



Music's Promise For Curing Cancer, The T.J. Martell Foundation's 44th Annual New York Honors Gala

Atlantic Records' Michael Kushner, BMI's Mike O'Neill, and Country Music Association's Sarah Trahern to be honored by Entertainment leaders on October 15th at Cipriani 42nd Street

New York, New York – (June 12, 2019) – With generous hearts supporting the T.J. Martell Foundation, the national non-profit charity that provides funds for innovative cancer research, plans for the October 15th 43rd Annual “New York Honors Gala” has been announced by Co-chairs **Julie Greenwald and Craig Kallman of Atlantic Records, Charlie Feldman of BMI**, and Chairman of the T.J. Martell Foundation's National Board of Trustees **Joel Katz of Greenberg Traurig**. New York's prominent community and business leaders will join entertainment and philanthropic stars to honor **Michael Kushner**, Executive Vice President, Business & Legal Affairs and General Counsel, **Atlantic Records** who is receiving the “Lifetime Music Industry Award,” **Mike O'Neill**, President and CEO, **BMI** who will be presented with the “T.J. Martell Foundation Legacy Award” and **Sarah Trahern**, CEO, **Country Music Association** who will be presented the “Spirit of Music Award.”

To be held at Cipriani 42nd Street, New York, the elegant evening will open with a reception and tempting auction items ranging from musical memorabilia, collectible wines, luxury dining, and travel experiences. The invitation-only and always sold-out event is the foundation's primary fundraiser of the year, supporting its mission of funding innovative medical research and treatments focused on finding a cure for cancer.

The evening includes surprise guests invited by the honorees to perform and present awards. Past hosts, presenters, performers, and notable guests have included Bryan Adams, Indie Arie, Mary J Blige, Garth Brooks, former President William J. Clinton, former President George H. W. Bush, Clive Davis, Foreigner, Joe Jonas, DJ Khaled, Doug Morris, Bill Murray, REO Speedwagon, Sting, Stevie Wonder, Yoko Ono and many others luminaries. Past honorees have included Irving Azoff, Steve Boom, Scott Borchetta, Jennifer Breithaupt, Drew Carey, Charlie Daniels, Clive Davis, John Esposito, Berry Gordy, Jeff Harleston, Randy Jackson, Quincy Jones, Joel Katz, Monte and Avery Lipman, Kenny Loggins, Arnold Palmer, Bea Perez, the late Frances Williams Preston, Sarah Stennett, Julie Swidler, Carrie Underwood, Afo Verde, Russell Wallach, Brett Yormark, among many others.



Michael Kushner is the Executive Vice President, Business & Legal Affairs and General Counsel for Atlantic Records. Since joining Atlantic Records senior executive team in 2001, he oversees all business affairs and legal functions. Beginning his career at PolyGram in 1987, Kushner has held senior roles at Sony Music, and before joining Atlantic Records, he served as Senior Vice President, Business & Legal Affairs at the Island Def Jam Music Group. Kushner is a board member of the arts organization *Bang on a Can* and has served for the past two years as Chairman of the Entertainment Law Initiative, an affiliate of NARAS. He received his undergraduate degree from Franklin & Marshall College and his law degree from Columbia University School of Law. He and his daughter reside in Manhattan.



Mike O'Neill is President and Chief Executive Officer of BMI© (Broadcast Music, Inc.). In his role, O'Neill oversees all of BMI's business operations, both domestically and globally and directs the company's strategic growth to benefit BMI's songwriters, composers, music publishers, and licensees. He is also a member of the BMI Board of Directors.

Under O'Neill's leadership, BMI reported their highest-ever revenue and distributions to its affiliated songwriters, composers, and publishers. He spearheaded BMI's historic victory over the U.S. Department of Justice to ensure the continued practice of fractional licensing. He has also overseen exponential growth year-over-year in both signing up tens of thousands of new



affiliates to the company and processing trillions of performances, adapting to the seismic digital shift in how music is consumed. O'Neill has served BMI for 24 years. Before his current position, he oversaw all aspects of BMI's creative team, domestic licensing and revenue generation, including radio, television, cable, satellite, and the general licensing division. He also managed royalty distributions and administrative service groups. He has led licensing negotiations, developed new licenses and sales policies, and spearheaded a new customer relations programs. He was also instrumental in developing the groundbreaking BMI Live program which pays performing songwriters for live performances in small venues.

Before joining BMI in 1994, Mike O'Neill was the Director, Affiliate Relations for CBS-TV Network. He holds an MBA from Rutgers University in Marketing and Finance and received his undergraduate degree in Business Administration from Montclair University. He is Chairman of the Board of FastTrack and sits on the Board of Directors for the Songwriters Hall of Fame, the T.J. Martell Foundation, the Broadcasters Foundation of America, National Association of Broadcasters Education Foundation and Monmouth Medical Center Foundation. He also serves as Honorary Chair of the BMI Foundation.



Sarah Trahern is President of the Country Music Association (CMA) and is based in Nashville, Tennessee. The music and television veteran assumed the title in 2014. Before her appointment to CMA, she served as Senior Vice President and General Manager of Scripps Networks Interactive Great American Country (GAC). (we should have a line here that says "as president of CMA Trahern oversees etc.)

Trahern has more than 27 years of experience in the network television business. Before joining CMA, she was responsible for the strategic direction of the GAC Network and oversaw all aspects of the network, including programming, marketing, creative, and digital. She had joined GAC from Shop At Home where she was credited with providing a vision for the programming strategy while stabilizing the production process and enhancing the network's quality of on-air content. She also has owned her own production company, Sterling Television, and worked in programming at PBS. In 2010, she was named one of the 30 Women "Power Players" in the music business by Billboard Magazine, and in 2011, she was an honoree of the Louise Scruggs Memorial Forum at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. She participated in the Department of Defense's 84th class in the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference and is a graduate of Women in Cable Television's (WICT) Betsy Magness Leadership Institute. Her work has been recognized with a Peabody Award and Cable Ace Award. She has always been seen as a top leader in the country music industry.

Trahern moved to Nashville in 1995 to oversee specials and entertainment for TNN. She began her cable career at C-Span in Washington, D.C. covering politics and public affairs and produced the popular series "Booknotes." She is a board member and past chair of the Academy of Country Music Association, a member of the Advisory Board of All About Women and a member of the Board of Directors of the Monroe Carell Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. She is a graduate of Georgetown University and has an MBA from the Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt. A native of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois she resides in Nashville.

Chairman of the National Board of Trustees Joel Katz explained that "the music industry's long-time support of the T.J. Martell Foundation dates to 1975 when music executive Tony Martell established the organization in memory of his son, T.J., who was lost to leukemia at the age of 19. Since then, more than \$280 million has been raised for groundbreaking treatment and support of cancer-related illnesses."

For tickets, sponsorship, or more information, please visit www.honorsgalanewyork.org.

ABOUT THE T.J. MARTELL FOUNDATION

The T.J. Martell Foundation is the music industry's leading foundation that funds innovative medical research focused on finding treatments and cures for cancer. The foundation was founded in 1975 by music industry executive Tony Martell and his colleagues in loving memory of his son T.J., who died of leukemia. The foundation



has provided more than \$280 million for research at eight flagship hospitals in the United States. For more information on the T.J. Martell Foundation, visit www.tjmartell.org.

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