

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

July 24, 2023

Friends of Georgia Radio announces 2023 Georgia Radio Legends

ATLANTA, Ga. — Friends of Georgia Radio, the non-profit organization dedicated to developing the next generation of innovators in audio through scholarships and mentoring, promotes innovation to ensure a healthy and vibrant industry that serves communities, and celebrates Georgia radio legends, is announcing the 2023 Class of Georgia Radio Legends.

These are six professionals, nominated by Friends of Georgia Radio members, who make a positive difference in radio and audio arts, serve as leaders of their communities and organizations, and help to define radio's future.

This year's honorees are:

Ms. Carol Blackmon, Retired Air Talent, WIGO, WVEE-FM, WAMJ (all Atlanta), Syndicated Talk-show Host, current Host of The Georgia Lottery, and Member of the National Black Radio Hall of Fame.

Mr. Mark Kanov, Retired, former Vice President and General Manager of WQXI-AM & FM and WSTR FM, Atlanta.

Mr. Charles Kinney, Current Director of Engineering & Technology, COX Media Group, Atlanta, and Athens.

Mr. Ken Woodfin, Retired, 50-Year

plus veteran Radio Broadcaster. Former owner of multiple stations in Columbus and Macon, plus stations in Alabama and Florida.

Mr. Alan Sneed, Retired, former Programming Consultant. Former Program Director of WKLS-FM, Atlanta ("96 ROCK") and ABC Radio.

Mr. Rick Caffey, SVP and Market Manager at Audacy Atlanta, including V103 Atlanta, WAOK, 92.9/TheGame, and Star/94.1, Former BAG board member and cornerstone participant in the Radio Talent Institute.

In addition, Friends of Georgia Radio will recognize the late **Gene Harden**, owner of WTWA/WTHO Thomson, Georgia, as its first Georgia Radio Pioneer.

"This is such a terrific group of professionals," said Friends of Georgia Radio president Richard Warner. "Our panel of volunteer judges, who built their own solid careers in the industry, were impressed with the caliber of all 20 nominated and excited about the impact each honoree has made on our industry and our state."

For more information, contact:
admin@friendsofgeorgiaradio.org



***Hall of Legends
Class of 2023***

Carol Blackmon

Bio: Carol is a legendary media professional who has spent more than four decades as a radio

personality and nearly thirty years as a television host for the Georgia Lottery and a host for one of the national drawings, Mega Millions.

April 2023 brought one of the most prestigious national honors to her career along with more than 30 of her esteemed colleagues, known as Black Women In Radio. Carol was part of what was the Inaugural 30 Black Women In Radio Inductees into The Smithsonian/Library of Congress. This talented group of radio broadcasters grew to the Inaugural 39, truly an iconic class; The Class of 2023, of Black Women who bring their undeniable talent, expertise and unique "Black Girl Magic" to the medium of radio. This collection will become an ongoing acknowledgement of their contributions to the industry and those that will follow in their footsteps. Now the indelible footprint of the women that bring so much to radio, not only as a "co-host" or "sidekick", but also of a leader, a worthy participant in the industry, will be forever recognized, honored and engrained in the history of radio and the contributions of Black Women In Radio. The collection includes special historic and oral history of the inductees.

Carol's most recent tenure in the business included syndication. She was an integral part of a superbly talented syndicated radio ensemble, The Chubb Rock Show with SiMan Baby. This group of family, performers, and broadcasters achieved the daily objective of bringing enlightenment, information, community and lots of fun to audiences Monday through Friday. The show uniquely occupied time slots in both morning and afternoon drive in various markets. Having worked with her "industry brother", the legendary, highly respected and talented, the late SiMan Baby, has become a major career honor for Carol.

In 2022 she received The Gold President's Volunteer Service Award for her volunteerism and commitment to strengthening her community. Carol has participated in many organizations throughout Atlanta, surrounding areas and beyond in their missions to create, promote and support the betterment of communities locally and nationally.

In March 2021 Carol, along with two of her fellow "sister" broadcasters received the honor of being inducted into the National Black Radio Hall of Fame. They received the National Black Radio Hall of Fame, "Talented Sisters of Radio Award". She is grateful to have received this national recognition.

Additionally, in 2016, special acknowledgements alongside four of her colleagues; more talented women in radio, came in the form of a Resolution from the Georgia State Capitol. As part of this prestigious distinction, they also received accolades from the Georgia House of Representatives and the Senate. This was the inaugural event honoring Women In Radio in the State of Georgia. This was a very reflective moment for Carol because it represented standing on the shoulders of so many legendary Women In Radio that paved the way for her and her colleagues. This notable group of broadcasters soon became dubbed the "Fabulous Five" and were also given an unexpected salute from the City of Riverdale.

The "Fabulous Five" received a Proclamation from Atlanta City Hall from the men and women of

the Council, a recognition spearheaded by Councilman Michael Julian Bond. These presentations created memorable experiences for the “Fab Five”. Carol affirms the blessing in doing the work she enjoys, while also having fun, making a difference and helping others along the way. The “Fab Five” are grateful to be regarded by those in public service, the community and industry they love.

In June 2016, Carol was given a very special emcee opportunity, part of a community yet high profile signature event by an influencer whose name is synonymous with humor, creativity, philanthropy, fun, and multimedia. She was the week-long host, content creator and program emcee for more than 200 moms of the Steve Harvey Mentoring Camp for Boys. Carol shared her stories of perseverance, empowerment, and encouragement to single moms while receiving their compassionate support during this annual Harvey Foundation legacy event. Her week ended with Brigadier General Donna W. Martin from the US Army “coining” her by presenting Carol with the Brigadier’s personal Coin of Excellence. An honor that Brigadier General Martin had earned as a nearly 30 year Veteran and highly decorated soldier. This is by far one of her most valued honors.

The backstory to Carol’s career began in her hometown of Buffalo, N.Y., where dance was her first love. She was part of a local African dance troupe whose home was the African Cultural Center in the heart of her community. The dancers traveled throughout Western New York, but she also played leading roles in stage productions at the center. Yearning to feed her first career choice to become a Fashion Illustrator, Carol eventually found employment in retail and studied Retail Management in college. Rising through the retail ranks was unfulfilling so she began looking for other career opportunities. A family friend told her of an overnight on-air position at a local radio station; intrigued she applied for the job. Shortly after, she was hired and started her journey to an illustrious career.

After several months at the Soft Rock station, Buffalo R&B powerhouse WBLK came calling. She quickly worked her way from part-time to middays. This led to many weekend gigs in Toronto, Canada and making appearances at popular nightclubs. Her talent led her to her next opportunity, working morning drive at a jazz station in Gainesville, Florida. After adding the morning slot to her resume, it was time to look at Atlanta for the next career opportunity.

Highly respected radio icon, morning man and Program Director for Atlanta’s 1340 WIGO, Mike Roberts, hired Carol to join the team. After expanding her talent at WIGO, she went to WBUS, hosting middays. Carol soon made the leap to WVEE (“V103”), the leading station in Atlanta, where part-time transitioned to middays and later, to Co-Host the "Mike and Carol in the Morning Show", dominating ratings in Atlanta morning radio for nearly a decade! As co-host, she conducted many intriguing interviews with noted celebrities, including Oprah, Usher, Steve Harvey, Jamie Foxx, and Samuel L. Jackson. She also hosted a popular weekly dance show, called “Atlanta Jams”, that garnered some of the best local ratings during its tenure, while providing teens with a fun and safe atmosphere and major acts a platform for their artistry. She also was

the voice of an international R&B radio show, “Night Champagne” that aired in Japan.

After her time at V103, Carol became a media coach, a partner in a public relations firm and eventually a partner in a voiceover coaching business. She has voiced commercials for many national and global brands to include Toyota, Macy’s, Publix, Nissan, Home Depot, Clinique, Apple, Ford, Red Lobster, JCPenney, OWN and countless others.

After some of her entrepreneurial efforts, she landed at Atlanta’s Majic 1075/975 where she hosted the Majic Midday Café for seven years. Promoting positivity on her show was paramount as she entertained, educated and informed her audience on a daily basis. Her show also provided the platform for her to seize the opportunity for community advocacy with important features. Carol created segments that helped feed those in need, shared employment opportunities and wellness information, which included encouraging listeners to get their check ups and mammograms. She also started Mammograms for Moms, an annual feature of her show that added an extra push for mammograms during the month of May.

Her biggest and best accomplishment to date is being the proud mom of an incredible son, who is a SCAD graduate with a BFA in Animation. He is working in his field at a marketing firm in California.

Rick Caffey

Senior Vice President, Market Manager
Audacy, Inc., Atlanta
WAOK | WSTR-FM | WVEE-FM | WZGC-FM

Rick Caffey is Senior Vice President and Market Manager of Audacy Inc., with oversight of station operations, programming, sales, marketing, and brand management for Atlanta stations WAOK-AM (1380 News/Talk), WSTR-FM (Star94), WVEE-FM (V-103), and WZGC-FM (92.9 The Game). More than 200 million consumers worldwide receive local radio, sports, news, podcasts, and digital content from Audacy (formerly Entercom).

He began his Broadcast career in 1979 as an AE in Chicago, then moved to management in 1985 as General Sales Manager of WCLR (now,WTMX-FM Chicago), Bonneville's Adult Contemporary station. He then managed U.S. Radio's WHRK-FM and WDIA-AM in Memphis before moving to Atlanta in 1994 as Station Manager of WALR-FM.

Rick joined Granum Communications in 1995 as Vice President and Market Manager of WAOK AM and WVEE-FM, now owned by Audacy. With the purchase of Granum in 1997, Infinity added Z-93 (WZGC) to the Atlanta cluster. Since 2017, Caffey has managed Atlanta's four market-leading radio stations. As a result of Rick's leadership, the cluster has partnered with the Atlanta Falcons (NFL), Atlanta United (MLS), and the Atlanta Hawks (NBA) to broadcast live

play-by-play broadcasts.

Rick and his staff at V-103 (WVEE-FM) have received the National Association of Broadcasters' Marconi Award five (5) times. "As long as team members truly focus on listeners and advertisers first, everything else will fall into place," Caffey asserts.

He serves on the Board of the Metro Atlanta Chamber's Atlanta Sports Council, which helps recruit major regional, national, and international sports events. Furthermore, he is a member of the Board of Directors at the New Life Communities Center in Decatur, Georgia.

Rick, originally from Chicago, is the eldest of five children of Lisa and Fred Caffey, who reside in Metro Atlanta. He is the proud father to Parris and Ciara. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Journalism and a minor in Marketing from Northern Illinois University.

Rick and his wife, Jacqui, reside in Ansley Park (Midtown, Atlanta) with their Miniature Schnauzer, Khal Drogo. Besides sharing a love of Faith, Family, and Friends, they enjoy international travel, sporting events, music, theatre, food, and wine.

Rick Caffey was 2022 inductee into The Georgia Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

Mark Kanov

Bio: Retired after 40 years in Georgia Radio atWSTR, Atlanta. Served as GM from 1991 - 2008 over one of the most successful and innovative Top 40 stations in the nation, which raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for hospitals and non-profits, and launched the career of Ryan Seacrest.

Kanov's media career began in print after he graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in advertising. He moved to Atlanta "to seek fame and fortune" and sold advertising for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution for a year.

In 1968 he began selling air time at WQXI-FM, now Star 94. He became the local sales manager in 1980, general sales manager in 1985, station manager in 1990, and senior vice president and general manager in 1993.

Kanov and his wife, Sarah, have done their own community service as foster parents for Cradle of Love, a Georgia adoption agency. The organization provides support to birth mothers who place newborns with the agency, and it works to find homes for the babies. The Kanovs have taken care of 23 foster babies.

The Sandy Springs resident retired July 25, 2008, after exactly four decades at the Atlanta radio station.

Charles Kinney

Director of Engineering
COX Media Group, Atlanta

Charles Kinney began his Broadcast career; he was born into it.

Charles is the son of former prominent Florida Broadcast Engineer, Reed Kinney, of Panama City. He will tell you that his earliest memories from childhood were of being at radio stations with his father, with his first paid radio job being the board-op for American Country Countdown at the age of 14.

Charles continued to work on air throughout high school, and into his time at Florida State University. At that point, he began working with his father's friend and colleague, the legendary Broadcast Engineer, Charlie Wooten. Both his Dad and Wooten were huge mentors and very influential in his life, and Charles credits his Dad and Wooten as being huge mentors and very influential in his life, as being his personal and professional "True North."

While at Florida State University, Charles performed contract work around the Tallahassee Radio market, then achieving his first Chief Engineer position at WGLF in 1991. He says that "My dad and Charlie were always there to help every time I got in over my head!"

After college, Charles relocated to Kansas City to join the staff of Computer Concepts Corporation, which was looking for someone who understood radio engineering, as well as computer automation systems applications. This allowed him to become associated with great Radio Broadcasters, nationwide. Among the clientele of Computer Concepts Corporation was COX Radio/WSB, as well as Radio One.

Ironically, it was Radio One who saw the skill and talent of 27-year-old, Charles Kinney, who hired him as its Chief Engineer, in Atlanta. Within three months, Radio One expanded its Radio portfolio, and Charles was promoted to Radio One Corporate Director of Engineering, where he shepherded Radio One acquisitions in Detroit, St. Louis, Cleveland, Richmond and Boston. In September 1999, WSB suffered the tragic loss of its chief engineer, and one of the most prestigious Broadcast Engineers in America, John Talbert. Aware of the respect that Mr. Talbert had for Charles, COX Radio/WSB quickly offered him the position of Chief Engineer. According to Kinney, "I couldn't refuse, and became the Director of Engineering for the Cox Radio stations in Atlanta."

Nine years later, Kinney was awarded the responsibility for the newly acquired COX Radio stations in Athens, Georgia.

Notwithstanding his being one of the most highly respected Broadcast Engineers in America, not to mention the State of Georgia, twenty-three years, hence, Charles Kinney remains Chief

engineer of 11 of Georgia's finest Radio stations, in Georgia. The contributions that he has made to Broadcast Engineering, nationally and statewide, are myriad. As important is his generosity to his fellow Broadcasters in times of need.

Charles Kinney was a 2022 recipient of The Ditty-McLemore Award for Broadcast Engineering Excellence by the Georgia Association of Broadcasters.

Alan Sneed

In 1980 Alan moved to Atlanta from Nashville. In Nashville, he programmed WKDF-AM, which was country, and WKDF-FM, which was one of top rock stations in Nashville. In Atlanta, at 96 Rock, he programmed the station to number one. Alan hired many talented personalities who are now in the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame. Later, Alan consulted at Summit Broadcasting and Radio One. He was an incredible teacher...in a variety of formats. At Summit Broadcasting, he assisted the company with training many entry-level programmers, giving them the tools they needed to become successful. And at Radio One, Alan was hired as a consultant, and he was instrumental in putting Hot, -Magic, & Praise on the air in Atlanta. Alan continues to consult today.

Alan Sneed

Programming Consultant- Alan Sneed Radio Consulting Jun 1986 – Sep 2018 The consultancy was known as Atlanta Media Research from 1986-89, as Wescom Media Services from 1989-1991, and then as Sneed and Schuster from 1991-95. It was involved in roughly 90 markets, including 11 of the Top 12.

Managing Member -ASRadio, LLC Mar 2005 – Oct 2012

ASRadio, LLC owned and operated 104.3 WEYE- FM in Hawkins County, TN and 100.5 WFYE-FM (Y-100) in Southwest Virginia. Both covered portions of the Tri-Cities, TN-VA market and were sold in 2012.

Program Director WKLS FM-AM/Atlanta (96 Rock) Mar 1983 - Feb 1985

96 Rock was owned by Gulf Broadcasting during this period. The "96 Rock Wake-Up Crew" was introduced as the brand name of the morning show in 1984, and the name was used for many years. Charity albums "Home Cookin' III and IV" were released in 1983 and 1984, respectively.

Program Director- KSRR/Houston (97 Rock) Oct 1981 - Feb1983

97 Rock played "Kick Ass Rock & Roll" beginning in 1981 and was owned by ABC.

Program Director- WKLS FM-AM/Atlanta (96 Rock) May 1980 - Sep 1981

96 Rock was owned by SJR Broadcasting (San Juan Racing). The station's 198111.3 FM- AM combo share among 12+ listeners and the 10.7 for the FM were its best numbers ever. A charity album called "Hotlanta Home Cookin'" featuring original local music was released in early 1981 to benefit Special Olympics.

Program Operations Manager- WKDF-WKDA/Nashville Apr 1978 - Feb 1980

Dick Broadcasting owned and operated Rock "103 KDF" and Country WKDA-AM.

Program Director- WKGN/Knoxville Aug 1976 - Mar 1978

"Album Rock KGN" was the first AM to program the Burkhart-Abrams Superstars Rock format. It was owned by Creative Displays, which was primarily an outdoor advertising company.

Sales Manager Kuhlman-Murphy Company-Jan 1971 - Mar 1975 Knoxville, Tennessee Area
Multiple brand beer distributorship servicing thirteen counties in East Tennessee.

Education

University of Tennessee, Knoxville BS, MS, Education, Educational Psychology (Research and Measurement/College Student Personnel) 1967 -1975

Activities and societies: Pi Kappa Alpha, Scarranean Senior Society, Omicron Delta Kappa, Interfraternity Council, University Center Governing Board, Campus Entertainment Board

Ken Woodfin

Bio: The Radio History of Ken Woodfin, Columbus GA Broadcaster

-Much of this as told by Ken himself

June, 1949 – Ken graduated high school; during high school, he was a star basketball player and had a country & western band in which his basketball coach played in his band; they did 30-min jam sessions weekly, live on air at a radio station in Alexander City, AL. He became fascinated with the world of radio while in high school.

June, 1954 – Ken got out of Army, married Louise Brooks and started a family. He was playing in several bands, traveling across the south but needed a stable way to make a living so he began looking for a job in Radio, which he was so fascinated by.

March, 1955 – Ken started working as a DJ at WCLS-AM radio station for station owner and engineer, Charlie Parrish; he worked as a DJ at WCLS for several years. (Interesting fact, the formats were different per shift. He played country music during his shift.) He saw that sales people were making more money, had nice clothes and driving nice cars, so he got into Sales at WPNX a few years later then moved on to Sales Management at WCLS.

2nd job was at WRBL radio in sales, which played what we all call “elevator music”.

Late 50s-early 60s - 3rd job in Radio was Sales Manager of WPNX in Phenix City

1960-70s - Meanwhile, there was a 3-man radio station owner partnership of attorneys Milton Hirsch, Joe Ray, and Phil Meltzer from NY – they owned WOKS-AM, R&B station; Joe Ray, bought Meltzer out. Woodfin was working in sales, then promoted to Station Manager when Hirsch and Ray bought Meltzer out. Mr. Ray became ill and unable to continue, so Ken bought in at 25%. Eventually, when Ray died, Milton and Woodfin bought Ray out, Woodfin then had 57%

ownership and Hirsch was a silent partner.

1969 - Woodfin had applied for the license to build 104.9 (3rd FM in the city) and WWRH was formed in September of 1969, a Progressive Rock station, ahead of its time. Radio was experiencing a lot of turmoil and change, as FMs were just getting off the ground. They sold WOKS & WFXE to Art Angell, who changed to an Urban format under the name Foxie 105. Late 1970s - Woodfin and Hirsch bought back both WOKS and WFXE and with rebranding and aggressive marketing, had a very successful run for many years, with the largest market share as FM frequencies continued to grow. Active in and always focused on community issues, Woodfin established the first radio station board of directors, comprised of community leaders and a few city council leaders. Among many accomplishments, the biggest was the WOKS/Foxie 105 Annual Christmas Party in which every child who attended the event left with a bicycle for Christmas. This event grew each year into the thousands and was moved to the Columbus Civic Center to accommodate the local community crowd.

Early 80's - Growth and expansion was on Ken Woodfin's mind. "The Woodfin Group" had made an impact as one of the most successful radio groups in Georgia and he continued to grow his empire, buying an FM in Augusta, GA, creating another Urban station with the FOXIE brand, bought an AM/FM combo in Macon, GA, continuing to operate very successfully under the Urban and Black Gospel formats for years with a continued focus on community engagement. Mid 1980s - He sold the Columbus stations, WOKS/WFXE, to Greg Davis and purchased WEIZ FM from Allen Woodall with the intent to format the Easy Listening 100.1 to "Sunny 100 - Classic Hits of the 60s, 70s and 80s". He broke ground on the first building in Columbus specifically designed and custom built for the Sunny 100 studios. The building is located at 1011 Peachtree Drive.

1986 – All about rebranding and marketing: Bought WEIZ-FM from Allen Woodall and changed call letters to WGSY-Sunny 100; purchased and started 100,000 watt FM station WFSY 98.5 in Panama City, FL the same year. The Columbus start-up was in a former architects' office on Warren Williams Rd., radio consultant Dennis Winslow was hired, as was the cream of the crop radio announcers; both Sunny 100 and Sunny 98.5 launched on 1/1/87 and enjoyed years of incredible success under Ken Woodfin's leadership. Arbitron numbers skyrocketed in both markets. Perhaps the most successful spring radio campaign ever developed and run for several years was an on-air giveaway of \$10,000 to a certain # caller when the song "American Pie" began. In Columbus, the influx of phone calls shut down the entire Columbus phone system, including the 9-1-1 emergency number. City leaders met with Woodfin to devise a plan to protect the city's emergency phone system while Sunny 100 conducted their spring contests and giveaways. There has never been and will never be another locally-owned radio station to have the impact that Sunny 100 had in the 80s. A true phenomenon all under the leadership of Ken Woodfin. Eventually, Woodfin sold the group to Tommy Milligan, a local grocer who had interest in radio in Florida.

June 6, 1997 – Woodfin closed on WULA-FM, a small town 3,000 watt stand-alone station in Eufaula, AL. Knowing the potential, he changed the call letters to WIOL and immediately filed to upgrade to 50,000 watts and applied to build a new tower as close to Columbus, GA as possible, in Cottonton, AL. It took about 3 years to get FCC permit to build tower for Classic Rock 92.7-The River. A niche format, the classic rock station was successful and held its own against local powerhouses, some previously owned by Woodfin. With corporate radio coming on the scene, Woodfin saw the writing on the wall and eventually sold to radio owner Greg Davis, having then sold both his first station to Davis as well as his last one, ending his over 50 year career in Radio. Today in 2023 – What a ride! At 91, Ken Woodfin still resides in Columbus, Georgia, living just around the corner from the custom-built radio station that was his pride and joy. In his home, you will see Radio memorabilia such as an antique microphone on a stand, a sand-blasted sign that once hung outside the door of The Woodfin Group, and many other framed memories of the life and legacy of his hard work, determination and resilience. Ken Woodfin is a pioneer in Radio and his legacy will continue through the passion of those who had the pleasure of working for him once upon a time and still work and contribute to this great industry.

For further information:
admin@friendsofgeorgiaradio.com