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By JASON KASHDAN / CBS NEWS / September 26, 2014, 10:55 AM

2015 Grammy Music Educator semifinalists announced



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On Feb. 8 2015, America will tune into the 57th Annual Grammy awards on CBS.

While the ceremony is held to present artists with the recording industry's most prestigious award, The Recording Academy and The Grammy Foundation will also honor one local hero.

For the second year, the organization will recognize a music educator who has "made a significant and lasting contribution to the field of music education and who demonstrate[s] a commitment to the broader cause of maintaining music education in the schools."

Last year's winner Kent Knappenberger from the small town of Westfield, New York, shared how the award created a paradigm shift in his school.



LOS ANGELES, California - JANUARY 25: Chairman of the GRAMMY Foundation Rusty Rueff, The Recording Academy president/CEO Neil Portnow, Kent Knappenberger and Chair of the National Recording Academy's Board of Trustees Christine Albert at the Special Merit Awards Ceremony as part of the 56th GRAMMY

"It's still impacting me and it's impacting my students," Knappenberger said.

And even though he received the award in February, he's still seeing the effects.

"There's a joke with me and my band director. Until they crown the next Miss America, you're going to be pretty busy," Knappenberger said.

This year, 7,000 nominations were submitted from all 50 states. The 25

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Awards on January 25, 2014 in Los Angeles, California / **MICHAEL BUCKNER/WIREIMAGE**

semifinalists have been announced and come from 25 cities across 17 states.

All semifinalists will have the chance to earn \$6,000 for their music department through the Ford Drive 4 UR School program.

Ten finalists will be announced in December and will be recognized for their impact on students.

The winner will be announced during Grammy week 2015 and will be flown to Los Angeles to accept the award and a \$10,000 honorarium.

As exciting as the award is, Knappenberger said there's still more to be done.

"The national average of the kids we impact is 12 percent. We need to think differently how we can deliver our subject area to a broader population and a changing population," Knappenberger said.

Here, announcing for the first time, is the list of the 2015 Grammy Music Educator Award semifinalists:

- Diane Abrahamian, Penfield High School, Penfield, New York**
- Steven Acciani, Diamond Bar High School, Diamond Bar, California**
- Phil Aguglia, Kenmore East High School, Tonawanda, New York**
- William Bennett, Cane Bay High School, Summerville, South Carolina**
- Jared Cassidy, Windham High School, Windham, New Hampshire**
- Caleb Chapman, Pioneer High School for the Performing Arts, American Fork, Utah**
- Josh Chodoroff, Highland Park High School, Highland Park, Illinois**
- Dr. Buddy Clements, Walnut High School, Walnut, California**
- Charles Cushinery, Ed W. Clark High School, Las Vegas, Nevada**
- David Dehner, Monte Vista Christian School, Watsonville, California**
- Jamal Dickerson, Creative Arts Morgan Village Academy, Camden, New Jersey**
- Terry Eberhardt, Marriotts Ridge High School, Marriottsville, Maryland**
- Krista Fanning, Caddo Middle Magnet, Shreveport, Louisiana**
- Elizabeth Fortune, Washington Middle School, Seattle, Washington**
- Vivian Gonzalez, South Miami K-8 Center, Miami, Florida**
- Micah Haven, Meeker Middle School, Tacoma, Washington**
- Aaron Hill Sr., Smithfield High School, Smithfield, Virginia**
- Stevi Marks, Glenbrook South High School, Glenview, Illinois**
- Richard Maxwell, Arcadia High School, Phoenix, Arizona**
- Debra Reilly, Springhouse Middle School Allentown, Pennsylvania**
- Huber Smith, Maplewood Middle School, Sulphur, Louisiana**
- Michael Smith, Nyack High School, Upper Nyack, New York**
- James Story, Volunteer State Community College, Gallatin, Tennessee**
- Nancie Tobison, Barrington High School, Barrington, Illinois**
- Danny Yancey, Martin Gifted and Talented Magnet Middle School, Raleigh, North Carolina**

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