The **Leading Light Award** is presented to a company or executive that has supported their staff via internal initiatives aimed at improving mental health, wellbeing and work/life balance.

Submission #1

**TuneCore**

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Since its inception in 2006, TuneCore has established itself as the leading digital music distribution and career development platform for self-releasing artists, not only through consistent technological innovation and artist support initiatives, but also by creating a work environment where its employees feel nurtured and supported both in and out of the office. In an effort to ensure a healthy work-life balance for employees, TuneCore adopted a year-round 4.5 day work week as well as a flexible remote work policy—including one full month of fully remote work during Summer— allowing employees to keep up productivity while prioritizing their health, families, and home life. In office, the company also regularly provides mental & physical health and wellness perks for employees including guided meditation breaks, sound baths, massages, and more, creating an inviting work environment that stokes creativity while relieving stress. In 2022, for mental health awareness month, TuneCore invited Rosana Corbacho, a clinical and humanistic psychologist specialized in the unique challenges faced by music industry professionals, to join for a series of lunch and learn sessions throughout the month to provide employees with direct access to mental health support. Outside of the office, TuneCore offers employees access to mental and physical health support programs through partnerships with Calm and Gympass. Calm, an online mediation app, provides employees with free guided meditations, breathing exercises, and more to help combat anxiety. Gympass, meanwhile, supports employees' mental and physical wellbeing by providing low-cost access to a diverse roster of gyms, training facilities, yoga studios & more, ensuring that employees are able to take care of their bodies and minds without incurring additional financial stress. TuneCore’s leadership takes the health of employees very seriously, and as such has implemented an unlimited sick day policy as well as 100% employer paid short term disability and 16 weeks paid leave at 100% of salary for new parents.

TuneCore’s employees only make up half of its true workforce; the other half are its artists. As such, in 2022, TuneCore hosted its first artist & industry-facing mental health support event, Mental Health Matters, which featured Dr. Amy Mariaskin (Nashville OCD & Anxiety Treatment Center), Chad Karger (Porter's Call), Tatum Hauck Allsep (Music Health Alliance), and Mad Welsley (TuneCore Artist) providing lectures and resources to support the mental health of artists/songwriters and members of the greater music industry, covering topics including stigma, resources for support, and living and creating/working in a post-pandemic world. As a result of the numerous steps taken to ensure the wellbeing of TuneCore employees across all levels and functions, in 2022, TuneCore was named #49 in Crain’s Best Places to Work in New York City.

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John Graffo, TuneCore  
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Submission #2

**Mike Heyliger**

*Director of Label Management*

**The Orchard**

mheyliger@theorchard.com

Mike Heyliger is the Director of Label Management at The Orchard, a leading global music distribution and artist and label services company operating in over 45 markets worldwide. Mike Heyliger brings 25 years of music industry experience to his role, where he’s worked to manage relationships and releases with distribution partners, Red Bull, Mack Avenue, Omnivore, Vpal, and Ruco.

In addition to his work at The Orchard, you can find Mike on the board of numerous mental health organizations such as Sound Mind, and working closely with Backline.cares. Beyond his work with these organizations, Mike often discusses his mental health journey through his intersectional lens. He aims to use these conversations as part of his endless desire to reduce stigma, help others, and provide a safe space for those struggling. Mike proves to be a comfort to all those who know him.

Additionally, Mike heads the Mindful Vinyl initiative, which supports mental health awareness by raising money and partnering with labels to provide limited-edition green vinyl music releases. Direct proceeds from the vinyl sales benefit the JED Foundation, a mental health and resource organization. In 2018, The JED Foundation honored Mike and The Orchard with the Media Award for Leadership in Mental Health, because of Mindful Vinyl’s work in raising mental health awareness.

Aside from his social impact work, Mike uses his voice through his podcast Detoxicity, which looks to amplify conversations with men around toxic masculinity, and through his journalism having written for Popmatters, Ultimate Classic Rock, and The Boombox. You can also find Mike, an avid vinyl collector, hosting music trivia nights most Thursdays.

Links:

<https://dailyrindblog.com/billboard-names-the-orchards-mike-heyliger-a-pride-power-player/>

<https://www.dailyrindblog.com/spreading-mental-health-awareness-jed-foundation/>

<https://www.mondo.nyc/speakers-2022/mike-heyliger>

<https://www.soundmindlive.org/about-soundmind>

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Meredith Nadeau, The Orchard  
orchmktg@theorchard.com | 2035206251

Submission #3

**Steve Corbin**

*SVP Sales & Commercial Services*

**WMX**

steve.corbin@wmg.com

Steve Corbin stands head and shoulders above his peer group in supporting the physical music business, and all that entails. He is a tremendous steward and advocate, and never hesitates to make himself available, no matter the subject, situation or customer. He is a true partner, always looking for common ground and solutions that benefit all parties and the health, longevity and the benefits of the physical business.

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Laura Provenzano, Alliance Entertainment  
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Submission #4

**Sarah Robertson**

*Founder/President*

**A to Z Media**

sarah@atozmedia.com

Throughout her almost 30 years at A to Z Media, Sarah has always been focused on the well-being of her staff, their communities and the music industry as a whole.

Sarah founded A TO Z CARES, because the company’s management and employees have a longstanding tradition of providing charitable contributions for select non-profit projects that align with our shared sense of values.

A to Z Cares is our more deliberate and targeted effort to inspire meaningful, direct and ongoing positive impact within our immediate communities of business by encouraging staff and clients alike to work together in donating their time, ideas and labor for the greater good.

Our mission is to foster civic engagement by supporting and empowering the efforts of individuals and organizations bravely taking a stand against injustice, poverty and care for our Earth by offering a hand-up and not simply a handout.

A to Z Cares has partnered with over 25 different organizations over the last few years (most listed below) and continues to look for new opportunities both in our industry and the world at large.

In regards to taking care of staff, Sarah’s efforts are unparalleled and she offers a number of different benefits / options to her growing staff, now at about 50 people in multiple states across the USA.

We’ve outlined many of the staff benefits, below:

Mental Health Day added to employee OOO schedule, separate from the generous vacation program

Loan Program - account for those who have an unexpected expense

Bereavement - open and supported

Maternity and Paternity leave policies available

Feminine hygiene products in bathrooms

Supporting local communities directed by employees (more info via A to Z Cares tab)

Birthdays are an additional day off for all staff

When first starting the company, Sarah generously subsidised medical benefits for all staff, partners and children and continues today including vision / dental at 100% coverage

CPR Training to anyone interested and sessions held in both our NYC and PDX offices

Always celebrate International Woman's Day with a lunch / gift for all female employees

Employee Development - Relevant course work may be covered by A to Z

Employee Recognition - Win of the Week: employees are recognized internally by their peers and get a gift card for their effort

Mate Rate Manufacturing - Employees have access to cost + 5% manufacturing for their personal projects

Employee Referral Program - Any staff member who refers a candidate who is hired gets a $500 bonus after the new hire's 90 Day Review

Office Environment - Snacks provided, Coffee machine/water cooler available & Free product made available to staff

Financial planning services available via 401K provider to all employees

Profit Share for eligible employees

Recognizing Work Anniversaries by calling out employees and celebrating quarterly

Cross training programs between NYC and PDX where employees visit offices on opposite coasts to work with their peers - all costs covered

A TO Z CARES OUTLINE:

Program Action

Alzheimers Association

Made double 12" gatefold project and CD projects for Mona Dehghan free of charge

Build the Block PDX Program 2023

Oregon Food Bank Food Drive Holiday 2019

ATO Benefit Project LP for Charity

Relapse Benefit Project LP for Charity

Hopeless Benefit Project LP for Charity

Other Initiatives/Charitable Partners we've worked with:

Donations in communities that have an A to Z presence

Thanksgiving initiative, Portland,Oregon — https://www.oregonfoodbank.org/

Thanksgiving initiative, New York — http://chipsonline.org/donate/

Thanksgiving initiative, Las Vegas, Nevada — https://www.threesquare.org/

Thanksgiving initiative, Milwaukee: WI — https://www.hungertaskforce.org/

Thanksgiving initiative, Philadelphia/PA — https://www.philabundance.org

Thanksgiving initiative, California — https://www.sfmfoodbank.org/

Thanksgiving initiative, New Jersey – https://www.bridgesoutreach.org/

Ukraine World Central Kitchen — https://www.peopleinneed.net/

Earth Day — https://oeconline.org/

Friends of Trees — https://friendsoftrees.org/

Woman Charities —  Planned Parenthood, 28 Days

GOFUNDME — Several individual Go Fund me projects for people in our industry including Walter from Imprint, Jeffrey Kaye, Lawrence Mass Baseball Club and https://www.gofundme.com/f/sleeping-bags-for-portland-unhoused

Black Lives Matter — We made a number of donations including George Floyd via Rhymesayers

Womens Help — https://rosehaven.org/helping/

Health/social Services for youth — https://outsidein.org/

Food Bank — https://www.gsfb.org/

St. Judes —  https://www.stjude.org/

Community efforts — https://ioby.org/

Gifts — Wynona’s House Child Advocacy Center

Personally, I have seen Sarah do amazing and very generous work, often without a word to anyone else – her generous spirit runs throughout A to Z and benefits everyone lucky enough to be in her presence. She inspires, and is often inspired, by these initiatives – our employees feel supported and heard, and A to Z is an important part of the larger community due to Sarah’s belief in giving back and being a proactive partner to those around us.

Supporting Materials:

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/194-2970d341b57fca936d549962fb2ed8f0/2023/02/The-Bizzys-2023-Sarah-Robertson.docx>

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Stacy Karp, A to Z Media  
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Submission #5

**Warner Music Group**

steve.corbin@wmg.com

WMG is committed to the employee’s mental health by 4 initiatives. 1). One Medical- focus on in-office remote visit with a PCP (primary care provider), which includes virtual therapy, coaching and mindful breaks. 2). Ginger- provides confidential mental healthcare through coaching sessions and is designed to work with people from all backgrounds. 3) Cigna- virtual sessions with a social worker/psychologist or psychiatrist using Talkspace, Sondermind, and MDLive. 4). Rightway- a concierge health service via app or live speak to locate best in class network doctors. Well Being- Employees are able to participate in our Emotional Well-Being pillar which can include live meditations, webinars, self help tips and much more through the resources mentioned above as well as partnering with our DEI team on sourcing businesses and providers that can support our employees in their wellbeing goals. This also extends to artists and songwriters through various programs such as Porter’s Call (Warner Music Nashville and Warner Chappell Music Nashville) and Warner Music UK efforts in 2022 on artist/songwriters’ mental health and wellness. In 2022, WMG hired its first SVP of Global Workplace Experience who strategically aligns real estate, office services, and office experience initiatives. WMG implemented a new employee program, called Go Visit, which allows employees to work remotely for up to 20 days per year. In 2022, WMG supported nearly 10,000 Go Visit days globally, across 1,200 people from 37 countries! In the US, WMG worked with Sharebite, a non-profit food delivery service that enables every meal ordered on the platform to prompt a meal donation to help combat food insecurity in our local communities. In 2022, WMG donated nearly 75,000 meals through City Harvest and Feeding America. Lastly, WMG has a global view to employee well-being based on a local approach. Warner Music Korea, for example has monthly family days to Warner Music Germany expanding their employee assistance program to 24 hours, 7 days a week. Warner Music Australia and Warner Music Poland’s Social Benefits fund have a time off for wellness that aids employees facing difficult life situations.

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Steve Corbin, Warner Music Group  
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Submission #6

**Six Shooter Records**

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Six Shooter strives to exemplify good music business citizenship, and to make a positive impact in every aspect of our work. From the top down, staff through roster, the company is actively engaged in making meaningful contributions to mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS BENEFITS

In January 2020, Six Shooter proudly began providing health benefits to staff for the first time, a significant development for our team internally stemming from a desire to increase employee satisfaction, retention, and to build a positive work environment. In 2021 we doubled the mental health budget in the benefits plan in response to the toll of COVID-19 on mental health.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT PROCESSIn 2022 we launched a new HR program designed to develop our staff through coaching and mentorship. The principles of the program are built on trust, teamwork and communication. The dual purpose is to enhance the leadership strengths of our senior staff and to develop the careers of the entire team. This system incorporates our company values of Excellence, Leadership, Integrity, Respect, Creativity, Passion, Positivity, Collaboration and Community.

DEDICATED SLACK HOURSSlack notifications are automatically silenced outside of working hours so folks are able to maintain a healthy work-life balance, and enjoy their time outside of work. The organization has also implemented “deep work” hours on Slack, where staff are encouraged to avoid sending messages between 1pm and 4pm EST. This gives everyone the opportunity to get through work uninterrupted and reduces the temptation to work at home after hours.

EQUITY COMMITTEESix Shooter established an Equity Committee in 2020. Its purpose is to amplify and provide support to issues, movements and days of observance that Six Shooter Records as a company, and their staff, resonates with. The committee has designed initiatives that are internal as well as outward facing. Internal facing initiatives include donations, sharing resources or providing staff education / further training in a particular area (for example, a 4-part session called “Inclusion Hurts'' led by Ronnie Ali | Leaves On A Stream). Outward-facing initiatives are designed to amplify a particular message or person/people via social media, provide staff an opportunity to volunteer at events (for example, Music Declares Emergency Summit), as well as share interesting resources that they’ve found helpful or insightful, with their online community.

KEYWORDS FOR THE MONTH/YEARAt the start of each year, everyone is encouraged to select a key work to help set their intentions for the year. It helps the team to set positive intentions for the year. At the end of the year, the team does a retrospective and talks about how their year went, and how their word related. Sometimes the word that was selected at the start of the year doesn’t end up reflecting the year that has passed, and the opportunity to pick a reflective word is presented. It’s a great way to encourage everyone to be mindful and intentional throughout the year.

KITCHEN PARTYIntroduced during the pandemic as a way to connect with fellow employees, the weekly kitchen party continues every Friday afternoon. They are good for team connectivity and help foster camaraderie on the team. It’s a great opportunity for everyone to connect in a casual environment. While attending the kitchen party is not mandatory, it’s certainly encouraged.

ARTIST ACTIVISMAmelia Curran and Riit are both vocal and active in raising awareness for increased mental health support. Curran is the co-founder of It’s Mental, a grassroots organization based in St. John’s, informed by the artist’s longtime work on destigmatization. Riit released a cover of Awolnation’s “Sail” in May 2021, adding her voice to mental health awareness with many vulnerable public posts about the lack of resources available for Inuit.

Supporting Materials:

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/194-2970d341b57fca936d549962fb2ed8f0/2023/02/Bizzy-Awards-Leading-Light.pdf>

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Alyssa Wannamaker, Six Shooter Records  
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Submission #7

**Triple 8 Management**

sam@triple8mgmt.com

I would like to submit my company, Triple 8 Management, to recognize a company that has supported their staff via internal initiatives aimed at improving mental health, wellbeing and work/life balance. Including but not limited to:

• Monthly massages• Unlimited Time Off• Mental Health resources included in healthcare plans• Health, vision, and dental• Flexible in-office and work from home options• 401k• Maternity and paternity (includes adoption)• Summer Fridays (office closes at 2pm) As COO of Triple 8 Management, a large part of our focus is to continue growing the work life balance culture of our company, especially as our staff continues to grow their families and demands of life outside of the office.

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Samantha Steele, Triple 8 Management  
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Submission #8

**Bauer Entertainment Marketing**

brian@bauerem.com

Video Submission:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-fwx8IsmX65kmzArmiP7iWEBmT7LVRl3/view?usp=sharing>

Supporting Materials:

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/194-2970d341b57fca936d549962fb2ed8f0/2023/02/Baueroo.jpg>

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/194-2970d341b57fca936d549962fb2ed8f0/2023/02/Best-Place-to-Work.jpg>

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Brian Bauer, Bauer Entertainment Marketing  
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Submission #9

**Aaron Davis**

*CEO/Co-Founder*

**Exploration**

aaron.davis@exploration.io

This candidate highly prioritizes the mental health and wellbeing of the company. He created a "buddy system" during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow team members to check in on the wellbeing of their buddies. He initiated monthly all-hands Zoom meetings in 2020 as well with guest performances by magicians and musicians that raised the company's spirits and kept us close. He continues to always put the company's wellbeing first by offering opportunities for employees to access mental health resources and instilling a culture of compassion and self-care.

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Heidi Seo, Exploration  
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Submission #10

**Laurel Wright**

*singer/songwriter*

**The Young Fables**

theyoungfables@gmail.com

Laurel prides herself on being open and honest with her fans and followers. Her life has been nothing but easy and it was 2018 when her sister died in a car crash in January and then 8 months later her dad died of a heart attack. Laurel shares her story in her beautifully iconic sounding songs that brings recognition to a topic that is often so hard to talk about. She brings up deep rooted feelings not only in her music but on social media and speaking at her live shows. She radiates strength and practices her mental health daily and advocates that to everyone she meets. Her duo, The Young Fables, take you on a journey down the road of honesty in their music and you can feel the passion and the sadness and can relate to their message. In this world, it is hard to express how you feel in a safe space and Laurel gives you that safe space. She treats everyone like a friend or part of her family and the love she has for music and for people take priority in the energy she exudes. They made a documentary about their story and it really shows the amount of passion and sorrow that goes into songwriting and making music. www.theyoungfables.com/watchthefableofasong and their epk is www.theyoungfables.com/epk and their website is www.theyoungfables.com

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Jennifer Adan, Tommy Jo Publishing  
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Submission #11

**Chris Nardone**

*President*

**Venture Music**

[chris@venturemusic.com](mailto:chris@venturemusic.com)

Video Submission:

<https://vimeo.com/808282648>

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