The **#NEXTGEN\_NOW One To Watch Award** is presented to an executive under 40 whose work (professional and/or volunteer) has been exceptional, innovative, and stands out as a contribution to the industry.

Submission #1

**Chris Dampier**

*Vice President, TuneCore Publishing*
**TuneCore**

john.graffo@tunecore.com

Chris Dampier, at 38 years old, is Vice President, Publishing and Sync for leading independent digital music company, TuneCore and one of the most dynamic young executives in the music industry today. Dampier has built the company almost from the ground up and turned it into a hugely profitable and influential player, becoming one of the most important music publishing companies in the independent music space. In the past twelve months, Dampier has remained laser focused on growing the company at a rapid pace (TuneCore has grown an impressive 160% since Dampier took the reins), while continuing his fierce advocacy on behalf of independent songwriters. TuneCore Publishing, under Dampier, currently administers over 105,000 songwriters and almost 1.5M songs across 230 territories around the world (all numbers are confidential). In the last twelve months, Dampier added 10,769 new songwriters to TuneCore’s roster and generated tens of billions of streams worldwide. In December 2022, TuneCore Publishing reached the milestone of $100 million in revenue, with Dampier at the helm, TuneCore Publishing has consistently seen double digit Y-o-Y growth, with the past twelve months showing 32% growth from 2021 to 2022. Dampier’s efforts in expanding revenue streams for TuneCore Publishing songwriters has also spurred substantial international growth. He grew international publishing revenue for domestic TuneCore songwriters a whopping 237% from 2021 to 2022. One of Dampier’s areas of focus at TuneCore is to increase education and transparency surrounding publishing administration to benefit rising songwriters. Because many of his songwriters are independent and don’t have the benefit of major labels to advise them, he leans heavily on curating his own support services. Dampier has created and executed proprietary newsletters, workshops, in-person and virtual panels, speaking engagements, op-eds and more in order to ensure his songwriters are aware of the revenue streams available to them and that they don’t leave their hard-earned money on the table. To better achieve this, Dampier has developed premier processes to ensure data accuracy, yielding an industry-leading 99% verified song rate for TuneCore Publishing songwriters. Dampier knows that a good sync deal can change an independent artist’s life, and therefore has led TuneCore Publishing to secure significant placements, including international multi-year advertising campaigns for Samsung’s QLED 8K launch, Michelob Ultra, and hundreds of other placements in film, television, trailers and video games, with 66% of sync placements secured in 2022 being first time syncs for TuneCore songwriters. Some of Dampier’s most notable placements in 2022 include Bad Bunny’s “El Apogon” in the trailer for Bullet Train, Prettyboy D-O’s “Dey Go Hear Wehh” in FX’s Atlanta, Risqkae’s “The Intro” in the video game Madden ‘23 and more. Very much a renaissance man in his own right, in 2022, Dampier also served as music supervisor for ‘Right To Offend: The Black Comedy Revolution’ which was executive produced by Kevin Hart and premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival before airing on A&E. Dampier also sits on the Independent Publisher Advisory Council for the National Music Publishers Association, is a voting member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame and is a member of both the Association of Independent Music Publishers and the Guild of Music Supervisors.

In a sector long dominated by an old guard of major music publishers, Dampier is an endlessly energetic executive who works furiously to help independent songwriters receive their fair share of the music publishing revenue pie by raising awareness, providing education, creating opportunities and influencing legislation. The fact that he’s able to do this all while increasing his roster and growing revenue by double digits year over year on a consistent basis, has not only independent songwriters paying attention, but should have the entire music industry watching him and TuneCore.

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Submission #2

**Josh Epple**

*VP of Promotions*
**Hopeless Records**

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As VP, Promotions at Hopeless Records, Josh has been a leading force in amplifying the voices and stories of Gen-Z artists in the alternative space. By building out our streaming, promotions, and UGC/influencer departments, his work in championing Gen-Z artists, fans, and their music is helping shape alt-culture and pushing the mainstream industry to hold space for these artists. From leading viral trending UGC marketing campaigns for Scene Queen and Neck Deep, radio campaigns for Fame On Fire (#15 Active Rock Chart), and global streaming campaigns for DE'WAYNE, Josh is always striving to creatively amplify the artist's message.

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Submission #3

**Ashley Hall**

*Associate Director of International Label Management*
**The Orchard**

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Ashley Hall, Associate Director of International Label Management, is always operating at maximum capacity. In her day-to-day, Ashley is managing many of the largest releases that come through The Orchard. Campaign management for Ashley includes working release projects for Eric Nam, Rimas, Pitbull, Ozuna and many more. With her keen eye for detail and relentless dedication, Ashley makes sure all releases run smoothly, meet store requirements, and exceed the expectations of our clients.

On top of her many responsibilities, Ashley is the light of The Orchard; and often at the center of activism and culture. She makes time to participate in a number of social initiatives within The Orchard, Sony Music, and beyond. A current board member of HUE (Helping Unite Everyone), Ashley frequently organizes community engagement events to spread awareness and encourage Equity and Inclusion in the workplace.

Additionally, Ashley is a co-founder of WOTO, aka Women of The Orchard. This collective began on International Women’s Day and unites colleagues across all territories and encourages equity, and community for women throughout the global organization. Together, they share information about recent challenges facing underrepresented genders globally and provide a safe space for women in all countries to learn, organize, and take action.

Previously, Ashley was a council member of the inaugural year of CEPA, The Orchard’s Council for Equity and Progessive Action. As a member of the Council Ashley help to initiate a hiring manager toolkit as well as trainings courses hosted by Brave Trainings Founder and CEO, Cornell Verdeja-Woodson. The workshops titled, “Building a Culture of Belonging” and “Authentic Allyship vs. Performative Allyship” were attended by over 300 participants and fostered a safe space for individuals to reflect and listen to their coworkers, share their experiences, and learn how they can become better, authentic allies.

In addition to her many activist roles, Ashley dabbles in artist management in support of local Hip-hop/R&B artist, Con Killion, and is very engaged in the music industry community at large.

Links:

<https://www.shesaid.so/alt-list/alternative-power-100-music-list-2021>

<https://www.dailyrindblog.com/introducing-the-orchards-council-for-equity-and-progressive-action/>

<https://musicbiz.org/nextgen_u-virtual-summit-feb-2022/>

<https://www.dailyrindblog.com/wtfdyd-live-womens-history-month-edition/>

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Meredith Nadeau, The Orchard
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Submission #4

**Emilio Morales**

*Director*
**Rimas Publishing**

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Esteemed Music Biz Award Committee, I am writing to nominate Emilio Morales for the #NEXTGEN\_NOW One To Watch Award in recognition of his leadership and his exceptional and innovative contribution to the music publishing industry. As the Director at Rimas Publishing, the music publisher affiliated with the Rimas Entertainment label, Emilio has demonstrated outstanding leadership and achieved remarkable accomplishments that have positioned the company as one of the leading Latin publishers today. Under Emilio’s direction, Rimas Publishing has achieved impressive milestones, including the financial success of RSM Publishing LLC (one of the three companies that make up Rimas Publishing, which also includes Risamar Publishing LLC and Megasongs Publishing LLC), which finished the year with a revenue of over $5M, for the first time in its history. The company also has exponentially grown its roster and boasts a diverse clientele list that includes over 100 talents, among them the renowned Bad Bunny, Eladio Carrión, Mora, Súbelo NEO, Caleb Calloway, Lennex, Pailita, Cris MJ, Marcianeke, Corina Smith, Tempo, DJ Negro and Lizzy Parra. In 2022, Emilio led Rimas Publishing to receive prestigious recognitions within the industry, including Publisher of the Year at the Billboard Latin Music Awards, an honor the company received for a second consecutive edition in 2022. The company also won “Best Urban Music Album” at the 2022 Latin GRAMMY Awards® and “Best Música Urbana Album” at the 2023 GRAMMY Awards®. Rimas Publishing also received a historic Album of the Year nomination at the GRAMMYs for Bad Bunny’s global hit production “Un Verano Sin Ti.” This honor was the first time in the organization’s 65th-year history that a non-English album received that recognition. Emilio concluded 2022 as Hitbreaker in Variety’s prestigious Hitmakers List, a special honor he received as a top industry publisher. For his role as a visionary leader who continuously demonstrates innovation and creativity, delivering for his clients and positioning the company as a trailblazer in the industry, I strongly endorses Emilio Morales for the #NEXTGEN\_NOW One To Watch Award. His proven record and remarkable success make him an ideal candidate for this award.

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Juan Yoshika, Acoustyle Communications
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Emilio's passion and dedication to his work are truly exceptional, as he consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that his clients receive the best possible service. His empathetic nature has helped him build strong relationships with clients, enabling him to truly understand their needs and provide tailored solutions to meet them. Through his tireless efforts and expertise, my colleague has made significant contributions to the music industry, helping to shape and elevate the industry as a whole.

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Submission #5

**Brontë Jane**

*VP Creative/A&R Director*
**Third Side Music**

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As one of the youngest, most dynamic creative heads in the publishing industry, Brontë Jane, Third Side Music’s VP Creative/A&R Director, is well-deserving of this recognition. Not to mention she’s been on a roll over the past 12 months, with a string of successes by her roster, which has experienced numerous chart hits, awards, and global licensing activity. Notably, Brontë recently re-signed two-time GRAMMY nominated EDM duo SOFI TUKKER and the news was reported in Billboard. In making the announcement, SOFI TUKKER said, “Signing with [Third Side] has been one of the best decisions we’ve made in our career.”

<https://www.billboard.com/pro/zaytoven-sells-catalog-sofi-tukker-extends-third-side-publishing-deals/>

During their time working together, Brontë has already helped generate an impressive 350+ sync placements for the artist, including a recent brand partnership with US Open, who used their No.1 US Dance Radio hit “Summer In New York” as a theme during broadcasts.

She was also highlighted in Billboard for her bringing a “hands on approach” to working with creatives, as part of a recent story about Brontë landing the high-profile signing of Capitol Records artist Sky Ferriera: <https://www.billboard.com/pro/sky-ferreira-publishing-deal-third-side-music/>

She’s also celebrated the successes of GRAMMY-nominated trio BADBADNOTGOOD, which re-signed in 2022, GRAMMY-nominated Courtney Barnett, GRAMMY-winning songwriter/producer Matthew Tavares, GRAMMY-nominated Unknown Mortal Orchestra, and Blonde Redhead, to name a few. In a short period of time, this roster has achieved 50 NMPA/RIAA certified Gold, Platinum, and Multi-Platinum awards, including for cuts on Coldplay’s “Human Heart”, Panic! At The Disco’s “Hey Look Ma”, Dreamville ft. Ty Dolla $ign’s “Got Me”, Fousheé’s “Deep End”, Daniel Caesar’s “Get You”, Free Nationals ft. Daniel Caesar’s “Beauty & Essex”, Aminé’s “Buzzin”, and many more. Additionally, artists she has signed have worked with the likes of some of the most important contemporary and legendary artists in the industry, such as Kendrick Lamar, Rihanna, Post Malone, John Mayer, Kid Cudi, and Liam Gallagher. Major sync placements have also included massive global campaigns for brands such as Apple, Rolls Royce, Old Navy, Rick & Morty (Blonde Redhead original song), Apple TV’s Harriet the Spy (Courtney Barnett original theme song), and more.

Beyond bolstering the success of her own artists, Brontë has made it a priority to expand opportunity and access to the industry. She began an online call-to-action called “Open Call”, which encouraged fellow gatekeepers in the industry (i.e., A&Rs, label executives, managers, etc.) to break down barriers and open their inbox to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) community members who might not otherwise have access. With ‘Open Call’, she ignited a movement to diversify her email inbox and make herself publicly available as a resource for those who need it the most. Every week, Brontë dedicates hours for calls and meetings with young and/or aspiring musicians and industry folk. Other gatekeepers in the industry have since followed in her footsteps and opened their inbox and arms to assist and inspire others and do the same.

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/03/Bronte-Jane-Submission-MusicBiz-NextGen-Award-2023.pdf>

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Rebekah Alperin, Storyboard Communications
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Submission #6

**Dylan Bourne**

*CEO and Founder*
**Bourne Creatives**

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I am nominating Dylan Bourne, CEO and Founder of Bourne Creatives, for the #NEXTGEN NOW One to Watch Award because of his commitment to fostering creative talent and fast-achieved success of his newly launched full-service management company. Dylan, who was named Ambassador by the Recording Academy for its GRAMMY Next Generation class of executives, brings a holistic 360-degree approach to management, incorporating innovative digital strategies and focusing on being a true partner with talent. Within the first year of launching Bourne Creatives, the 31-year-old manager, A&R executive, and digital marketing guru signed an incredible roster of cutting-edge artists, writers and producers who have blown up with viral chart-topping hits and awards nominations, packed shows, international tours, and 7-figure deals with labels and publishers.

https://www.instagram.com/bournecreatives/?hl=en

This includes: dazy, the artist/producer behind “Sunroof” - which was the most used song on TikTok in the US in 2022, nominated for VMA Song of the Summer, and reached #1 at Pop Radio, #4 on the Billboard Hot 100 where it spent ten weeks in the Top 10; JELEEL!, the breakout star who (with the help of Dylan’s digital strategies via unique personality content) blew up on TikTok with over two million followers and is behind the single “DIVE IN!” that reached #6 on the Tik Tok Charts, #11 on Spotify’s US Viral Charts and was used in over 200k UGC videos on TikTok; DWLLRS, who achieved #5 on the TikTok charts with the track “Blue Spirits” and was signed to Island Records in 2022; and more.

Dylan is a formidable candidate not only because of his roster of rising stars, but also the strong partnership he establishes with them. As a young executive, he provides innovative support and perspective. He has uniquely expanded the visibility of his artists and producers, created a solid foundation for their careers and earning ability, and strategically crafted personality content to support the artist development strategies. His talent and potential undeniably makes Dylan Bourne one to watch!

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/03/Dylan-Bourne-Submission-Grammy-NextGen-Exec-Announcement.pdf>

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/03/Dylan-Bourne-Submission-Supplemental-Materials-2-of-2.pdf>

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Submission #7

**Laura Pittard**

*Director of Marketing*
**Redeye**

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Laura Pittard oversees Redeye’s entire Marketing Department of project managers, marketing strategists, and experts to develop and execute successful marketing campaigns with our valued label and retail partners. Over the past 12 months, by focusing on providing labels with robust and bespoke marketing plans and strategic guidance, her team has supported the development and growth of top artists in the independent music scene, from debut releases from artists on the rise to Grammy-nominated legends. In today’s ever-changing global marketplace, Laura’s team is dedicated to keeping label partners informed about the latest marketing and sales opportunities and industry trends to drive physical and digital sales. Because of the Marketing Team’s consistent strength of partnership and proven results, Redeye has expanded partnerships with several labels in key territories in the past year, inking worldwide deals with New West and Innovative Leisure, and extensions into LATAM with Beggars Group, Domino, Ninja Tune, Mexican Summer, and others. Moreover, in the past year, with Laura’s oversight, Redeye has further solidified its position as the leading physical distributor with a email marketing strategy focused on providing retailers with long-lead pre-order details on key releases and label-focus campaigns to bolster early support with accounts and drive sales. Through Redeye’s dedicated retail marketing outreach, we not only keep our customers informed of newly announced and upcoming releases, we take pride in highlighting the impressive and essential catalogs of our label partners with our editorial content, including our Redeye Label of the Month.

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Submission #8

**Charlie Painter**

*Business Affairs Manager*
**Redeye**

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In April of 2022 I moved from North Carolina up to Brooklyn to join our team there and continue to represent Redeye in one of the biggest music markets in the world. My role at Redeye as Business Affairs Manager is to recruit new artists and labels to work with across a wide range of genres. In the past year alone, I've helped bring diverse indie labels from around the world into the Redeye family including Mello Music Group, Tee Pee Records, SPINSTER, Radio Martiko, Soundway Records and the most recent Preoccupations record among others. Through this, I have been able to play an instrumental role in furthering our shared goal of providing truly independent distribution options for our diverse partners while continuing to build an incredible roster that we're excited and proud to work with. As a global distribution company, it is important that our roster reflects the vast diversity of the communities that we serve, and we continue to make this an area of focus. We’re very proud to work with labels such as Get Better Records, TULLE, Jazz Is Dead, SPINSTER, Don Giovanni and Studio One to name a few, that are owned, operated and/or dedicated to giving a platform to traditionally underrepresented communities. Lastly, as a large portion of my position calls for meeting with labels, artists and industry partners in person, it's been a huge benefit relocating to NYC to join our team here. Redeye is a company whose foundation is built on strong relationships and communication with our partners and customers. I’m excited to continue that with our team in one of the most well-known music cities in the world.

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Laura Pittard, Redeye
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Submission #9

**Marina Baranik**

*Digital Data & Product Operations Manager*
**Redeye**

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Marina was promoted to head of Redeye’s Digital Operations department during an incredibly stressful time during the pandemic. She rose to the occasion and quickly implemented various changes to both the department’s structure and processes. These changes included streamlining Redeye’s digital delivery process, allowing the team to onboard new clients more efficiently and keep up with Redeye’s fast growth. Additionally, during her first year in the role, she managed the onboarding of several labels including Mexican Summer and Carpark Records. While it was certainly a team effort, Marina’s contributions helped Redeye surpass their digital sales goal significantly.

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Submission #10

**Mariah Czap**

*Co-General Manager | Head of Digital*
**Yep Roc**

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Mariah Czap is Yep Roc Records’ first female General Manager in its over 25-year history. In June 2021, Mariah was elected to the A2IM (American Association of Independent Music) Board of Directors, helping guide A2IM in strengthening its mission of fighting for independent copyright holders through advocacy, education, and community. In 2022, she was appointed to the board’s Executive Committee as Secretary. In February 2023, Mariah was elected to the Folk Alliance International Board of Directors, supporting the organization in serving, strengthening, and engaging the global folk music community through preservation, presentation, and promotion. Over the past year, Mariah and her team have been dedicated to adding new voices and genres to the Yep Roc roster. She’s helped sign acts including Elf Power, Jenny Owen Youngs and Jobi Riccio, among others. In her almost 10 years at Yep Roc, Mariah has directed worldwide marketing campaigns for Watchhouse (formerly known as Mandolin Orange), Michaela Anne, Tift Merritt, Robyn Hitchcock, Blitzen Trapper and The Felice Brothers, among others.

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Laura Pittard, Redeye
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Submission #11

**Bryan Mooney**

*Global Vice President of A&R*
**Downtown Music Services**

Bryan@DowntownMusic.com

As Global Vice President of A&R at Downtown Music Services, Bryan Mooney oversees the signing of new talent to the company's Artist & Label Services division formerly known as DashGo. During his time at the company, he's signed  artists including Cheat Codes, Francis Karel, Hunter Hayes, Loren Gray, Matoma, New West, Rebecca Black and Yung Bae to the company's independent services offering, along with labels like Avex USA’s “Selene”, with whom DMS has collaboratively launched viral records including Sadie Jean’s ‘WYD Now?’ and Zach Hood’s ‘Isabelle’. Earlier in the pandemic Bryan guided his management client Axel Mansoor in creating the popular ‘Lullaby Club’ on the social audio app Clubhouse, resulting in Axel smiling from 13M+ phone screens and singing to an audience of 60k people every night, with guests including Alaina Castillo, John Mayer, and JP Saxe. When Clubhouse’s growth stagnated, Bryan migrated Lullaby Club’s nightly presence to Amazon’s new social radio platform ‘Amp’, and pivoted Lullaby Club into a media company that’s currently developing an audiobook series, podcast, record label, and activating IRL at music festivals. Axel’s success has been covered in The NYT, WSJ, Forbes, NPR, BBC, Pollstar, etc.

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Patrick Ames Conner, Downtown Music Services
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Video Submission:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FZkhRpYWWjYAK3z0wvtnlMPaih90SV9N/view?usp=sharing>

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Maria Gironas, Cool Shit, Cool People
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Submission #12

**Louisa Rochdi**

*Tour Manager & Founder*
**Lobby Call & Gen Admission**

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Video Submission:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/b7jzws9s0tmjce5/IMG_0302.MOV?dl=0>

Links:

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/02/The-birth-of-Gen-Admission.pdf>

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/02/Screenshot-2023-02-28-at-22.25.16.png>

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<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/02/Lou-Rochdi-Bizzy-NextGen-2023-Nomination-Letter.pdf>

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/02/ArticleGenAdmission_LunaCollective.pdf>

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Submission #13

**Sarah Janiszewski**

*Senior Manager of Industry Relations*
**TIDAL**

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Sarah Janiszewski is the senior manager of industry relations at TIDAL. In her role, Sarah is the lead representative for TIDAL’s editorial team for maintaining and building relationships with labels, distributors, creators, artists, and industry partners. In 2022, Sarah led the creation of a new Editorial Partner Toolkit for our label and distributor partners, which was a complete revamp of the Editorial and partner experience. The tools allow labels to know who to reach out to, how to pitch songs for playlists, how to pitch songs for campaigns and more streamline how they partner with TIDAL. Both executives to day-to-day account leads from labels and partners have shared feedback that the toolkit is a ‘game-changer’. She also is responsible for scoping and securing exclusive experiences for TIDAL members in-app. For example, for the last Black Music Month Sarah secured Dyana William, co-founder and often referred to as Mother of Black Music Month to curate The Official Black Music Month Playlist series in partnership with the National Museum of African American Music. Before joining TIDAL, Sarah has consistently occupied artist-first roles including: Being a part of the management team of GRAMMY-winning artist D'Angelo and was a lead on behalf of him for VERZUZ Presents: D’Angelo & Friends.

Coaching artists in media strategies and artist development across all major label groups alongside revered artist media coach Dyana Williams, which involves deep-diving with artists in coaching sessions to develop their storytelling around who they are and how to talk about their music. Previously Sarah was head of industry relations and marketing reporting to the CEO of Jammer, an interactive music app invested in by record executive, talent agent, and entrepreneur Scooter Braun. While at Jammer, Sarah oversaw partnerships with all labels and artist teams and developed artist marketing strategies, including campaigns for artists such as Ariana Grande, Jonas Brothers and Anitta. Sarah is considered a stem expert and was frequently engaged in speaking engagements on behalf of Universal Music Group while with Jammer. Sarah also previously served as a GRAMMY board member, managed an Interscope Records and Will.i.am Music Group artist who had a No. 1 single, directed a music brand in which she managed a multi-year partnership with The Roots, and managed projects for Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff, including working on their induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

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Submission #14

**Lindsey Major**

*Head of Customer Experience*
**The Mechanical Licensing Collective (MLC)**

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As Head of Customer Experience at the Mechanical Licensing Collective (The MLC), Lindsey Major is responsible for designing an effective customer experience strategy and leading The MLC’s world-class support team. Major’s team consistently provides an excellent experience for The MLC’s users and members and has provided one-on-one support to more than 40,000 people, engaging in more than 16,000 interactions last year alone. Within six months of joining The MLC, Major had built the entire Customer Experience department — virtually. Major continues to lead this 20-person Support Team, which is available via phone, e-mail or chat 10 hours a day, five days a week, to assist members, prospective members and others. As The MLC’s membership steadily grew throughout 2022 — surpassing 23,000 by end of the year — the Support Team was often the first interaction new members had with the organization. At that critical juncture, Major’s team proved highly effective in helping those individuals navigate the membership process, set up their user accounts, register their songs and access their royalty statements. In her role, Major also develops and enhances customer experience operations, creates effective staff training programs, designs and improves processes, builds innovative support tools to improve quality interactions, and spearheads the overall voice of the customer strategy for The MLC. She regularly leads organization-wide process design and improvement initiatives using Lean Six Sigma principles (of which she is a Master Black Belt.) Service is at the heart of The MLC, and in everything Major does, she carries out this guiding principle through her commitment to maintain a strong relationship with each person she and her team serves. By building and leading a team that has helped thousands of rightsholders navigate the complex landscape of mechanical licensing and become members of The MLC, Lindsey has established a new standard for service in the music industry.

The MLC was created under the Music Modernization Act of 2018 (MMA), revolutionizing the way songwriters, publishers, and other rightsholders receive their mechanical royalties. As part of the leadership team, Major’s role supports the organization’s efforts to ensure songwriters, composers, lyricists and music publishers and administrators receive their digital audio mechanical royalties from streaming and download services in the U.S. accurately and on time.

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Mallory Fatke, The Mechanical Licensing Collective (MLC)
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Submission #15

**Dae Bogan**

*Head of Third-Party Partnerships*
**The Mechanical Licensing Collective (MLC)**

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As The MLC’s Head of Third-Party Partnerships, Dae Bogan leads the efforts to identify and engage third-party partners in the publishing, rights management and music distribution sectors of the industry and in the music technology space (streaming, music distribution, asset management platforms). In his role, Bogan has established connections with over 100 companies and organizations, educating them about The MLC and exploring how they could support its mission. In the last year, Bogan led the launch of a new data portal for The MLC, the Distributor Unmatched Recordings Portal (DURP), by working closely with seven key independent music distributors. This portal provides the opportunity for distributors to interact with data on over 3.5 million recordings and millions of dollars in associated unmatched mechanical royalties. This will allow distributors to work with their customers to register their songs with The MLC and claim any unmatched royalties for their songs that The MLC has accrued. This new portal joins The MLC’s growing suite of tools that leverage their publicly available data to improve data quality and fulfill their mission to pay rightsholders accurately and on time. Distributors who tested an early version of this new portal include TuneCore, CD Baby, Believe, Repost by SoundCloud, Symphonic Distribution, Empire and Vydia. Nearly 50 distributors have since begun using the portal. In his role, Bogan leads The MLC’s outreach efforts aimed at rightsholders from diverse and traditionally underrepresented communities, activating several service partnership initiatives with third-party partners such as House of Blues' Music Forward Foundation and Vh1 Save The Music Foundation, curating cultural virtual roundtables, and leading the planning of The MLC's first Black Music Month summit.

Bogan’s work exemplifies The MLC’s guiding principle of service, and his efforts to engage with a diverse group of stakeholders and prospective members helped The MLC grow its membership to more than 23,000 in 2022.

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Mallory Fatke, The Mechanical Licensing Collective (MLC)
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Submission #16

**Donovan Watkis**

*CEO/Writer*
**World Music Views**

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Donovan Watkis, the CEO of World Music Views, is a true leader in the music industry and a deserving candidate for The #NEXTGEN\_NOW One To Watch Award. His platform has played an essential role in the development of niche music genres all over the world, giving a voice to artists who might have otherwise gone unnoticed. Through his innovative and entrepreneurial spirit, Watkis has created a space that celebrates cultural diversity and promotes the growth of the music industry on a global scale.

Under Watkis' leadership, World Music Views has emerged as a unique and vital platform that connects music enthusiasts with some of the most exciting and innovative artists from around the world, particularly representing dancehall, reggae, acrobats and MENA music cultures. Through his vision and hard work, Watkis has created a thriving community of music lovers and industry professionals who are passionate about promoting cultural diversity in music. His exceptional leadership, dedication, and innovation have made World Music Views/worldmusicviews.com an essential leading contributor to the music industry, and his work stands out as a shining example of what can be achieved with passion, commitment, and creativity. He developed the first music business platform in the Caribbean dedicated to investigating copyrights & catalogues and find their rightful owners. For all these reasons and more, Donovan Watkis deserves to win The #NEXTGEN\_NOW One To Watch Award.

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Debbie Bissoon, World Music Views
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Submission #17

**Andrew Batey**

*Founder + Co-CEO*
**Beatdapp**

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Andrew Batey is a perfect candidate for this award as he is truly solving real-world issues for the music business at large with his company – Beatdapp – which is dedicated to combating streaming fraud. I can't think of anyone better to receive this award given by the Music Business Association as what Andrew is doing truly exemplifies the future of music commerce and maintaining a healthy ecosystem for the business. His work is next AND now.

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Blake McDaniel, CAA
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Submission #18

**Nermina Mumic**

*MSc*
**Legitary**

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I'm nominating Nermina Mumic, the CEO & Founder of Legitary, a deep tech startup that aims to bring fairness and transparency to the music streaming industry. Legitary provides award-winning, patented AI tools to audit streaming revenues and provide fair, data-driven valuations for music rights. Their AI engine has already analyzed well over 400 billion streams and is currently used by labels, auditors, collection societies and M&A teams. Nermina is a mathematician and developed & patented Legitary's streaming auditing solution as part of her PhD research in statistics. Nermina holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Technical Mathematics from the Vienna University of Technology, where she graduated with distinction. In 2016, she started her PhD in Statistics under the supervision of an internationally leading scientist in the field of robust statistics, which allowed her to conduct groundbreaking research on outlier detection methods with application to music streaming. She filed two patents and founded Legitary as a university spin-off based on her research, making her the brain behind the technology.

This scientific achievement made her a finalist at the World Science Summit & Falling Walls for the 'Scientific Breakthrough of the Year 2020' in the Science Startup category.

Nermina has also been nominated for several business awards such as the Austrian State Prize, the Austrian Founders Prize and the Digital Female Leader Award, selected among Austria's Top 100 Young Entrepreneurs, Forbes 30under30 and is a Global Shaper at the World Economic Forum.

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Sebastian Stark, Legitary
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Submission #19

**Shrina Patel**

*Director, Business & Legal Affairs*
**Merlin**

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Shrina Patel is Director, Business & Legal Affairs at Merlin, the independent’s digital music licensing partner. Since joining the team nearly three years ago, she has negotiated a variety of deals to enable the usage of independent music on digital services. She also focuses on bringing significant revenue to the independent music community and novel opportunities to earn revenue beyond traditional streaming services. Her work keeps independents at the forefront of innovation in the digital music space, allowing Merlin members to benefit from the prevalence of independent artists and music on platforms such as social and gaming services. Shrina often collaborates with digital services in their first music industry deals, helping to shape their approach to using music and finding creative ways to partner and drive value. In the past year, Shrina has worked on deals including a high value and complex renewal with Facebook and another involving micro-licenses for YouTube creators. Early 2022 saw the announcement of a partnership between Merlin and Lickd, a platform that lets video creators legally use copyrighted music and audio in their videos. She was also instrumental in Merlin’s deal with Twitch (announced in February 2022) and Pinterest (announced October 2022) — the first music industry deals for these services alongside other major rightsholders. 2022 closed out with a deal that brought together Merlin members’ music, fitness, and gaming when the company announced another deal that Shrina spearheaded: a partnership with Supernatural, the VR fitness app for Meta Quest headsets.

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Crystal Henderson, The Press House
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Submission #20

**Jenna Gaudio**

*Chief Operating Officer*
**Vydia**

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Jenna Gaudio is a music and media technology executive who specializes in building, aligning, and scaling successful teams that deliver innovative, industry-leading products and outcomes. Gaudio currently serves as COO of Vydia, an end-to-end music technology platform that provides innovative infrastructure and tools to some of the most influential music businesses in the world. Known for being an impactful catalyst for change and growth in an organization, Gaudio’s previous roles at Vydia include SVP Operations, VP Product, and Head of Marketing, leading the company with a strategic, agile plan at every inflection point, and allowing the company to continue launching a record number of industry changing products year after year. Prior to Vydia, Gaudio built and managed the marketing team at video ad tech company, Yashi, where she played a critical role in the company’s successful acquisition in 2015 for $33M by Nexstar Media Group. Focused on successful team building that leads to rapid innovation, Gaudio is most proud of the award-winning culture at Vydia that has led to the company being named a “Best Place to Work” for four years, as well as being honored as an Inc 5000 Fastest Growing Company in America four times.

Gaudio has achieved many personal accolades such as being named a Top 50 Women in Business by NJBIZ in 2021, Product Leader of the Year in 2019, and won The American Business Association's awards for "Female Executive of the Year" and the “Women Helping Women” in 2018. With a priority of providing employees the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally, Gaudio led the execution of many employee-first programs, including Vydia’s Professional Development Reimbursement Program to enhance professional output and personal growth, and Sweat Equity Reimbursement Program, encouraging healthy exercise to support employee well-being. Gaudio is also the Executive sponsor of Vydia’s Culture Committee, aimed to promote and drive the company’s culture through a variety of initiatives, and Vydia’s Benefits Committee, focused on proposing ideas and programs to improve employee satisfaction. Passionate about elevating the visibility and success of other women in tech, Gaudio serves as Executive Director of Jersey Shore Women in Tech, an organization that supports, educates, mentors, and develops a network for women in business. Gaudio also graduated from Monmouth University Honors School with a focus on Communication and Media Studies and remains an active mentor to the community. Gaudio has led partnerships with notable organizations including MusicBiz, a global network connecting, empowering, and educating the industry; SXSW, a conference that celebrates the convergence of tech, film, and music industries; Women In Music, a non-profit organization committed to advancing equality, visibility and opportunities for women in music; and A2IM and their Black Independent Music Accelerator program (BIMA), a fellowship initiative with the intention of fighting for social and economic justice within the music industry by amplifying independent, Black-owned music businesses. She also participates as a mentor, speaker, and supporter of several industry and community-driven programs including the All Stars Project, the Boys and Girls Club in Asbury Park, Executive Women in Product, and HOBY’s annual leadership conference. Her charisma and success has led her to become a recognized role model within the tech community. Whether it be mentoring interns to giving seasoned professional advice from her own experiences, or coaching her direct reports, Gaudio continues to pave the way for more women to find their own success. She has created a large community of women who champion the idea of using their individual strength and ability to lean into difficult situations in order to positively affect their environments.

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Stephanie Riordan, Vydia
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Submission #21

**Desiree Zapata**

*Senior Product Manager*
**EMPIRE**

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My name is CRYS, an independent latin pop artist based in LA and Desiree has been working as my creative manager for 6 years now. She has operated in many different capacities as a key part of developing my brand.

Here are a few of the main things she's done for me to name a few: artist development, styling, A&R services, video directing, creative directing, graphic designing, social media coordinating, marketing strategy, content creating, hair & makeup and so much more. She has been my day to day, consistently showing up and showing out with unique creative ideas, a strong work ethic and a heart of gold that has shaped me as a person and an artist.

Most recently our work was highlighted by Billboard on article "23 latino artists to listen to in 2023": <https://www.billboard.com/lists/23-artistas-latinos-que-escuchar-en-2023/>

Here are some of my top music videos with creative direction and styling by Desiree:

Negocios- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnP1XgFRe3k>

Juntos- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZE0TuRWpF8>

Pause- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFFO-7Rx7Ik>

I've attached some pictures with styling and creative direction by Desiree.

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Crystal Osorio, CRYS
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Submission #22

**Gareth Mellor**

*Vice President of Global Marketing and Communications [role embargoed until end of Q1 2023]*
**Downtown Music Holdings**

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Gareth Mellor is the Vice President of Global Communications and Marketing for Downtown Music Holdings. (role embargoed until end of Q1) With a prolific and accomplished career spanning over 14 years, Gareth Mellor’s extensive experience across multiple aspects of brand and artist marketing, partnerships and events has been widely significant and recognised. A music executive with strong, demonstrative global strategy and leadership skills, Mellor has seen award-winning success with SAAS platforms, music-tech, edtech and entertainment brands, counting senior marketing roles at FUGA, Kobalt / AWAL, Tunecore and now Downtown as part of his extensive repertoire. Mellor has a proven track record of driving growth and establishing a strong brand presence in the music industry.

As Head of UK & Ireland for TuneCore, Mellor oversaw the expansion of the world’s largest DIY distributor, generating a 65% YoY increase in new clients and leading the launch of the company in Australia and New Zealand. At Kobalt Music Group, where he was the Marketing Director for UK & Europe and later the Director of Strategic Marketing for AWAL, Mellor oversaw all marketing initiatives for the company’s four divisions; led all major brand, partnership and event-based activity globally, and oversaw the rebranding of AWAL in the region. Since 2021, Mellor has directly established and led the central marketing function at world-leading B2B music distributor, FUGA - a division of Downtown Music - as its Global Head of B2B Marketing. In January 2023 Gareth Mellor was promoted to VP of Global Marketing and Communications at Downtown Music Holdings [this role is embargoed till end of March 2023]. In his new position, reporting to Downtown CMO, Molly Neuman, Mellor now oversees the marketing and communication efforts of Downtown’s complete portfolio of businesses, including CD Baby, Songtrust, Downtown Music Services and FUGA. Over the last 12-18 months, Mellor has been instrumental across a range of notable achievements at FUGA, including the expansion of the B2B marketing team from 3 members of staff to 6, and establishing its core function to oversee global marketing, press, events and internal communications for the company.

As a result, FUGA has been successfully re-positioned as a creative business, leading to a 5x increase in press coverage and in the last 12 months, a 9x nomination increase in the amount of awards and lists, (including Music Week Awards, Liberas and Computing Awards) more than it has in the past decade, with its team featuring on double the amount of panels YOY. Other key achievements include: - Restructuring FUGA’s client communication process, resulting in a 60% email open rate and a 9-point increase in the best-ever NPS score of 51. - Mellor re-launched FUGA's social accounts and content, leading to 5% organic monthly follower growth and double the engagement. - Launched FUGA’s first live music showcases, overseeing ‘sell out’ events (including the Great Escape, Reeperbahn and Music Biz) whilst evolving the company’s - webinar brand and opening this up to new audiences. In the last 12 months, this has seen a 3x increase in sign-ups with much more broader topics at the focus. - Mellor has also introduced a new product marketing process for FUGA, which has supported the successful release of 20+ products and features in the last year. - Mellor updated and introduced lead tracking, resulting in a 10% monthly increase in unique traffic and reduced funnel overload with more robust routing. These efforts have helped FUGA increase revenue by 40% YoY via new business and cross-sales. - Overseen the integration of two companies and has recently led the integration of a sister company into the FUGA brand. In September 2022, Mellor was elected onto the board of trustees for mental health charity, Music Minds Matter - a charity set up by Help Musicians. A trusted voice of expertise within the music industry and an ally for mental health advocacy, Mellor has lent his expertise to multiple panels and conferences, including Music Biz, Primavera Pro, Technology for Marketing, Brighton Music Conference, Figaro Digital Marketing Summit and more; as well as being a mentor for A2IM, the BIMM Institute and Focus Wales.

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Emma Cordell, FUGA (a Downtown Music division)
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Submission #23

**Sina Seger**

*Vice President of Accounts*
**FlyteVu**

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Sina Seger is Vice President of Accounts at Marketing Agency FlyteVu, a Nashville based full-service entertainment marketing agency founded in 2015 that connects brands to consumers through compelling storytelling, unparalleled experiences, and the power of pop culture. Seger joined FlyteVu in 2017 and in her role as VP of Accounts she has spearheaded brand partnerships in music and entertainment for corporate brands including Barefoot Wines, Cracker Barrel, Norwegian Cruise Lines, and Vanderbilt Health. The former Swiss banker with an MBA from Vanderbilt University and a passion for the art of songwriting utilizes her many talents to lead the FlyteVu account teams in strategizing and executing innovative and meaningful campaigns using the power of music, entertainment, and the latest innovations in tech and pop culture. Notable campaigns she’s led include Vanderbilt Health’s ‘Gratitunes’ with Brad Paisley and 100+ artists and influencers to uplift and encourage essential workers during the height of the Covid 19 Pandemic in 2020, Jack Daniel’s Tennessee Apple product launch with Kesha at the Houdini Estate in Los Angeles, Cracker Barrel’s ‘Five Decades, One Voice’ celebrating the brand’s 50-year anniversary by shining a spotlight on 50 years of women in country music and providing a platform and mentorship for emerging female country artists, an AR music experience for Barefoot Wine with Black Eyed Peas, and a multi-year partnership between Norwegian Cruise Line and Kelly Clarkson as the Godmother to their ship Norwegian Encore and face of their ‘Giving Joy’ contest honoring teachers. Most recently, Sina has led cross-functional teams in advising FlyteVu’s first web3 client R Labs on their go-to-market strategy for their genesis token project R Planet resulting in a full mint-out in less than one hour despite adverse market conditions, producing a signature event with performances from Future and Latto during Miami’s F1 Racing weekend for Patrón Tequila, and bringing to life Vanderbilt Health Work Perks, a full-month employee rewards program that engaged businesses and entertainment venues in the Greater Nashville Area to provide a gamified rewards experience and accomplished a significant uptick in employee retention.

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Brittany Rashkin, FlyteVu
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Submission #24

**Ian Simon**

*Founder and CEO*
**Strangeloop Studios**

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Ian Simon has made an immense impact on the music industry both as a creative and an entrepreneur exploring the frontiers of virtual artists and experiences. Ian played a major role in bringing to life some of the most memorable tours of the last decade. He has personally toured with Ms. Lauryn Hill, Future, Denzel Curry, DJ Snake, Zeds Dead, and many others, designing and running tour visuals. He also served as Kendrick Lamar's visual content director from 2013 to 2019, spanning MAAD City (opening for Kanye on the Yeezus tour) to DAMN, headlining Coachella 2017, and subsequent world tours. LA-based visual content production house Strangeloop Studios, which Ian co-founded and currently serves as CEO, has designed tour visuals for The Weeknd, Lil Nas X, Dua Lipa, Lizzo, Vince Staples, and more. His shows have been seen by tens of millions of people, and notably, he produced the visuals for Billie Eilish's 2019 Apple Music Awards show at the Steve Jobs Theater. With the loss of live music due to the pandemic, Ian acted with great foresight into the potential for virtual music engagement and launched Spirit Bomb, the world's first "virtual artist" label. Ian founded and grew Spirit Bomb, a subsidiary of Strangeloop, as CEO in 2020, leading a multimillion dollar fundraising round led by Warner Music Group and Sony Music. Spirit Bomb virtual artists are fictional characters, run by artists and fans, that perform real-world concerts and have performed for over 10,000 people around the world. One of their artists, LV.4, has a tour that will be announced this year. At the same time, Ian buoyed Strangeloop Studios through COVID by pivoting into creative direction for virtual concerts. Ian personally provided creative direction for virtual concerts on TikTok from The Weeknd & Calvin Harris, as well as advising the Wave on concerts from Justin Bieber, John Legend, and more.

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Megan Dembkowski, INFAMOUS PR
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Submission #25

**Peter Harvey**

*CEO*
**RoyFi Inc**

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Peter is a Co-Founder and CEO of RoyFi, Inc. He earned his A.B. Economics; M.B.A. with concentrations in Finance and Marketing, from Rollins College.  As a lifelong music enthusiast, Peter began researching the music financing market as the Head of Research for a $30 billion investment consulting firm and was appalled by the “payday-lending” model being used by advance providers in the industry. Very simply, creatives were/are being taken advantage of due to their lack of financial savvy and need for capital to fund their careers. Utilizing his financial background and passion for music, Peter co-founded RoyFi to democratize access to capital for the creative class through non-recourse advances, at rates that are significantly lower than what is currently available to creatives.  RoyFi has also created a fully-automated and innovative advance platform that easily plugs into any royalty-paying organization to be used as a tool for artists, producers, and songwriters in a private but secure manner. RoyFi is dedicated to providing creatives with access to reasonably priced capital that helps move their careers forward!

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Submission #26

**Caren Kelleher**

*Founder & CEO*
**Gold Rush Vinyl**

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Caren Kelleher (age 39) has spent the past 20 years working hard to help independent musicians succeed, most recently as the founder & CEO of Gold Rush Vinyl, the record pressing plant of Austin, Texas. Even as a child, it was her dream to work in the music business and I'm proud to nominate her for this award in recognition of the ways in which she has turned her dream into reality, helping so many others along the way. Prior to starting Gold Rush Vinyl, Caren was Head of Music App Partnerships at Google Play and was on the 2011 launch team for Google Music / Google Play, where she developed and ran its indie artist marketing programs. People thought she was nuts for leaving such a great job in Silicon Valley to start a vinyl pressing plant in 2017; but she saw how important vinyl for touring musicians and how difficult it was to get made, especially after her experiences as an band manager. Caren took on the daunting task of building a brand new factory, growing her team and competing in a male-dominated industry as one of only two woman-owned pressing plants. Today, Caren's pressing vinyl for thousands of artists -- from Dolly Parton and Weezer to local bands just getting their start. Her new business divisions -- making gold and platinum records, and upcycling recycled vinyl into new products -- showcase the ingenuity that earned Gold Rush Vinyl a spot on Fast Company's "Most Innovative Companies of 2020" list and Forbes Next 1000 awards. Caren also cares deeply about supporting the next generation of women in music. She has provided dozens of female college students with internships and scholarships, helping them secure full-time jobs at companies like BMI, CAA, Capitol Records, SXSW and TikTok. She is a frequent guest lecturer at schools like University of Texas, Texas A&M, NYU and her alma maters, Emory University and Harvard Business School. Caren is also on the board of The Recording Academy's Texas chapter and supports Austin-based music non-profits like Sonic Guild, Health Alliance for Austin Musicians and Austin Music Foundation, which provide crucial services to independent artists. Caren is a force to be reckoned with and her company's commitments to sustainability, diversity and community are ones that other leaders should take note of.

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<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/01/Gold-Rush-Vinyl-is-Changing-the-Record-Pressing-Game-Tribeza.pdf>

<https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/191-7fc0cb8ac11d159d6b676172c3008624/2023/01/Striking-Vinyl-Gold-EASTside-Magazine.pd>

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Sami Newman, Corner Market Communications
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Submission #27

**Matthew Galizia**

*VP, Music Publishing Services*
**The Orchard**

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In 2020, Matt Galizia negotiated and spearheaded a partnership between The Orchard and Sony Music Publishing to launch The Orchard's first ever publishing administration department. Under Matt’s leadership and industry expertise, the publishing team has amassed a roster of 140+ labels, artists and management companies comprising over 30,000 unique songs which makes the Orchard SMP's largest publishing client in North America. Publishing is a sector of the music industry where there is a common lack of understanding and a widespread inability to monetize rights, especially in emerging territories. Matt’s efforts have empowered independent and upcoming artists worldwide by giving them the opportunity to not only understand their publishing rights but also the agency to collect the money that is due to them and further their careers in music.

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Aidan Miller, The Orchard
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Submission #28

**Bryan Bakke**

*Director of Business Development*
**ORFIUM**

bryan.bakke@orfium.com

Bryan and his work with ORFIUM has been astronomically impactful for the larger music industry, and specifically for the production music community. He was promoted as the new Director of Business Development recently after just a short time at the company. This new leadership role continues to positively impact our community and he is very deserving of this award.

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Morgan McKnight, Production Music Association
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Submission #29

**Kick Lee**

*Executive Director*
**CMA**

kick@cmastaff.org

Kick has contributed to the nonprofit sector of music with CMA and their various endeavors like: SSP, MBA, Talent Agency and Stage Trailers! Under his guidance, CMA has served all over Cincinnati and is expanding to Columbus and even other states! They have a diverse roster of talent musicians and the continuous education they offer propels those students to become full time musicians.

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Samantha Martin, CMA
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