

# The Living Legends Foundation Announces its 2024 Honoree, Filmmaker and former Label President Ed Eckstine

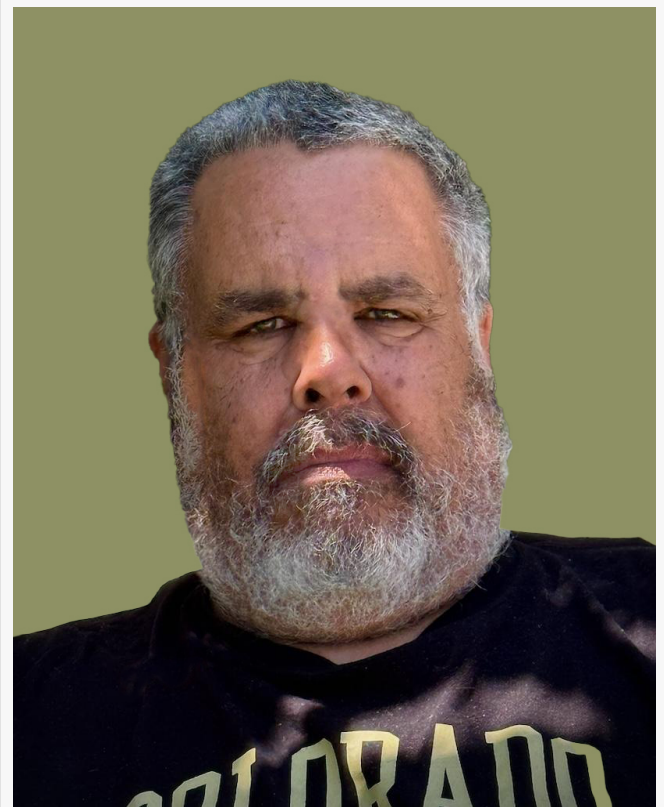
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, September 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The officers and board of directors of the Living Legends Foundation, Inc. (LLF) today announce its newest honoree, Filmmaker and Television Producer and former Label President and Music/Entertainment Executive Ed Eckstine, as its 2024 recipient of the Ray Harris Lifetime Achievement Award at its annual awards dinner and gala on Friday, October 4, 2024, at the Taglyan Cultural Complex, 1201 N. Vine Street, Hollywood, CA. The red carpet and cocktail reception begin at 6:30 p.m. with the awards dinner at 7:30 p.m.

Hosted by radio legend Skip Cheatham with entertainment by DJ Battlecat, this year's Dinner Chairpersons are Music and Entertainment Executives and former Living Legends honorees Tracey J. Jordan and Lionel Ridenour.

The Lifetime Achievement honoree Ed Eckstine grew up in the music and recording industries. The son of legendary vocalist, bandleader, and

matinee idol, Billy Eckstine, who was among the great innovators and pioneers of Jazz during the swing and bebop eras, was also known as Mr. B, by his adoring fans and fellow musicians. Billy Eckstine helped to shape the culture of Jazz. With a career spanning 50 years, he was posthumously awarded with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award (2019) and a Grammy Hall of Fame Award (1999) for his outstanding artistic and lifelong career achievements.

Ed said he was bitten by the showbiz bug from the "family dining table conversations." Eleven-year-old Ed began his career performing odd jobs on the road with his father, along with his siblings during summer vacations. The family would pack up the station wagon and tour the



Lifetime Achievement Honoree Ed Eckstine, Filmmaker and TV Producer and former Record Label President and Music Executive

country with his father.

After one year at Boston University, Ed left school and continued his journey in the music business. He had a passion for music journalism when his childhood friend David Gest got a shot writing for SOUL newspaper. During that time, Ed also penned feature stories for Al Green, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Isaac Hayes, Barry White, The Spinners, The Four Tops, The Temptations, Sarah Vaughan, Johnnie Taylor, Curtis Mayfield, Ella Fitzgerald, Norman Whitfield, Lamont Dozier, Charles Wright, Les McCann, Richard Pryor, Minnie Riperton, Syreeta Wright, Redd Foxx, and The Dramatics, among others.

In 1974, at nineteen years old, Ed joined Quincy Jones Productions and spent eleven years as a key member of his entertainment company and served as executive vice president and general manager and Jones' right-hand man.

During his tenure there, he worked on numerous projects including The Brothers Johnson, (four-time multi-platinum recordings), Michael Jackson (Off the Wall and Thriller), George Benson ("Give Me The Night"), Rufus and Chaka Khan, Patti Austin, James Ingram, The Roots soundtrack, the film adaptation of The Wiz and of course Quincy's classic recordings including the multi-Grammy Award-winning album, The Dude.

At thirty years old, Ed moved to New York City and joined Clive Davis's Arista Records as vice-president of A&R, where he contributed creatively to projects by Whitney Houston (Whitney Houston and Whitney), Kenny G. (Duotones), Aretha Franklin ("Who's Zoomin' Who" and "Freeway of Love"), Dionne Warwick & Friends ("That's What Friends Are For"), Exposé (Exposure), Jermaine Stewart ("We Don't Have To Take Our Clothes Off"), and Patrice Rushen (Watch Out!).

In 1986, Ed began a decade plus journey with PolyGram Records. PolyGram Chief Operating Officer M. Richard "Dick" Asher initially hired him to create a new West Coast-based wholly owned PolyGram label, named Wing Records. During his tenure there, he broadened the creative scope of PolyGram geographically and musically in America. Ed was fortunate to have had great success with his initial signings of Vanessa Williams, Tony! Toni! Toné!, comedian Robin Harris, and singer/songwriter Brian McKnight. He was later offered a position overseeing all creative systems, eventually morphing into co-president with Mike Bone, then ultimately the sole





This year's honorees are among the best trailblazing entertainment executives and each one has forged a unique path to excellence and have opened the doors of opportunity to many in the industry."

*David C. Linton, Chairman of  
The Living Legends  
Foundation*

president of Mercury Records.

In 1990, he was the first African American to be appointed president of a major non-Black owned record company, an industry first. He oversaw a staff of 500 employees, administrated a \$350 million-dollar operating budget and played a key role in the worldwide success of projects by Bon Jovi, Def Leppard, John Mellencamp, Tears for Fears, KISS, Oleta Adams, Black Sheep, the hit soundtrack to the film Jason's Lyric, where he was named music supervisor, which was one among several other soundtracks.

Currently, Ed is producing a documentary on his father and working on other film and television projects.

"This year's honorees are among some of the best groundbreaking and trailblazing music and entertainment executives of the 20th and 21st centuries," says David C. Linton, Chairman of the Living Legends Foundation. "Each one of our honorees have forged a unique path to excellence and greatness and have opened the doors of opportunity to many in the industry."

As previously reported, honorees include the CEO of The Recording Academy® and MusiCares® Harvey Mason jr., who will be presented with the A.D. Washington Chairman's Award; legendary radio and television broadcaster Donnie Simpson will receive the Living Legends Foundation's Jerry Boulding Radio Award; longtime entertainment attorney, entrepreneur, and advocate L. Londell McMillan will be presented with the Kendall A. Minter Entertainment Advocate Award, renamed after his recent passing; founder and CEO of Culture Creators and former record label executive Joi Brown will receive the first-ever Impact Player Award; founder and CEO of The Chamber Group and former label executive Chris Chambers will be presented with the Media Executive Award; veteran record label executive and radio broadcaster Mike Kelly will receive the Music Executive Award; and former record label executive and founder and CEO of B. Lifted Up! Gwen Franklin will be presented with the Mike Bernardo Female Executive Award for her expansive and concurrent work in multiple industries.

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