

# kelsea ballerini

**hole in the bottle**

**#75** song of **2020**

over **75 million** global streams

**homecoming queen?**

**#59** song of **2020**

over **265 million** global streams

## 2020 RIAA certifications



**2x platinum single**  
miss me more



**platinum single**  
homecoming queen?



**platinum single**  
yeah boy



**platinum album**  
the first time

thank you country radio!



# VICTORY US

## CMA BROADCAST AWARD WINNERS

**Gowns and tuxes. Group shot party photos. Gobs of chilled after-party shrimp. Yeah, that was last year. Radio winners for the 54th CMA Awards cycle may not have enjoyed the fanciest of celebrations, but their community service has never been more crucial.**



**The Team That Sleights Together:** WKXC/Augusta, GA's Cash, Jenny Bender and Dub (front, l-r) and Chris O'Kelley, Melanie Quick and Tee Gentry (back, l-r) gather for a team meeting in the simpler times before face masks and hand sanitizer.

### WKXC/Augusta, GA

#### Small Market Station

"We have always been committed to serving our community in its immediate need, and this year was no different," says OM/PD Tee Gentry. "While we all felt isolated, confused and overwhelmed, we came together to meet those needs as best we could by being good listeners on-air and online and highlighting local heroes making a difference. We also provided a gift card service for local businesses and remained a source of updated news while also hosting safe, at-home concerts. As community leaders, we felt this was the best overall approach to build a thriving community in uncertain times.

"Our *Kicks 99 Wake-Up Krew* continues generating promotions to give back to listeners and keep them entertained. During the pandemic, the team also created a new benchmark called *Good Vibes* focusing on people doing good things for their neighbors and the community. We intend to continue this long after the pandemic subsides. We also continue giving back through the *Kicks 99 Christmas Wish* to meeting holiday needs throughout the area, and through the *Kicks 99 Backpack Blowout* providing school supplies to local residents and their children.

"As a team, we celebrated the win with a lot of hooting, hollering and even a couple tears. Seriously – Jenny from the Wake-Up Krew cried on the phone with Luke Combs! Beyond that, we are working on a true celebration when we can come together at a ridiculously nice restaurant and put a couple drinks in our hands."

### WUSY/Chattanooga, TN

#### Medium Market Station

"In addition to the pandemic, our community experienced additional hardships, the most devastating of which was a series of tornadoes that struck the area at approximately 11:30pm on Easter Sunday," explains SVP/Programming Justin Cole. "Homes were demolished, streets were closed, and power lines were down, all within a half mile of the radio station. Coronavirus restrictions were already firmly in place, which limited our station's ability to execute a physical response. While we were unable to be onsite for relief efforts and fundraising, our staff was able to go on-air immediately with information. As the National Guard rolled into town to distribute supplies, we let listeners know where they could drop off donations and advised those needing assistance where they could find help. We matched the feeling of the market and became an outlet for information and support, crying with those who lost everything and sharing the warmth with those able to offer help.

"Connection is paramount, so listeners' voices and their interactions with talent are invaluable. By using socials, virtual meetings, voicemails and other available technology, we continue to make certain our audience has a strong presence in all areas of our brand. Everyone on this team is passionate about our community. Without them, we don't exist – much less matter. Between the pandemic, natural disasters and the election, they've been done with the negative for quite some time, and we have thrived on being an escape from the craziness of politics, opinion, polarity or speculation. Our job continues to be serving as a companion who has a shared love of country music and the community.

"WUSY is a tight group; I often refer to it as a family. Much of our team was watching the nominees press conference, and there was an immediate group text thread and an onslaught of calls to one another. The day Ken & Daniel received the call saying we were winners was a very happy one. I've watched the effort this staff puts in daily, and I see their dedication to the community, their passion for the product and their humble hearts. To be recognized with an award amongst such a talented and competitive field of nominees really is an honor. We aired the *CMA Awards* on the station and thanked our listeners for the win because – again – it's all about the community and the team."



**Hope Totes:** WUSY/Chattanooga staffers show off their *St. Jude Radiothon* total in the pre-pandemic days of early March. Pictured (l-r) are St. Jude's Haley Cameron; WUSY's Cowboy Kyle, Styckman, Mo, Tyler Stansell, Tiffany Irving, Nichole Hartman, Justin Cole and Devon Owens; and St. Jude's Allison Buchignani.



**Hear Me, Hear Me:** KNCI/Sacramento's Tom Mailey (l) and Joey Tack solicit donations for the station's *Earbuds For Education* drive.

### KNCI/Sacramento

#### Large Market Station

"Our area has been hit on multiple levels with lockdowns and shelter-in-place orders due to the case numbers in California, as well as the threats of wildfires that spread statewide and drew national media attention," says PD Joey Tack. "In spite of all that has happened, our team has remained focused on being a source of local and relatable information with timely updates and news, as well as staying positive while instituting uplifting on-air benchmarks and promotions, including our *Health Care Hero Of The Day* and *Educator Spotlight* features. In addition to serving the community, being a beacon of light in a rather dark year has been the goal for KNCI. As the area transitioned to distance learning, we held an *Earbuds For Education* drive that brought in 425 pairs of headphones for students to use as part of their at-home school setups.

"Our digital focus has shifted to more creation and engagement and less curation of third-party content. Connection has been important, and we want to be accessible to our listeners, serve as a conduit to their favorite music and entertainment and also elevate the KNCI brand across platforms. Part of the initiative includes the launch of our Split Screen Sessions featuring on-air talent interviewing artists via Facebook Live. We've also created a digital liner sheet that is updated in real-time for our on-air talent. We intend to continue both long after a return to 'normalcy.'

"This is the first CMA Award win for KNCI, and the team has been thrilled to be recognized. Without the ability to gather in person, we celebrated with a group email chain and video call. Plus, morning co-host Pat Still surprised us all with Station Of The Year t-shirts!"



**Having A Ball-oon:** KSCS/Dallas' Mark "Hawkeye" Louis, Michelle Rodriguez and Al Farb (l-r) find colorful ways to spend time together during the pandemic.

**KSCS/Dallas**

**Major Market Station**

"The station's already active community involvement plan began with our *10K For Troops* garnering more than 50,000 cards for our military members serving overseas last Christmas," explains PD Mike Preston. "Our *Cook Children's Radiothon* also raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for our local children's hospital. Once coronavirus impacted our area, however, we turned to daily pandemic news updates and running personal PSAs from our on-air team talking about staying safe and new restrictions. We connected with our restaurant clients for our *Front Line Food Run* that allowed listeners to purchase lunches or dinners online for medical teams at area hospitals. That generated thousands of donated meals, which also helped our local restaurants during a time when dining out was restricted or prohibited. Additionally, we launched a *First Responder Of The Week* spotlight honoring the selfless folks putting their lives on the line each day.

"Something we will continue along with the on-air elements is the frequency of our team meetings. We have a weekly full programming team meeting, but have added a daily meeting for myself, KSCS APD Al Farb, KPLX APD Smokey Rivers and Dir./Marketing Rebecca Silvers. We brainstorm and run through details on elements ranging from music to appearances and everything between. Since our team moved to work-from-home just two weeks after I joined the cluster, I have only worked with this team via Zoom, but the meetings have been invaluable and productive.

"Similarly, because we are working remotely, our celebration of the big CMA win included emails all around! The Cumulus/Dallas community is large with six full stations, so the kudos and congratulations were ample. We are also working on some other ideas to more personally honor the core team for the amazing efforts that resulted in this honor."

**"Officer Don" Evans, DeAnn Stephens**

OFFICER DON & DEANN, WBUL/LEXINGTON, KY

**Small Market Personality**

"Adjusting to virtual was a learning curve, but we kept our audience and community connected with live online music events including *The Kentucky Campfire Series*," say Evans and Stephens. "We also took advantage of the extra time artists had while not touring to create a podcast series with extended artist interviews. And we brought some much-needed positivity to the area with random acts of kindness, which allowed us to remain on the streets while observing CDC guidelines. The *Officer Don & DeAnn* show pumped gas for front line workers, delivered lunch to teachers, honored moms pulling double-duty as at-home educators and provided gift cards to those doing good around the community.

"More than anything, this year drove home the importance of providing an escape and adapting to the community needs. It was our mission to do both while playing the country music fans love. We also prioritized getting in front of our listeners as much as possible – in person, via socials and on-air. We had been affected in much the same way as them, so we maintained a balance of realism and positivity. When the pandemic is over, those are the lessons we will take with us.

"As for celebrating, we sat in front of the television in our pajamas, poured a few drinks and watched the show. The first time we won in 2017, we had the privilege of representing our Country broadcast community in Nashville during a whirlwind of events. This time was much more like slow-motion, and it gave us the chance to reflect and be amazed at this very humbling experience."



**Trophy Self:** "Officer Don" Evans (l) and DeAnn Stephens recreate the thrill of victory with a helicopter ride alongside their CMA trophy from 2017.

**Clay Moden, Rob Banks, Val Townsend**

CLAY & COMPANY, WYRK/BUFFALO, NY

**Medium Market Personality**

"When lockdown began, *Clay & Company* became an outlet and a voice for small businesses," says Moden. "We invited local business owners to tell us how they are keeping Buffalo moving forward, which connected so well with the audience and clients that we are still doing it each morning." Adds Banks, "It gives listeners a chance to learn the backstory and features of businesses in the area and has been tremendously successful.

"We may have been working remotely instead of broadcasting together in the same room, but we love to bring country music – especially new music – to Buffalo," Banks says. "So much new music was put out during this pandemic and we all love listening to albums front-to-back, so we would play our favorite non-singles from new albums every few days. That's been a great new element we hope to keep moving forward."

Moden notes, "This was a great win for our team, but it was a huge win for our city and audience. In a year of losses, getting this award means we have worked hard to entertain, inform and become friends with the people who tune in each day, so it is as much their win as ours. We celebrate that morning after morning with the audience!" Concludes Banks, "My family also had a viewing party for us that was over-the-top and slightly embarrassing. My mom had a backdrop and red carpet, and she put everyone's name on a star. A few of our family members even played parts as show runners and interviewers. They made an unfortunate situation – not being able to celebrate together in Nashville – a very memorable one."



**Make It WYRK:** In lieu of a star-studded celebration in Nashville, Clay & Company's Rob Banks, Clay Moden and Val Townsend (l-r) enjoy a more casual outing and accept their handmade trophies from Banks' mom (inset).

**"Big Dave" Chandler, Chelsie Shinkle, Jason Statt, Ashley Hempfling**

THE BIG DAVE SHOW, WUBE/CINCINNATI

**Large Market Personality**

"Early on, we focused on people doing good in the community: those making masks, front-line workers going the extra mile and citizens organizing food drives," Chandler says. "We also knew listeners had been hit hard by shutdowns and many were out of work, so for the two weeks leading up to Labor Day we did *The Big Dave Show's Million Dollars' Worth Of Work* campaign. We hosted on-air interviews with hiring managers and posted jobs via the station website. More than 100 Tri-State employers and countless listeners were connected for new career opportunities. The program was so successful, we've kept it going. We've also talked to several artists – including Luke Bryan, Sam Hunt, Justin Moore and Dustin Lynch – to find out what they are doing during quarantine. We felt it was important for our listeners to know their favorite artists are going through exactly what they are.

"On the digital side, we started the *Big Dave Show & Tell* where, each day after the show, we used Streamyard to go live on Facebook and YouTube, answering questions from listeners and showing them different items from our lives. We also invited special guests including Carly Pearce, Kane Brown, Chris Lane, Robert Counts and Niko Moon to participate in the feature. Additionally, our *Big Dave Show Virtual Field Trips* for Tri-State students

have been a hit! We go out to area zoos, museums and factories on Mondays, record our field trips and play them back Wednesday of the same week during a live Zoom with local teachers and students. We plan to keep those going well into next year.

"The show picked up Large Market Personality awards from both the ACM and the CMA this year, and WUBE won ACM Large Market Station, but we didn't get to go to either show or celebrate the wins. It really is an honor to have been recognized with these prestigious awards all in one year, and maybe one day soon we'll be able to celebrate as a team accordingly."



**Branded New Man:** The *Big Dave Show's* "Big Dave" Chandler, Chelsie Shinkle, Ashley Hempfling and Jason Statt (clockwise from top left) show off their personality-branded masks during a *Big Dave Show & Tell* segment.

**THE UP-TEMPO SONG FROM A  
PROVEN HITMAKER IN THE FORMAT!**

CHRIS JANSON  
**WAITIN'  
ON  
5**

*THANK YOU  
COUNTRY RADIO  
FOR YOUR EARLY  
SUPPORT!*



**FOUR #1s AND "WAITIN' ON 5"!**



**KEYEs To Safety:** Chris Carr & Company's Kia Becht, McKaila Granning and Carr (l-r) mask up to participate in a socially distanced Food Parade with the Minnesota State Fair.

**Chris Carr, Kia Becht, McKaila Granning**

CHRIS CARR & COMPANY, KEYE/MINNEAPOLIS

**Major Market Personality**

"We truly dared to be different – but not irresponsible – and got out to help people by getting our hands dirty," Carr says. "Truckers needed food because they couldn't fit through a drive-through, so we fed them tacos in the biggest parking lot we could find. Front line workers were tired and overworked, so we found another large lot near a major hospital and fed hundreds of workers in their cars. With Memorial Day gatherings canceled due to the pandemic, we found a way to honor our heroes and feed veterans, active military and families who lost loved ones in the military during yet another drive-through event. Area children battling cancer had very little contact with anyone outside of immediate family during the pandemic, so we asked our audience to write letters to lift their spirits, garnering thousands of responses for the Pinky Swear Foundation during our *Letters Make It Better* campaign. The list goes on. We engaged and our audience stepped up. Radio works if you let it!"

"We pride ourselves on being the most interactive show in the market, both on-air and via social media, and this year showed us how to send it into overdrive. All the cool stuff we would normally give away wasn't there, so we gave our audience an abundance of information, options for their personal needs, and humor that was getting hard to find anywhere else. The year also gave us an already-heated election season and civil unrest. Sadly, politics is a major part of the pandemic, too, along with the events surrounding the passing of George Floyd here in Minneapolis. We learned that common ground can be found and unity can be achieved, and we embraced and highlighted what everyone was striving for – some kind of normalcy and eventual peace. Not everyone agrees on how to solve the issues we face together, but we can agree that we all want to help make things better."

"As is par for the course this year, our celebration after winning was pretty low-key. We may have all been home in our jammies for the awards, but we called one another an hour before it started so we could be a part of each other's night as much as possible."



**Lon Helton**

COUNTRY COUNTDOWN USA,  
WESTWOOD ONE

**National Personality**

"From the first day of *Country Countdown USA*, there have only been three of us," Helton says. "I first met Jo Pincek Hunt soon after she relocated from San Diego to Nashville, and hired her as Office Manager for *Radio & Records*/Nashville at the start of 1992."

"Three months later, then-Westwood One CEO Norm Pattiz and then-VP/Programming Gary Landis offered me the job of co-hosting a Country countdown show. The idea was to find a country star to co-host. I thought it would be difficult getting an artist to commit as full-time co-host, and floated the idea of a different one each week. When they bought into that, I knew I needed someone to book talent. Considering my oversight of the *R&R* Country chart, I wasn't comfortable booking artists, so I hired Jo, who was more than up for the challenge. For the record, however, I did book the first show. Because we were trying to be conversational with a minimalist script, I wanted someone I knew *really* well to be my first co-host. So I recruited my friend Steve Wariner for the show that aired the first weekend of April, 1992."

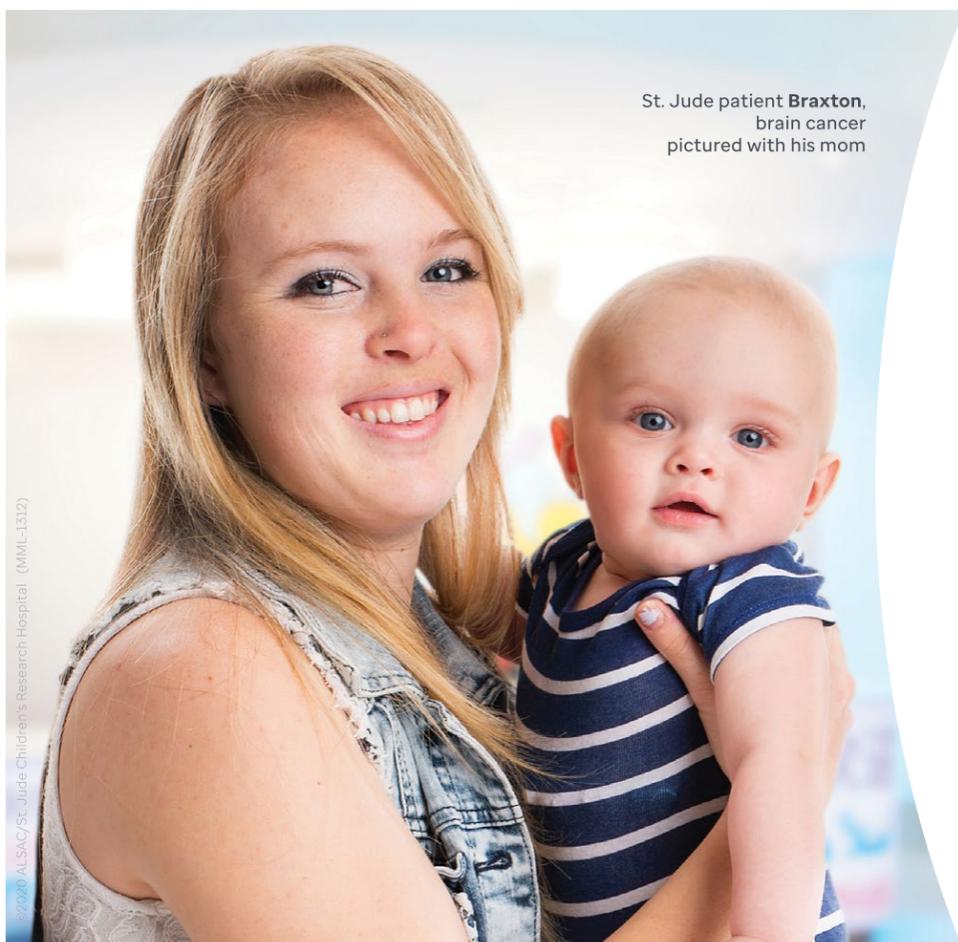
"A few career twists took Jo to High Five Productions and other projects. She is now the proprietor of Brilliant Sky, a Brentwood, TN toy store. Armed with the best Rolodex in Nashville, Jo continues to book *CCUSA*."

"George Achaves was a producer/writer for the Mutual Broadcasting System in Washington DC when he was assigned as *CCUSA*'s producer/writer. We had worked on *Listen-In* for Mutual, which ran from 1988-89, and he also produced projects with legendary Country broadcaster Lee Arnold. That experience made George the natural choice for *CCUSA*. A 35-year vet of MBS and Westwood One, the New Jersey native made the bold move to relocate to Nashville in 2002."

"It's truly a privilege to share our *tenth* CMA award. I could not have asked for better partners over the last 28 years. (I have a hard time believing either of the last two sentences.) Thank you, Jo and George. Make plans to party when this is over!"



**Crystal Light:** Achaves, Helton and Hunt share the trophy.



St. Jude patient Braxton, brain cancer pictured with his mom

Thanks to you, **we won't stop.**

Thank you for everything you do to support the lifesaving mission of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital®. Your kindness means families have a place to turn after hearing the words "your child has cancer." And your generosity means they will never receive a bill for treatment, travel, housing or food—because all a family should worry about is helping their child live.

St. Jude has helped push the overall childhood cancer survival rate from 20% to more than 80%. And we won't stop until no child dies from cancer. You make that possible.

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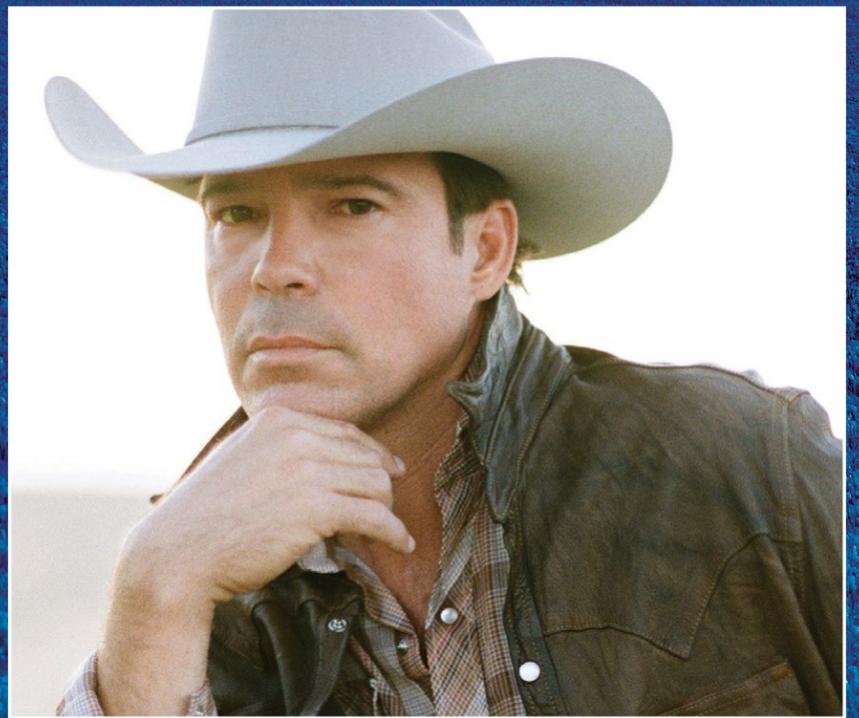


**SHOW DOG NASHVILLE**  
**15 YEARS**  
**COUNTRY STRONG**

**— BIG VOICES, BIG HITS & A BIG YEAR! —**



**TOBY KEITH**



**CLAY WALKER**

**THANK YOU Country Radio & Streamers.**

**A Clay Walker Hit**

**AND**

**Incredible New Toby Music in the New Year.**



**SESAC**

**CONGRATULATES**

**ALL OF OUR WRITERS**

**IN COUNTRY AIRCHECK'S**

**TOP 100 OF 2020**

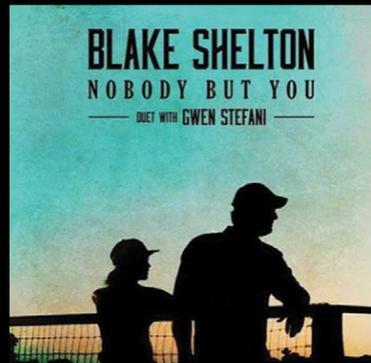


# SMACK CONGRATULATES ALL OUR WRITERS

## 12 SONGS IN THE TOP 100 OF 2020



4  
**SAM HUNT**  
"Kinfolks"



7  
**BLAKE SHELTON**  
"Nobody But You"  
featuring Gwen Stefani



8  
**OLD DOMINION**  
"One Man Band"



17  
**KANE BROWN**  
"Homesick"



20  
**SAM HUNT**  
"Hard To Forget"



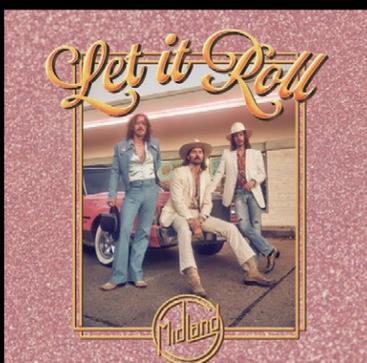
44  
**ASHLEY McBRYDE**  
"One Night Standards"



58  
**BLAKE SHELTON**  
"Happy Anywhere"  
featuring Gwen Stefani



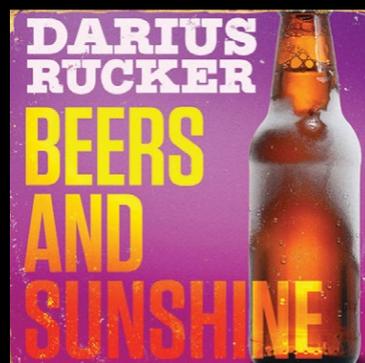
60  
**LADY A**  
"Champagne Night"



65  
**MIDLAND**  
"Cheatin' Songs"



76  
**RASCAL FLATTS**  
"How They Remember You"



83  
**DARIUS RUCKER**  
"Beers And Sunshine"



87  
**OLD DOMINION**  
"Some People Do"