanthropist, and the Creative Director of Louis Vuitton, with over 10 billion combined global music streams to date. This year, Williams produced *Let God Sort Em Out*, the highly anticipated return from Clipse, which earned five GRAMMY nominations, including Album Of The Year, Best Rap Song, Best Rap Performance, Best Rap Album, and Best Music Video. In 2024, Pharrell released his critically acclaimed animated biopic *PIECE BY PIECE*, directed by Morgan Neville in partnership with Focus Features and LEGO®. The film features a 21-track soundtrack, including five new original songs written and performed by Williams alongside 16 catalog tracks from his career. Its titular single earned him a GRAMMY nomination for Best Film Music, bringing his career total to 43 GRAMMY nominations. Beyond music and film, Williams founded YELLOW in 2019, a nonprofit committed to evening the odds for youth through



education. That same year, he launched the first SOMETHING IN THE WATER festival. In 2020, he debuted Humanrace, a brand dedicated to empowering individuals in their pursuit of well-being. Williams also launched Black Ambition, a nonprofit providing pathways to success for Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs.

Multi-platinum, GRAMMY Award-winning singer, songwriter, producer, and actress **Brandy** is one of the most influential artists in pop music history. She first rose to fame in the '90s with her quadruple-platinum self-titled debut album, her starring role in the hit sitcom *Moesha* and her iconic performance in Disney's television adaptation of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella*. Revered by peers and fans as "the Vocal Bible," Brandy is celebrated for her unparalleled, emotionally rich voice and genre-defining catalog – from her five-time-platinum album *Never Say Never* and its GRAMMY-winning classic "The Boy Is Mine" to her acclaimed 2020 album *b7*. In 2023, she released *Christmas With Brandy*, a holiday album highlighting her continued evolution as a vocalist and storyteller. She continues to expand her creative imprint through acting, with roles in A24's *The Front Room*, Disney's *Descendants: The Rise of Red* and the 2025 film *I Know What You Did Last Summer*. She is currently preparing to release her memoir *PHASES*, described as the result of countless hours of reflection, work and healing.

Franklin is a 20-time GRAMMY Award-winning artist, songwriter and producer whose innovative fusion of gospel, R&B, hip-hop, and pop has redefined contemporary gospel music for more than three decades. His critically acclaimed 2023 album *Father's Day* featured the No. 1 single "All Things," earning him his 20th GRAMMY Award, followed by the uplifting 2025 release "Do It Again." Franklin recently received the Ultimate Icon Award at the 2025 BET Awards for his enduring influence across music and entertainment, and debuted his original series *Den of Kings*, which drew over one million views in its first week. His influence spans generations and genres, highlighted by collaborations with artists such as Chance the Rapper, Demi Lovato, Justin Timberlake, and Mariah Carey. Beyond music, he continues to broaden his creative footprint through television and film, as well as his SiriusXM channel, *Kirk Franklin's Praise*. A committed mentor and advocate, he supports emerging talent through initiatives like Camp Lotus and champions organizations such as Compassion International and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. He remains committed to inspiring people worldwide with a message rooted in faith, love and resilience.

Franklin was initially set to be honored during the 2025 event prior to the Recording Academy's decision to condense GRAMMY Week programming to prioritize Los Angeles wildfire response. See [here](#) for Franklin's initial announcement as the Black Music Icon Award honoree.

Returning for the fourth consecutive year to produce Recording Academy Honors is MVD Inc, with Adam Blackstone also returning as music supervisor for the evening. Guests will enjoy specialty cocktails by PATRÓN Tequila throughout the star-studded celebration.

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 GRAMMY Awards and the Recording Academy, please visit [GRAMMY.com](https://www.GRAMMY.com) and [RecordingAcademy.com](https://www.RecordingAcademy.com). For breaking news and exclusive content, "like" Recording Academy on [Facebook](#), and join the Recording Academy's social communities on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#), and [LinkedIn](#). For media assets, please visit the [Recording Academy Press Room](#).

ABOUT THE BLACK MUSIC COLLECTIVE

The Black Music Collective is an advisory board of music industry leaders dedicated to advancing opportunities in Black music and championing increased representation across the field. Powered by the Recording Academy's [DREAM Network](#), the Collective serves as a central hub for creators and business leaders across all genres, uniting visionary voices to set unified goals, foster community and drive meaningful change within the industry. To learn more about the Black Music Collective, visit [here](#). For exclusive content, follow the Black Music Collective on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

ABOUT MVD INC

MVD Inc. is an award-winning global creative and experiential agency operating at the intersection of culture, creativity, and brand storytelling. Founded by visionary sisters Miatta Johnson and Massah David, MVD is known for producing culturally defining campaigns and platforms that resonate globally and shape industries. With a proven ability to translate cultural moments into iconic, high-impact experiences, the agency has set new standards across music, film, fashion, and technology. Trusted by partners including Sony Pictures, Universal Music Group, ESSENCE, and the Recording Academy, MVD delivers work that drives results while influencing the cultural zeitgeist.

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CONTACTS

Communications Department

Recording Academy
communications@grammy.com

For Media RSVPs:

Caroline Stegner

PMK Entertainment
caroline.stegner@pmkentertainment.com

For Guest RSVPs:

Black Music Collective
blackmusiccollective@grammy.com