## WEEKLY

## Scott Hendricks To Exit Warner Music Nashville



After nearly 16 years with the company, **Scott Hendricks** will exit his position as EVP A&R/Creative Advisor at Warner Music Nashville at the end of December.

Throughout his tenure in A&R at Warner Music Nashville, Hendricks has overseen 95 No. 1 singles on the country airplay charts. He has also produced an incredible 78 chart-topping hits among 123 total top 10 singles. Hendricks' expertise has impacted the careers of **Blake Shelton**, **Hunter Hayes**, **Brett Eldredge**, **Dan + Shay** and many more.

"Scott has been a friend, a mentor, a brother and an always generous teacher from the day I met him as a publisher almost 30 years ago," says **Cris Lacy**, Warner Music Nashville Co-Chair & Co-President. "His unparalleled expertise in the studio and his willingness to share the 'hows' and 'whys' of everything he does – whether as a label head, producer or A&R person – makes him irreplaceable. His quintessential stories will live on, and we look forward to hearing and co-creating many more of them as we work together on projects now and in the future."

"It's hard to believe it's been almost 16 years since I joined the Warner team. It's true time flies when you are having fun!" Hendricks shared. "I've been a part of countless great memories in those years. It's been an honor and a privilege to collaborate with so many talented people as well as the artists we served. I am thankful for each and every one. I look forward to continuing my work with Blake Shelton and Dan + Shay as I transition back to being an independent producer. With **Ben** [Kline] and Cris now leading the charge, Warner Music Nashville is in good hands moving forward."

Alongside Hendricks, Shelton has achieved a massive 12 billion global streams as well as dozens of RIAA certifications, spanning two 5x Platinum singles ("Boys 'Round Here" and "God Gave Me You"), a 3x Platinum album (*Based On A True Story...*), a 2x Platinum album (*Red River Blue*) and many more. **MR** 

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#### THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

Scott Hendricks To Exit Warner Music Nashville

Stephanie Wright Joins WMN As SVP A&R

Lineup Revealed For CRS 2024 New Faces Show

WMN Promotes Mike Dupree To SVP, Creative Director

Anastasia Brown Exits Visionary Media Group

Nominees Revealed For 2023 CMA Touring Awards

ACM LEVel Up Program Names 2024 Cohort

Gavin DeGraw Joins Sony Music Nashville

Lee Thomas Miller Signs With SMACKSongs

Haven Madison Signs With 19 Recordings/BMG

Warner Chappell Music Signs Sam Backoff

**DISClaimer Single Reviews** 

And much more...

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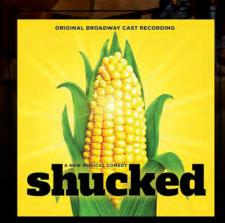
2023 Drama Desk Award Winner
OUTSTANDING MUSIC

# "BRANDY CLARK AND SHANE McANALLY

churn out down-home bangers that celebrate independence, resilience, and loyalty,

MAKING A CASE FOR COUNTRY AS A NATURAL BROADWAY GENRE."

**Observer** 





## Stephanie Wright Joins Warner Music Nashville As SVP A&R

Warner Music Nashville has tapped **Stephanie Wright**, who joined the company as a consultant in
October, as SVP A&R. She will report to Co-Chair &
Co-President **Cris Lacy.** 

"Ben [Kline] and I have known and respected Stephanie for many years – quite often we've been on the other side of her at another label, actively battling it out to sign an artist" Lacy shares. "She is a fierce competitor, a tenacious team leader and has an innate sense for exceptional music and artists. Most importantly, she is recognized in the music community as a passionate advocate for developing songwriters, producers and artists, many of whom she helped achieve their first career milestone. Her reputation and long-standing relationships will strengthen our incredible A&R team exponentially."

Wright joins Warner Music Nashville from UMG Nashville, where she spent more than 23 years in A&R. During her time at UMG, she signed and worked with dozens of hit-making artists, including multi-Platinum chart-toppers Jordan Davis, Sam Hunt, Parker McCollum and Grammy-Award winner Kacey Musgraves. A native of Salt Lake City, Wright came to the music business through her cousins—the Platinum-selling sibling trio SHeDAISY. Since then, she has been instrumental in critically acclaimed albums including Lee Ann Womack's Call Me Crazy, Musgraves' Same Trailer Different Park and Hunt's Montevallo.



"Joining Warner Music Nashville, in a way, feels like a homecoming," Wright says. "Over the course of my 23 years in A&R, I've known Cris as a friend, passionate label competitor and overall industry leader. Likewise, I've known Ben my entire career, starting when we worked together for Mercury Nashville. When the opportunity to join Cris, Ben and the WMN team arose, the decision was easy. The rest of the world is learning how exceptional our artists and songwriters are; something we've always known! Country music now touches every corner of the globe, creating new fans and influencing new artists everywhere. Great talent knows no boundary and I'm grateful, and excited, to be in this new home that puts the artist's story first."

The news comes after the announcement that EVP A&R **Scott Hendricks** would be leaving his position at the end of December. **MR** 

## **Lineup Revealed For CRS 2024 New Faces Show**



Country Radio Broadcasters (CRB) has revealed the lineup for the Country Radio Seminar (CRS) 2024 New Faces of Country Music Show, taking place Friday, March 1.

This year's showcase will feature **George Birge**, **Dillon Carmichael**, **Corey Kent**, **Megan Moroney** and **Conner Smith**.

The New Faces of Country Music Show stars five emerging artists who have achieved notable country

radio success during the qualification period, which spanned from Nov. 1, 2022, to Oct. 31, 2023, for the 2024 show. The event has served as a pivotal moment in the careers of established country hitmakers since its inception in 1970.

"With five of 2023's top 10 airplay artists earning that distinction for the first time, there's no doubt country music is surging at every level. The 2024 New Faces class is another prime example, and yet one more reason to look forward to the country industry's most important B2B event–CRS," says **Chuck Aly**, CRS New Faces Committee Chairman.

CRS 2024 is set for Wednesday, Feb. 28–Friday, March 1 at the Omni Nashville Hotel. For more information, click here. **MR** 

## Warner Music Nashville Promotes Mike Dupree To SVP, Creative Director

Warner Music Nashville has elevated **Mike Dupree** to SVP, Creative Director. Reporting to Co-Chair & Co-President **Cris Lacy**, Dupree and his team manage all of the label's creative initiatives, including video production and graphic design.

"Mike is well known for his long-standing dedication to this label and its artists," Lacy shares. "Moreover, his desire to build a collaborative creative team is imperative for telling the unique stories of our artists through visual mediums. **Ben** [Kline] and I are proud to recognize his talent and leadership, and we are excited for this next chapter in his career with Warner Music Nashville."



An industry veteran of more than two decades, Dupree first started working with the roster at Warner Music Nashville in 2010. Over the last several years, he has contributed to award-winning videos for artists including Cody Johnson, Dan + Shay, Ashley McBryde and Gabby Barrett. Some of his accomplishments also include three feature documentaries with Johnson (*Dear Rodeo*, 2021), Randy Travis (*More Life*, 2022) and Ian Munsick (*White Buffalo: Voices of the West*, 2023).

"I'm very aware that what we get to do every day is special, and I'm beyond grateful to continue this extraordinary life with the amazing artists and label team here at Warner Music Nashville," Dupree says. "I'm constantly inspired by their creativity, passion and collaborative spirit—I am truly standing on the shoulders of giants. I appreciate the trust that Cris and Ben have placed in me, and I look forward to shaping the future of this storied label together." **MR** 



## COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

#### **CHART ACTION**

#### New On The Chart —Debuting This Week

song/artist/label—Chart Position

Your Place/Ashley Cooke/Big Loud Records - 60

Chevrolet/Dustin Lynch feat. Jelly Roll/Broken Bow Records - 63

God Bless the Radio/Flat River Band/Early Bird Records - 72

Small Town Famous/Bowman/Reviver/Nine North - 73

The F Word/Bertie Higgins/Toucan Cove - 77

#### **Greatest Spin Increase**

song/artist/label-Spin Increase

Where The Wild Things Are/Luke Combs/River House Artists/

Columbia Nashville - 148

Your Place/Ashley Cooke/Big Loud Records - 125

Let Your Boys Be Country/Jason Aldean/Macon Music/Broken

Bow - 113

Pretty Little Poison/Warren Zeiders/Warner Records - 107 Chevrolet/Dustin Lynch feat. Jelly Roll/Broken Bow Records - 105

#### **Most Added**

song/artist/label-No. of Adds

Your Place/Ashley Cooke/Big Loud Records - 10

Let Your Boys Be Country/Jason Aldean/Macon Music/Broken Bow - 6

This Is My Dirt/Justin Moore/Valory - 5

Man Made A Bar/Morgan Wallen feat. Eric Church/Big Loud - 5 Chevrolet/Dustin Lynch feat. Jelly Roll/Broken Bow Records - 5 We Don't Fight Anymore/Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton/Big Machine - 5

#### On Deck-Soon To Be Charting

song/artist/label-No. of Spins

New Neon/Cliff Dorsey/Black Sheep Records - 145
Jack and Diet Coke/Redferrin/Duncan Music Group/WMN - 132
You Don't Know Me/Dianña/Billieegee Productions - 126
Gonna Love You/Parmalee/Stoney Creek - 121

If I Had A Bar/Jon Wolfe/Fool Hearted Productions - 111

NO. 1 SONG

## CHRIS STAPLETON WHITE HORSE



After topping the chart with it in November, **Chris Stapleton** returns to No. 1 on the *MusicRow* CountryBreakout Radio Chart with "White Horse."

Co-written by Stapleton and **Dan Wilson**, "White Horse" appears on his album *Higher*. Stapleton is currently nominated for three awards at February's 66th Annual Grammy Awards, including Best Country Solo Performance and Best Country Song for "White Horse" and Best Country Duo/Group Performance for "We Don't Fight Anymore" with **Carly Pearce**.

"White Horse" currently sits at No. 9 on the *Billboard* Country Airplay chart and No. 6 on the Mediabase chart.



Each songwriter and artist earning No. 1 credit on the *MusicRow* Chart receives a *MusicRow* Challenge Coin. Click <u>here</u> to view a full list of recipients.

## MusicRow CountryBreakout Chart Reporting Stations

WHMA Anniston, AL
WXFL Florence, AL
KQUS Hot Springs, AR
KDXY Jonesboro, AR
KBOD Mountain Home, AR
KWCK Searcy, AR
KRAZ Santa Barbara, CA
WCTY Norwich, CT
WPPL Blue Ridge, GA
WUBB Savannah, GA
KXIA Marshalltown, IA
KIAI Mason City, IA
KTHK Idaho Falls, ID
KKMV Rupert, ID

WOOZ Carterville, IL
WALS Peru, IL
WAAG Galesburg, IL
WYOT Rochelle, IL
WRTB Rockford, IL
WFMB Springfield, IL
WIFE Connersville, IN
KAIR Atchison, KS
KQZQ Pratt, KS
WKDZ Cadiz, KY
WDHR Pikeville, KY
KRRV Alexandria, LA
KQKI Morgan City, LA
WKPE Hyannis, MA

KYSM Mankato, MN
WTCM Traverse City, MI
KZPK St. Cloud, MN
KFAV Warrenton, MO
WBBN Laurel, MS
WFAY Fayetteville, NC
KZZY Devils Lake, ND
KYCK Thompson, ND
KRVN Lexington, NE
KFGE Lincoln, NE
KBRX O'Neill, NE
KQBA Santa Fe, NM
WDNB Monticello, NY
KITX Hugo, OK

KPNC Ponca City, OK
KWEY Weatherford, OK
WCJW Warsaw, NY
KWOX Woodward, OK
KRKT Albany, OR
KRWQ Medford, OR
WVNW Lewistown, PA
WNBT Mansfield, PA
WCFT Selinsgrove, PA
KZZI Spearfish, SD
WUCZ Carthage, TN
WLLX Lawrenceburg, TN
KFTX Corpus Christi, TX
KYKX Longview, TX

KLLL Lubbock, TX
KXOX Sweetwater, TX
WAKG Danville, VA
WAXX Altoona, WI
WJVL Janesville, WI
WGLR Platteville, WI
WQPC Prairie du Chien, WI
WJMQ Shawano, WI
WCOW Sparta, WI
WDGG Huntington, WV



## COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

Weeks On Chart	Last Week	This Week	Song / Artist / Label	Spins / Reports	% Spin Power	Spins +/-
21	2	1	White Horse / Chris Stapleton / Mercury Nashville	1755/54	2	38
9	7	2	Where The Wild Things Are / Luke Combs / River House Artists/Columbia Nashville	1658/58	10	148
37	4	3	Creek Will Rise / Conner Smith / Valory	1645/60	4	61
12	6	4	I Can Feel It / Kane Brown / Zone 4/RCA Nashville	1563/56	3	50
18	1	5	The Painter / Cody Johnson / CoJo Music/Warner Music Nashville	1557/55	-10	-171
22	9	6	Pretty Little Poison / Warren Zeiders / Warner Records	1467/56	8	107
25	8	7	Mind On You / George Birge / RECORDS	1463/44	1	19
17	10	8	Cab In A Solo / Scotty McCreery / Triple Tigers Records	1394/54	3	45
26	11	9	Burn It Down / Parker McCollum / MCA Nashville	1324/54	2	26
10	12	10	Mamaw's House / Thomas Rhett feat. Morgan Wallen / Valory	1270/60	5	66
36	13	11	23 / Chayce Beckham / BMG	1165/43	2	21
26	14	12	We Don't Fight Anymore / Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton / Big Machine	1127/55	5	57
50	15	13	Fearless / Jackson Dean / Big Machine	1004/46	0	1
25	16	14	Wine Country / Hannah Ellis / Curb Records	922/51	1	12
6	19	15	Rodeo Man / Garth Brooks and Ronnie Dunn / Big Machine Records	918/55	7	63
17	20	16	Tucson Too Late / Jordan Davis / MCA Nashville	906/48	7	59
50	17	17	We Got History / Mitchell Tenpenny / Riser House Records	883/31	0	-1
5	25	18	Take Her Home / Kenny Chesney / Blue Chair Records/Warner Music Nashville	869/54	7	59
20	21	19	I'm Not Pretty / Megan Moroney / Arista Nashville/Columbia Records	863/46	3	24
30	18	20	Truck Bed / HARDY / Big Loud Records	862/42	-1	-8
27	22	21	Glory Days / Gabby Barrett / Warner Music Nashville	843/45	1	12
5	28	22	Wildflowers and Wild Horses / Lainey Wilson / Broken Bow Records	837/48	9	71
13	26	23	Back Then Right Now / Tyler Hubbard / EMI Nashville	811/46	4	32
5	30	24	Man Made A Bar / Morgan Wallen feat. Eric Church / Big Loud	804/50	13	95
28	23	25	See You Next Summer / Brian Kelley / Big Machine Records	796/38	-4	-30
9	29	26	Under this Ole Hat / Sawyer Brown / Curb Records	786/53	3	24
9	27	27	Cowboys and Plowboys / Jon Pardi and Luke Bryan / Capitol Nashville	765/45	-1	-6
35	24	28	Nobody's Nobody / Brothers Osborne / EMI	763/36	-7	-59
13	31	29	I Remember Everything / Zach Bryan feat. Kacey Musgraves / Warner Records	676/38	1	6
19	32	30	Country Dance / Aaron Goodvin / Warner Music Canada/Sakamoto Music	628/31	3	19
10	35	31	Two Dozen Roses / Shenandoah & Luke Combs / 8 Track Entertainment/ADA	605/44	10	54
18	33	32	Wait Til I'm Gone / Donice Morace / Bad Jeu Jeu Records/CDX Records	574/32	2	12
4	38	33	Let Your Boys Be Country / Jason Aldean / Macon Music/Broken Bow	573/38	25	113
29	34	34	Out Of That Truck / Carrie Underwood / Capitol Records	558/30	1	3
11	36	35	Can't Break Up Now / Old Dominion with Megan Moroney / Columbia Nashville	523/40	0	2
7	39	36	Outlaws and Mustangs / Cody Jinks / Late August Records	512/41	13	59
13	37	37	Young Love & Saturday Nights / Chris Young / RCA	493/30	-1	-4
4	42	38	This Is My Dirt / Justin Moore / Valory	489/38	16	66
10	40	39	Where It Ends / Bailey Zimmerman / Warner Music Nashville	486/33	13	55



TOURING & NEXT BIG THING ISSUE





## COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

Weeks On Chart	Last Week	This Week	Song / Artist / Label	Spins / Reports	% Spin Power	Spins +/-
23	41	40	Drinkin' Problems / Dillon Carmichael / Riser House Records	435/28	1	5
10	43	41	I'm In Love / Hailey Whitters / Pigasus/Big Loud Records/S&D	418/31	0	-1
20	45	42	Outskirts / Sam Hunt / MCA Nashville	373/24	1	4
10	48	43	A Man Like You / American Blonde / American Blonde Music	353/27	4	13
11	47	44	Vertigo / Morgan Myles / KZZ Music/Blue Èlan Records	353/24	1	4
15	46	45	Always You / Trey Lewis / River House Artists	349/27	-2	-6
15	49	46	Jesus and John Wayne / Alabama feat. The Oak Ridge Boys / Gaither Music Group	343/23	1	4
42	51	47	We Ride / Bryan Martin / Average Joes Entertainment	332/23	-2	-6
8	54	48	Tractors And Trucks / Dave Wilbert / Wilbilly Records	324/23	9	28
11	50	49	Thicc As Thieves / Lauren Alaina / Big Loud Records	306/21	-10	-33
7	55	50	Drink About That / Ken Domash / Thunder Mountain Records	303/24	5	14
22	53	51	Something's Gonna Kill Me / Corey Kent / RCA Nashville	303/19	-1	-3
11	56	52	You Or The Whiskey / Sydney Hansen / Sydney Hansen Music	287/18	6	17
4	61	53	Love You Again / Chase Matthew / Warner Music Nashville	268/19	33	67
17	44	54	Last Train To Nowhere / Ghost Hounds / Gibson Records	268/21	-32	-124
12	57	55	Rough Around The Edges / Exile / Clearwater Records	243/15	-1	-3
12	60	56	He Don't Mind / Waylon Hanel / Waylon Hanel Music	230/15	8	18
8	59	57	Get Me Now / Matt VanFossen	230/16	0	0
8	62	58	Lovin' Not Leavin' / Wade Bowen / Bowen Sounds	216/15	7	15
7	67	59	Extra / Katie Linendoll	212/12	18	33
1	99	60	Your Place / Ashley Cooke / Big Loud Records	209/17	127	125
3	63	61	Pickup Man / HIXTAPE ft. Post Malone/Joe Diffie / Big Loud Records/Mercury	206/17	6	12
26	58	62	Brokenhearted / Joe Nichols / Quartz Hill Records	204/9	-16	-38
1	93	63	Chevrolet / Dustin Lynch feat. Jelly Roll / Broken Bow Records	201/14	109	105
9	64	64	Spirits and Demons / Michael Ray ft. Meghan Patrick / Warner Music Nashville	196/14	2	3
5	66	65	Before You / Glen Shelton / Jordash	193/11	5	10
3	74	66	Amazin' What Just The Right 3 Minutes Can Do / Larry, Steve and Rudy The Gatlin Brothers / CDX Records/Sony Orchard	177/11	9	14
6	69	67	Front Porch Swing / Luke Kelly / General Records	176/12	1	1
26	68	68	Something Real / Dierks Bentley / Capitol Nashville	176/9	-1	-1
8	73	69	Certified / Laura Bryna	171/17	4	7
21	71	70	Dance With You / Brett Young / BMLG Records	170/13	2	4
2	72	71	Better With A Buzz / Ryne Brashear / LIR Records	167/8	2	3
1	83	72	God Bless the Radio / Flat River Band / Early Bird Records	163/11	31	39
1	81	73	Small Town Famous / Bowman / Reviver/Nine North	160/12	23	30
9	65	74	Chipping Mill / Turnpike Troubadours / Bossier City Records	160/15	-15	-28
4	76	75	True Story / Jon Brennan / CDX Records	158/9	5	8
4	79	76	Back At The Bar / Landon Parker / Bad Ass Records	156/12	11	15
1	85	77	The F Word / Bertie Higgins / Toucan Cove	150/7	24	29
15	70	78	In Your Love / Tyler Childers / Hickman Holler Records/RCA Records	150/12	-13	-22
2	80	79	Be The Whiskey / Julia Cole / Smokeshow Music	147/12	10	13
5	77	80	Love Is Real / Shelley Lynch / CDX Records	147/8	1	1

No. 1 Song

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## **Anastasia Brown Exits Visionary Media Group**



**Anastasia Brown** has left her position as Chief Content Strategist at Visionary Media Group (VMG), where she oversaw creative, culture and music since 2020 for the start-up.

During her tenure, the company optioned the life rights for the **Cowboy Jack Clement** film and *The Cowboy Writes Again* album, which are both currently in development. She also signed **Leigh Nash**, **O.N.E The Duo, Cody Belew** and **Clayton Anderson**, and helped VMG to secure multiple sync placements with NBC, Ford Trucks, Hulu, ESPN, Fox Sports, CBS Sports, Netflix, Hallmark, FX and more.

Brown began her entertainment career in 1993 with Miles Copeland of Firstars Management, where she signed and developed artists including Keith Urban, John Berry, Junior Brown and Paul Jefferson. As an A&R consultant for Copeland, she signed Waylon Jennings and Leon Russell to Ark 21 Records.

She moved over to music supervision in 2001, first working on the Emmy-winning, **Steven Spielberg** mini-series *Taken*. That led to feature film and television credits including *Tell Me Your Secrets, The Shack, Hot Pursuit, The Americans, The Darkest Hour, Footloose, August Rush, It's Complicated* and the biopic about the **Rev. Billy Graham** called *The Early Years: Billy.* 

As a music consultant, Brown has placed close to 50 songs in major films and television series. She also served as a judge on USA Network's *Nashville Star*, which led to her writing the book *Make Me A Star* with journalist **Brian Mansfield.** She has also written columns for various publications. *MR* 

## Nominees Revealed For 2023 CMA Touring Awards



The nominees have been revealed for the 2023 CMA Touring Awards, which highlight vital behind-the-scenes members of the country music touring industry. Voted on by CMA members, the winners will be recognized at the awards ceremony on Feb. 12, hosted by **Keith Urban**.

"Honoring our touring community is something I look forward to every year," says **Sarah Trahern**, CMA Chief Executive Officer. "Each time I attend a show, hear a new tour being announced or see footage from an unforgettable night, I am reminded again of the importance, dedication and resilience of our touring community. I am also especially excited to add five additional categories this year, including a Crew of the Year honor. They are the road warriors that keep country music alive all over the world, and I can't wait to celebrate them on Feb. 12!"

Five new categories were added to the CMA Touring Awards, including Backline Technician, Stage Manager, Support Services Company, Unsung Hero and Crew of the Year. Final Round voting for the 2023 CMA Touring Awards opens Wednesday, Dec. 13 and closes Thursday, Dec. 28.

In addition to the Touring Awards, industry veteran and former head of CAA's Nashville office, **Ron Baird**, will be posthumously honored with the CMA Touring Lifetime Achievement Award. The award is given to an individual who has positively impacted and contributed to the growth of touring throughout the years. It honors an individual that has proven to have an unprecedented historical impact on country music fans and the industry alike, and whose presence will have a long-term positive impact on the genre and CMA for generations to come.

Click here to see the full list of nominees. MR

### **ACM LEVel Up Program Names 2024 Cohort**



Pictured (L-R, top row): Alexes Aiken, Jackie Ebnet, Haley Fairman, Kenyon Glenn and David Hawkins; (L-R, bottom row): Lacey Hayes, Gator Pizer, Nathan Pyle, Lizzy Stone and Bryan

A new cohort has been selected for the Academy of Country Music's LEVel Up: Lift Every Voice program. The new members were announced alongside a celebration of the inaugural 2022 cohort's completion of the Nashville-based two-year professional development program.

Designed to elevate and drive the next generation of rising leaders in the industry, the ACM LEVel Up Rising Leaders curriculum was created to empower participants to play a pivotal role in expanding the horizons of the country music industry into new audiences that transcend demographics and geography.

Funded entirely by the ACM, the program is at no cost to participants. The first year

is spent learning from leaders across the industry as well as collaborating as a cohort to develop a proposed plan to expand country music's reach. The second year sees the class implement their plan, working intentionally to shape the future and move the industry forward.

The inaugural 2022 cohort worked together to create an undergraduate series for college students across Nashville focused on highlighting various sectors of the music business and diving into behind-the-scenes education beyond textbooks to prepare them for the music industry. The 2022 cohort collaborated with the Academy and Black Music Action Coalition (BMAC) to ideate and develop the initiative that became <a href="OnRamp">OnRamp</a>, a guaranteed income program for young Black members of the Nashville music community, including artists and industry professionals.

The 2022 cohort also helped bring to life the ACM Lift Every Voice Award, which celebrates an individual in the industry who has played a pivotal role in elevating underrepresented voices throughout the country genre. The inaugural award was presented to **Breland** at the 2023 ACM Honors show in August.

"I celebrate the commitment of these individuals in leading the evolution of Nashville's country music industry, confident that with the LEVel Up program's support, they will achieve remarkable feats," states Shannon Sanders, Chair of the ACM DEI Task Force. "The 2022 cohort has set a high bar, and the 2023 cohort is well-positioned to effect substantial change in 2024. The latest LEVel Up members are at the forefront of this transformation, and I am eager to witness the enduring contributions they, and future participants, will make in the coming years."

#### ACM LEVel Up, 2024 Cohort, revealed in December 2023:

Alexes Aiken, Westwood One
Jackie Ebnet, Mtheory
Haley Fairman, UTA
Kenyon Glenn, ASCAP
David Hawkins, MY Public Relations Lab
Lacey Hayes, Romeo Entertainment Group (REG)
Gator Pizer, Farris, Self & Moore
Nathan Pyle, Songfluencer
Lizzy Stone, Wiles + Taylor & Co.
Bryan Webb, Apple Music

#### **Gavin DeGraw Joins Sony Music Nashville**



Gavin DeGraw with staff from Sony Music Nashville and Otter Creek Entertainment. Photo: Adam Davis

Multi-Platinum-selling artist **Gavin DeGraw** has joined Sony Music Nashville's roster.

DeGraw first made his musical impact with his 2003 Platinum debut album *Chariot*, which contained the Gold single "Follow Through" as well as both Platinum hits "Chariot" and "I Don't Want To Be." In 2008, DeGraw's self-titled album spurred the Platinum-selling single "In Love With a Girl," and its follow up, 2011's Gold-certified *Sweeter*, contained the now four-time Platinum "Not Over You."

DeGraw has gone on to release more successful albums, including 2016's Something Worth Saving and 2022's Face the River. In 2014, the singer-songwriter garnered a Grammy nomination for his duet with **Colbie Caillat** "We Both Know."

"I am so excited to join the team at Sony Nashville," he shares of the new partnership. "Everyone there has been passionate and supportive of my career thus far and I can't wait to see where this next chapter takes us."

Via his new home at Sony Music Nashville, DeGraw recently released his new album, *A Classic Christmas*, containing yuletide hits "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," "Silent Night," "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "White Christmas" and more. *MR* 

#### Lee Thomas Miller Signs With SMACKSongs

Hitmaker **Lee Thomas Miller** has signed a publishing deal with SMACKSongs.

With a career spanning over three decades, Miller has earned eighteen top 20 singles, including seven No. 1s, and 13 BMI radio performance awards. His songs have collectively received more than 25 million spins and garnered hundreds of millions of streams worldwide.

"One of the first songwriters to welcome me in the publishing business 15 year ago was Lee Thomas Miller," says **Lee Krabel**, SVP of Publishing at SMACK. "I'm incredibly excited to get the opportunity to work with Lee again at SMACK. He is simply one of the best songwriters to ever come to Nashville. Looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish together!"



Pictured (L-R): SMACK's Jeremy Groves, Carly Sater, Lee Krabel, Lee Thomas Miller, SMACK's Robert Carlton, Robin Palmer and Sam Sarno

Miller has also earned three Grammy nominations, a Teen Choice Award, and four NSAI "Songs I Wish I Had Written" trophies. Additionally, he won a CMA and an ACM Award for Song of the Year with "In Color" by **Jamey Johnson.** Another iconic hit, "You're Gonna Miss This" by **Trace Adkins**, secured Song of the Year titles at both the ASCAP and NSAI Awards and the Single of the Year at the CMA Awards. Miller has had cuts withr **Tim McGraw**, **Garth Brooks**, **Brad Paisley**, **Thomas Rhett**, **Brothers Osborne** and more. **MR** 

## Haven Madison Signs With 19 Recordings/BMG



Pictured (L-R): Joe Gillen (BMG), Katie Kerkhover (BMG), Jon Loba (BMG), Haven Madison., Thomas Coesfeld (BMG), JoJamie Hahr (BMG), Elissa Felman (19 Recordings) and Peter Strickland (BMG). Photo: Terry Wyatt for Getty

American Idol season 21 contestant **Haven Madison** has signed with 19 Recordings/BMG.

"I had the privilege of working at companies where **Faith Hill** and **Taylor Swift** began their careers," says BMG Nashville President **Jon Loba**. "While Haven Madison is not a country artist, she has the same spirit and clarity Faith and Taylor had about what their vision was for their careers, along with a razor sharpness about who they were and what they wanted to say to the world. We can't wait for everyone to hear Haven's music and see her evolution over the last year."

Growing up on the road, touring the country with her father **Jason Roy**, the lead singer of the Christian band **Building429**, Madison has always had a passion for music. Performing in her church choir, she also began writing and recording in her spare time, and as a high schooler, even wrote and sang on Building429's song "Different."

Competing on ABC's American Idol last year and making it to the final Top 8, she performed her own originals like the wistful "Fifteen" and heartfelt "Still Need You" that she wrote about her brother's fight against depression and suicide, earning instant praise from the judges—including guest judge **Ed Sheeran**—throughout her run on the show.

Having released music independently since 2020, Madison's discography includes tracks "Already Gone" and "Therapy" as well as an EP, All The Things I Didn't Say.

"I've been dreaming of this day since I was a kid, and I couldn't be more excited to have 19 Recordings / BMG beside me as I continue to share my art and passion with the world," says Madison. *MR* 

## Warner Chappell Music Signs Global Publishing Deal With Sam Backoff



Pictured (L-R): Ben Vaughn (Warner Chappell), Bethany Mako (Warner Chappell), Sam Backoff, Charly Salvatore (Underscore Works)

Warner Chappell Music (WCM) has signed a global publishing deal with songwriter **Sam Backoff**, in partnership with Underscore Works' **Charly Salvatore**.

Backoff is an Illinois native now based in Nashville. As part of her band Avenue Beat, she signed a record deal with Big Machine Records in 2019. The group saw success in 2020 with their viral hit "F2020," reaching over 52 million streams on Spotify, entering the top 20 on pop radio and being named the No. 1 song of 2020 by *The New York Times*.

After Avenue Beat disbanded in 2021, Backoff turned her focus back to her small-town country roots and zeroed in on her passion for the creation of songs. She has cuts with Charles Esten, Graham Barham, Summer Overstreet, Zoe Clark, Miki Ratsula, THE WLDLFE and others, and has recently collaborated with the likes of Ben Johnson, Jessie Murph, Ernest, Beau Bailey, Karley Scott Collins, KK Johnson, Carson Wallace and Savana Santos. MR

## DISClaimer Single Reviews: Brenda Lee Wears Her 'Queen Of Christmas' Crown



Happy holidays from DISClaimer.

I have your Nashville Christmas playlist right here and ready to go. Do not miss the offerings by Brandy Clark, Randall King, Jon Pardi and Eric Paslay.

Despite the abundance of quality, there is no question about who the Queen of Christmas is this year. A Disc of the Day award to Brenda Lee for her update on a timeless tune.

Click here to read Robert K Oermann's weekly single reviews

#### **MORE TOP STORIES**

CMA Names 2024 Board Of Directors

CRS 2024 Panel To Feature Nashville Label Heads

'Shucked' To Open North American Tour In Nashville

Blake Shelton, Morgan Wallen, More Added To 'New Year's Eve Live: Nashville's Big Bash'

Kobalt Music Signs Holden James

<u>Cole Swindell To Headline 28th Annual Key West Songwriters Festival</u>

Old Dominion, Chase Rice, More Among 2024 Maui Songwriters Festival Lineup

RIAA Introduces Class Of 2023, 57 Artists Earn First-Time Certifications

WMBA Hosts Its 2023 Wonder Woman Awards

CMT Names Listen Up Class Of 2024

Mediabase Reveals 2023 Year-End Chart Stats, Big Loud Lands In First Place

SOLID Raises Over \$46,000 For Music & Community Causes

<u>Carrie Underwood Extends Las Vegas Residency Into</u> October 2024

Opry NextStage Celebrates 2023 Class Members

The Store's Inaugural Toy Store Aids Nashville Families This Holiday Season

Rumble On The Row Matchups Revealed For 20th Annual 'Ringside: A Fight for Kids' Event

Nashville Artists Unite For Tornado Relief Benefit Concert This Sunday

## Megan Moroney Marks Milestones At Brooklyn Bowl Nashville



Megan Moroney performs during her sold-out show at Brooklyn Bowl Nashville. Photo: Cece Dawson

Megan Moroney shimmered and shined during her soldout show at Brooklyn Bowl Nashville on Thursday night (Dec. 7). "The Lucky Tour" stop also marked milestone moments for the up-and-coming star. Splashes of pink light and disco ball reflections swirled as the unforgettable night unfolded.

Logan Crosby was the first opener to take the stage. Brooklyn Bowl began buzzing as the first few notes of "Run Away With You" enrobed the room. He made sure the crowd was feeling alright before moving into "Everybody's Drunk" and a rendition of Bruno Mars' "When I Was Your Man," which had the entire venue singing their hearts out alongside him. Blue and green lights circled as Crosby grabbed his guitar for the title track of his latest project, "23 Days In L.A." The artist then asked if anybody in the audience was married, and was met with quite a few cheers, as he sang his sweet ballad "If

You Ask Me," which tells the story of a man asking the father of the woman he loves for his blessing.

"I think I just got engaged to three different people in the crowd," he joked before introducing yet-to-be-released tune "Girl Next Door." Crosby followed with his new single "Land" as well as a cover of **Chris Stapleton**'s "You Should Probably Leave," and kept everyone swaying as he wrapped with "Hold On To Me."

**Mackenzie Carpenter** was up next. Sporting a cropped, powder blue button down with cream fringe and a studded mini skirt of the same color, she shared a little about herself and started her set with the catchy, unreleased number "Walks Like A Cheater." Carpenter then serenaded the crowd with her debut single "Can't Nobody." After introducing her brother and frequent collaborator **Micah**, who was on guitar, and her drummer **Marcus**, she performed a country mash-up of various hits in addition to what she deemed her "murder your husband song," which centered around a woman whose husband mysteriously disappears on a fishing trip.

"What do y'all think about hearing Micah sing something?" Carpenter asked. The audience responded with excited screams as he borrowed the mic for the **Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**'s "Fishin' in the Dark." The artist stepped back up for "Jesus, I'm Jealous," a song about finding hope when you're hopeless, and "Country Girls (Just Wanna Have Fun)," her version of the **Cyndi Lauper** classic. She finished with clever tracks "Don't Mess With Exes" and "Huntin' Season," both of which are featured on her self-titled debut project.

Red lights radiated as Moroney's band members, each of them wearing a black cut-off t-shirt, strutted on stage in an orderly line and took their places with their instruments. The more they played, the more the anticipation began to build. A neon green shamrock sign lit up behind them in the center of the stage curtain, along with a royal blue cowboy boot and a pair of hot pink dice. Suddenly, the room went dark. As the sound of heels clicking against hardwood echoed, the woman of the hour made her way to the front. Once she hit centerstage, 10 spotlights beamed down on her, making it feel as though we had all been transported to a large-capacity stadium.

"Nashville, Tennessee, how are we doing y'all?" Moroney asked, her green, sequined fit-and-flare dress sparkling under the glowing hues as they transitioned back to warmer colors. The mass of fans surrounding her cheered loudly, indicating that everyone was doing great. Her white cowboy boots walked to each side of the stage and back as she sang "Another on the Way," a track from her debut album and the tour's namesake, *Lucky*. Moroney donned a pink guitar and requested that the audience join her in singing as she moved into another Lucky track, her single "I'm Not Pretty," which the artist wrote with both Mackenzie and Micah Carpenter as well as **Ben Williams**. The rays of light turned blue when she performed her first-ever release, "Wonder." Moroney noted that she wrote the tune with her best friend **Natalie**, who was present.

"This next song I feel like put me on the map, and it was the first song I heard on [SiriusXM] The Highway. I wrote it about my hometown hair salon," Moroney said as she started to strum the first chords of "Hair Salon." The song, which so perfectly captures the feeling of receiving gutwrenching news in an unexpected place, could be heard from every fan-filled corner.

The headliner then took a moment to express her gratitude. She stated that "it would be a miracle if [she] made it through the show without crying," and shared how she played Brooklyn Bowl a year ago when opening for **Warren Zeiders.** "A year later, all of you are here and it just means the world to me, so thank you so much." Moroney continued with sentimentality, noting that this show would kick off the last weekend of "The Lucky Tour" and that she would be performing the whole Lucky project throughout the evening.



'Pictured (L-R): PunchBowl Entertainment's Juli Griffith, Sony Music Nashville's Ken Robold, Columbia Records' Julian Swirsky, Sony Music Nashville's Randy Goodman, Megan Moroney, RIAA's Jackie Jones, Sony Music Nashville's Taylor Lindsey, Jen Way, Steve Hodges and PunchBowl Entertainment's Hayley Corbett. Photo: Cece Dawson

"Kansas Anymore" poured into her glittering mic, followed by "Sleep on My Side." The mic came off the stand as Moroney sang "Sad Songs For Sad People." Once the track concluded, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)'s **Jackie Jones**, Columbia Records' **Julian Swirsky** and Sony Music Nashville's **Taylor Lindsey** stepped on stage to surprise the singer-songwriter with a double-Platinum plaque for her No. 1 "Tennessee Orange," the highest solo certification in the country genre. Adding to the milestone, they shared the news that Moroney had been named a member of RIAA's Class of 2023 for receiving her first certified song this year, allowing her to share the special career turning points with her devoted fans. Moroney is one of only two artists in the program across all-genres to receive double-Platinum certification.

"I just want to take the time to really say thank you," she stated. "Y'all have completely changed my life [this past] year, and I will never take [this] for granted. Thank you for showing up tonight, thank you for making homemade merch and for buying merch, and showing early. I hope you guys are having as much fun as I am, because it's just really amazing to be here.

I also know it's more more than just buying a ticket. You guys are probably buying drinks and [maybe] went to dinner before or bought a new outfit, so I really appreciate y'all making tonight about me and the [band]. It means so much to me."

Moroney proceeded by playing "God Plays a Gibson" solo on a green Gibson as well as soon-to-be-released song "No Caller ID" and "Why Johnny." She put the guitar down and her band returned for "Mustang or Me," before Carpenter joined her for their *Lucky (Deluxe)* track, "Nothin' Crazy." The two grooved around the stage, engaging with the waving hands below. The pink guitar reappeared for "Georgia Girl," but vanished again as "Traitor Joe" blared through Brooklyn Bowl. Moroney had everyone give it up for her bandmates as she entered into **Taylor Swift**'s "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together," which had the sold-out crowd going crazy.

"This next song that I'm going play I think has the most important message of all the songs on the record. I wrote this song as a reminder to myself to never love the boy more than I love me, and it was a really healing experience to write this," Moroney shared. "When I put it out, I saw the way that it helped some of y'all, and it just means a lot to me and makes me want to keep writing songs like this."

On sparkly, silver guitar, she began to play "Girl in the Mirror." Moroney brought it full-circle with her double-Platinum, breakthrough hit "Tennessee Orange," everybody tinged with white light as they belted the lyrics alongside her. She then concluded with title track "Lucky," which had the entire room dancing with her.

Moroney fittingly wrapped the tour in her home state of Georgia this past weekend, and was just named as one of the five New Faces of Country Music for Country Radio Seminar (CRS) 2024. *MR* 



## TOP SONGWRITER CHART

This Week	Last Week	Songwriter's Name	Song(s)	Artist
1	1	Zachary Lane Bryan	East Side of Sorrow El Dorado Hey Driver I Remember Everything Sarah's Place Spotless Tourniquet	Zach Bryan Zach Bryan Zach Bryan ft. The War And Treaty Zach Bryan ft. Kacey Musgraves Zach Bryan feat. Noah Kahan Zach Bryan ft. The Lumineers Zach Bryan
2	2	Ashley Gorley	All I Need Is You Everything I Love Last Night Save Me The Trouble Thinkin' Bout Me This Town's Been Too Good To Us Truck Bed World On Fire Young Love & Saturday Nights	Chris Janson Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Dan + Shay Morgan Wallen Dylan Scott Hardy Nate Smith Chris Young
3	3	Jason DeFord	Need A Favor Save Me Wild Ones	Jelly Roll Jelly Roll with Lainey Wilson Jessie Murph feat. Jelly Roll
4	4	Randy Montana	Different 'Round Here Where the Wild Things Are	Riley Green ft. Luke Combs Luke Combs
5	5	Chayce Beckham	23	Chayce Beckham
6	6	Taylor Phillips	Love You Again Thinkin' Bout Me This Town's Been Too Good To Us World On Fire	Chase Matthew Morgan Wallen Dylan Scott Nate Smith
7	7	Ryan Vojtesak	Everything I Love Last Night Thinkin' Bout Me This Town's Been Too Good To Us	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Dylan Scott
8	8	Chris Stapleton	Think I'm In Love With You White Horse	Chris Stapleton Chris Stapleton
9	10	David Ray Stevens	Save Me	Jelly Roll with Lainey Wilson
10	9	Tracy Chapman	Fast Car	Luke Combs
11	11	Chase McGill	But I Got A Beer In My Hand Creek Will Rise Mamaw's House	Luke Bryan Conner Smith Thomas Rhett feat. Morgan Wallen
12	12	Dan Wilson	White Horse	Chris Stapleton
13	13	Kacey Musgraves	I Remember Everything	Zach Bryan ft. Kacey Musgraves
14	14	John Byron	Last Night Thinkin' Bout Me This Town's Been Too Good To Us	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Dylan Scott
15	15	Dave Turnbull	Where the Wild Things Are	Luke Combs
16	16	Matt Dragstrem	But I Got A Beer In My Hand Mamaw's House	Luke Bryan Thomas Rhett feat. Morgan Wallen
17	19	Michael Hardy	See You Next Summer Take Her Home Truck Bed	Brian Kelley Kenny Chesney Hardy
18	17	Christopher Anthony Lunsford	Rich Men North Of Richmond	Oliver Anthony Music
19	20	Geoff Warburton	Back Then Right Now But I Got A Beer In My Hand	Tyler Hubbard Luke Bryan
20	18	Warren Zeiders	Pretty Little Poison	Warren Zeiders
21	21	Ryan Beaver	Pretty Little Poison	Warren Zeiders
22	22	Jared Keim	Pretty Little Poison	Warren Zeiders

## TOP SONGWRITER CHART

This Week	Last Week	Songwriter's Name	Song(s)	Artist
23	25	Morgan Wallen	Everything I Love Mamaw's House	Morgan Wallen Thomas Rhett feat. Morgan Wallen
24	23	Hunter Phelps	Take Her Home Truck Bed	Kenny Chesney Hardy
25	29	Ryan Larkins	The Painter	Cody Johnson
26	30	Kat Higgins	The Painter	Cody Johnson
27	31	Benjy Davis	The Painter	Cody Johnson
28	32	Riley Green	Different 'Round Here	Riley Green ft. Luke Combs
29	33	Jonathan Singleton	Different 'Round Here	Riley Green ft. Luke Combs
30	34	Hillary Lindsey	Burn It Down See You Next Summer	Parker McCollum Brian Kelley
31	37	Dylan Scott	Can't Have Mine This Town's Been Too Good To Us	Dylan Scott Dylan Scott
32	35	Dallas Wilson	Can't Have Mine	Dylan Scott
33	36	Josh Melton	Can't Have Mine	Dylan Scott
34	38	Matt Alderman	Can't Have Mine	Dylan Scott
35	39	Lindsay Rimes	World On Fire	Nate Smith
36	40	Nate Smith	World On Fire	Nate Smith
37	41	Michael Tyler	Mind On You Spirits and Demons	George Birge Michael Ray with Meghan Patrick
38	54	Dylan Gossett	Coal	Dylan Gossett
39	43	David Garcia	Back Then Right Now Out Of That Truck See You Next Summer	Tyler Hubbard Carrie Underwood Brian Kelley
40	48	George Birge	Mind On You	George Birge
41	49	Colt Ford	Mind On You	George Birge
42	50	Jaron Boyer	Mind On You	George Birge
43	42	Ben Johnson	Truck Bed	Hardy
44	44	Shane McAnally	We Don't Fight Anymore	Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton
45	45	P. Good	We Don't Fight Anymore	Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton
46	46	Carly Pearce	We Don't Fight Anymore	Carly Pearce feat. Chris Stapleton
47	51	Liz Rose	Burn It Down	Parker McCollum
48	52	Parker McCollum	Burn It Down	Parker McCollum
49	53	Lori McKenna	Burn It Down	Parker McCollum
50	57	Jaxson Free	I Can Feel It	Kane Brown
51	58	Gabe Foust	I Can Feel It	Kane Brown
52	59	Phil Collins	I Can Feel It	Kane Brown
53	60	Kane Brown	I Can Feel It	Kane Brown
54	61	Jordan Minton	Dance With You Save Me The Trouble	Brett Young Dan + Shay
55	62	Jordan Reynolds	Save Me The Trouble	Dan + Shay
56	63	Dan Smyers	Save Me The Trouble	Dan + Shay
57	64	Shay Mooney	Save Me The Trouble	Dan + Shay
58	24	Jordan M. Schmidt	We Got History	Mitchell Tenpenny
59	69	Devin Dawson	We Got History	Mitchell Tenpenny
60	70	Andrew Albert	We Got History	Mitchell Tenpenny

# **CALENDAR** Single/Track Releases **December 15** Greylan James/Ain't Thinkin' Bout You/Big Machine Label Group **December 22** Bo Daddy Harris/It's a Southern Thing/So Damn Country Records Album/EP Releases **December 28** Corey Kent/'23/RCA Nashville **Industry Events February 4, 2024 66th Annual Grammy Awards** February 28 - March 1, 2024 **CRS**