

And the Winner Is



The Recording Academy is best known for producing music's biggest night, the Grammy Awards, but what many people don't know is that the Recording Academy is a membership organization of music professionals with chapters across the country working hard for their music communities on an agenda of education, advocacy, professional development, and human services. Many music professionals in Texas don't realize that the Grammys are right here in our backyard, in downtown Austin, Texas.

The Texas Chapter of the Recording Academy produces programs and events to help support the needs of Texas Chapter members, consisting of music industry professionals from music educators to producers and engineers, musicians, music video directors, and more. Additionally, the Texas Chapter partners with the Grammy Foundation, an affiliate of the Recording Academy, that focuses on music culture preservation and education to provide unique opportunities for students interested in a career in music. At a glance, the Texas Chapter provides career workshops, panels, behind-the-scenes looks at concerts, up-close-and-personals with top music artists, and more.

The Texas Chapter, along with the Grammy Foundation, is looking to music educators around the state to get their students and music programs involved. The Academy provides multiple activities, events, and programs each year in which your students have the chance to participate.

Grammy in the Schools

The Grammy Foundation accepts applications each year for Grammy Camp, Grammy Jazz Ensembles, and Grammy Signature Schools programs. These programs are part of the

Foundation's Grammy in the Schools offerings. The Gibson Foundation and the Ford Motor Company Fund continue to generously sponsor Grammy Signature Schools, and Grammy Camp is sponsored in part by Converse and Epiphone. Over the past three years, approximately 70 percent of campers who applied for financial aid received assistance.

"The Grammy Foundation connects young people with artists and industry professionals through Grammy in the Schools programs that offer real-world insights into careers in the music business," said Neil Portnow, President/CEO of the Recording Academy and the Grammy Foundation. "Whether you are a singer/songwriter attending Grammy Camp, a band member at a school awarded a Grammy Signature Schools grant, or an instrumentalist spending Grammy Week in Los Angeles as a member of the Grammy Jazz Ensembles, our programs offer students unique experiences that can help guide their musical futures."

Grammy Jazz Ensembles

High school singers and instrumentalists (public, private, parochial, home-schooled, etc.) are encouraged to audition for the Grammy Jazz Ensembles. Selectees will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Los Angeles, the host city for the Grammy Awards. Students participate in high-profile Grammy Week performances and recording sessions and will attend the Grammy telecast. Students are also eligible for college scholarships through the college incentive program (more than \$2 million available) offered by program partners Berklee College of Music, USC Thornton School of Music, the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, and Manhattan School of Music. Auditions for the 2011 Grammy Jazz Ensemble are due by October 22. Go to

www.GrammyInTheSchools.com to download the application.

The school of each selectee will receive a professional cymbal courtesy of the Zildjian Company. The Grammy Jazz Ensembles program receives additional support from the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, SmartMusic, Zildjian, Capitol Recording Studios (EMI Music), and Guitar Center Hollywood.

Grammy Signature Schools

The Grammy Foundation's Grammy Signature Schools program recognizes top public high schools across the country for outstanding commitment to their music education programs. For several years, Texas schools have been awarded these high honors and presented grants to their music programs. Each Grammy Signature School receives a custom award and a monetary grant to benefit its music program. The top programs are designated Gold recipients and the best of the Gold recipients is designated the National Grammy Signature School. In 2009, Arlington's own Martin HS was the recipient of the National Grammy Signature School designation and awarded \$10,000. The remaining Gold schools each received \$5,000.

In the Enterprise Award category, which recognizes efforts made by schools that are economically underserved, up to six schools receive grants of \$5,000 each. The band, choir, and orchestra programs of Jefferson HS in San Antonio were proud recipients of a 2010 Grammy Enterprise Award presented to them in an awards ceremony on May 24. This story's headline image features Grammy Foundation Senior Director David Sears presenting the Grammy to Jefferson HS students Quinton Sanders and Selina Serna.

The remaining Grammy Signature Schools recipients each receive a grant award of \$1,000 to benefit their music programs.

Grammy Camp

Grammy Camp offers selected high school students an interactive summer music experience. Focusing on all aspects of commercial music, this unique opportunity provides instruction by industry professionals in an immersive creative environment with cutting-edge technology in professional facilities. The program

offers 10 tracks: audio engineering; concert promotion/production; electronic music production; music journalism; and performance tracks in bass, drums, guitar, and keyboard; songwriting; and winds and strings. All tracks culminate in media projects, CD recordings, and/or showcase performances.

Grammy U

The Recording Academy has an organization called the Grammy University Network, a.k.a. Grammy U, for college and university students interested in pursuing careers in music. Each chapter's program is led by a Grammy U student representative and a team of campus ambassadors who communicate directly with the chapter staff about the students' needs and desires. University students across Texas are active members in this organization. The program offers mentorships, internships, and performance opportunities, as well as access to top music industry professionals. The organization has proven to be a great success in taking college students to the next level in their career endeavors.


Grammy U student members are now working in the studio with legendary producers and engineers, taking the hard-to-get entry-level positions at top PR and marketing firms, getting signed to record labels like Atlantic Records, and more.

Texas Chapter Supports Music Education in Our State

In addition to the Grammy in the Schools programs, each year the Texas Chapter and the Grammy Foundation present Grammy Career Day. The Chapter selects a Texas high school music program and brings in top music industry professionals to lead workshops and panels in their school for a day of fun and career exploration. At the end of the day, the chapter treats the students to a live performance by a popular radio hit band or performer.

Another program the Texas Chapter presents with the Foundation is Grammy SoundChecks. Year round, the Academy works with notable touring artists and organizes an event that allows 30–50 select high school music students to attend the performers' sound check, get a backstage tour of the production setup, and a personal question and answer session with the artist(s) after the sound check.

The Texas Chapter's newest educational initiative to help ensure the presence of arts education in the schools is our Speakers Bureau. Music industry professionals donate their time to speak to your classes about careers in the music industry. These key professionals are members of the Recording Academy and influential in the Texas music community. Speakers Bureau members aid in the education of students by providing personal testimonies about what it takes to make it in the music industry as well as how pursuing a career in music is always a positive endeavor.

The Recording Academy is an entity of people who truly care about music. From its members to its staff, the Academy is dedicated to keeping music alive in our communities and in our schools. The Texas Chapter's hope is that more schools will explore the extraordinary opportunities created for their students and supported by Texas Chapter staff, members, and the Grammy Foundation. For more information about the Recording Academy, visit grammy365.com. To get connected with the Texas Chapter, email texas@grammy.com or call the office at (512) 328-7997 and discover how you can get involved as an educator and an industry professional. 

Comment on this article:
tmea.org/features





Texas Chapter Board members Rodney Alejandro, Michael Mordecai, and Gilbert Velasquez conduct an improv jam session with students at Brackenridge HS in San Antonio.

Why Apply?



Director Ronnie Sanders offered his perspective on Jefferson HS receiving the Grammy Signature Schools award. The application deadline for 2011 Grammy Signature Schools is October 22. Go to www.GrammyInTheSchools.com to download the application.

What motivated you to apply?

I have always been a fan of the Grammys and knew about the Grammy Foundation's recognition to high schools across the country. Last September I thought Jefferson High School should apply, so I did.

What is the significance of receiving this award?

Jefferson High School is a unique campus; we've been on the cover of *Life* magazine, featured in a *National Geographic* layout, and included in numerous Hollywood movies. This Grammy award will continue the legacy of excellence in music education that Jefferson has for its students.

What was the reaction of your administrators/students/community on receiving the award?

For some, at first, they thought it was a joke, or thought it wasn't a "real" Grammy award; but when the Grammy award, now proudly displayed in our school's trophy case, was presented, everyone knew it was a *real* Grammy for Jefferson's choir, band and orchestra students and faculty.