

Please send us links to your coverage.

For media inquiries, please contact: [stellarspr@marchandproductions.com](mailto:stellarspr@marchandproductions.com)



**GOSPEL ICON KIRK FRANKLIN TOPS WINNERS LIST WITH SIX TROPHIES AT HISTORIC 35TH ANNIVERSARY STELLAR GOSPEL MUSIC AWARDS VIRTUAL SPECIAL ON BET & BET HER SUNDAY NIGHT**

*From Moving Tributes Honoring Rep. John Lewis and COVID-19 First Responders to Stirring Songs of Inspiration, Power and Praise, Tamela Mann, CeCe Winans, Anthony Brown, James Fortune, Travis Greene, Kierra Sheard, Marvin Sapp, Tye Tribbett and More Deliver Epic Performances*

**REPLAY THE HIGHLIGHTS AND BIGGEST MOMENTS WHEN STELLAR AWARDS AIRS IN SYNDICATION NATIONWIDE AUGUST 29 --SEPTEMBER 27**



***Top Winner Kirk Franklin Leads the Night with Six Stellar Awards***

***(Five as an Artist and One for his Project, Love Theory)***

***Photography by GIP III, Courtesy of CCP***

**Click the image above for Stellar Awards 2020 assets**

(CHICAGO, IL) **August 23, 2020** – Not even a global pandemic could diminish the powerful spirit of praise, worship and celebration during the historic virtual broadcast of the Stellar Gospel Music Awards Sunday night on BET and BET Her. Led by hosts **Kirk Franklin**, **Jonathan McReynolds**, and **Koryn Hawthorne**, the 35th Anniversary Stellar Gospel Music Awards awarded trophies in 28 categories for the year's best performances in the genre -- including six statues presented to the night's big winner, host and Gospel icon **Kirk Franklin**.

From the first moments featuring welcome remarks by Stellar Awards Founder and Executive Producer **Don Jackson** and powerful show open by **Tye Tribbett** of his uplifting anthem "We Gon' Be Alright," through the final credit roll, the "Greatest Night in Gospel Music" lived up to its claim to fame. Virtually bringing together the nation's Gospel community to offer hope and inspiration during these turbulent times, among the evening's highlights are a moving tribute to the late **Congressman John Lewis** by **CeCe Winans**, who performed "Bridge Over Troubled Water," and special recognition to COVID-19 first responder heroes.

Franklin's work on *Long Live Love* earned him five Stellar Awards for *Male Vocalist of the Year*, *Album of the Year*, *Producer of the Year*, *Contemporary Male Vocalist of the Year*, and *Contemporary Album of the Year*. Franklin earned an additional *Song of the Year* trophy for his work on "Love Theory." Gospel great **Donald Lawrence** presents the **Tri-City Singers** received four Stellar Awards for work on the *Goshen* project including *Choir of the Year* and *Contemporary Choir of the Year*, as well as *Song of the Year* and *Urban/Inspirational Single or Performance of the Year* for "Deliver Me (This is My Exodus)." Gospel legend **John P. Kee's** *I Made It Out* delivered three Stellar Awards for *Traditional Male Vocalist*, *Traditional Album of the Year* and *Traditional Choir of the Year*.

Singer/songwriter **Tasha Cobbs Leonard** garnered two trophies for *Artist of the Year* and *Contemporary Female Vocalist of the Year* for her project *Heart, Passion, Pursuit*, while **Le'Andria Johnson** earned two for her work on Donald Lawrence's project, *Goshen* in the categories *Albertina Walker Female Vocalist of the Year Award* and the *Traditional Female Vocalist of the Year*. **The Walls Group** received two statues for *Duo Group of the Year* and *Contemporary Duo Group of the Year* for their album *Friend in Me*, along with newcomer **Pastor Mike Jr.** who took home a pair of Stellar Awards for *New Artist of the Year* and *Rap/Hip Hop Gospel Album of the Year* for his work on *Live Free*. **Kurt Carr** received two Stellar awards, one as an artist (*Traditional Duo/Chorus Group of the Year*) and another for *Recorded Music Packaging of the Year* for the *Bless Somebody Else* project.

Rounding out the night with one Stellar Award each were **JJ Hairston** (*Praise and Worship Album of the Year*), **Ben Tankard** (*Instrumental Album of the Year*), **Gospel Kids** (*Youth Project of the Year*), **Keith Wonderboy Johnson** (*Quartet of the Year*) and **Greenleaf; Season 3** (*Special Event Album of the Year*).

Performers raised the bar with awe-inspiring renditions of their work calling attention to social justice and other challenges facing our society. Breathtaking and visually-stunning performances were delivered by **Tamela Mann**, **Anthony Brown**, **James Fortune**, **Koryn Hawthorne**, **J.J. Hairston & Youthful Praise**, **Jonathan McReynolds**, **Travis Greene**, **Kierra Sheard**, **Marvin Sapp**, **Tye Tribbett**, **Tauren Wells**, **Zacardi Cortez**, **Pastor Mike Jr.**, **DOE**, and **Rich Tolbert Jr.** Emerging artists making their Stellar Awards debut, **Group Fire**, **Keyla Richardson**, **Melvin Crispell III**, and **Titus Showers** joined a rich legacy of 35 years of excellence in Gospel music.

The show's hosts visited first responder heroes on the front lines of the Coronavirus pandemic in Dallas, Nashville and Chicago, expressing gratitude for their sacrifice and bestowing commemorative Stellar Awards lapel pins in honor of their service. In addition, several healthcare professionals and civic organizations were highlighted for their efforts to combat the deadly pandemic. The segments were made possible with the generous support of sponsors **AT&T**, **State Farm**, **Toyota**, **Procter & Gamble**, **McDonalds** and **AARP**.

The Stellar Gospel Music Awards show is Executive Produced by **Don Jackson**, with **Jennifer J. Jackson** serving as Executive in Charge of Production. **Michael A. Johnson** serves as producer and director for this year's award show. The Stellar Awards is

presented by AT&T and recognizes the year's best performances in the genre, honors Gospel music icons and acknowledges the accomplishments of individuals instrumental in advocating for the industry.

To relive all of the highlights, viewers can watch the Stellar Awards in national broadcast syndication in 210 markets starting August 29 – September 27 (check local listings). Follow @thestellars for the latest news and updates about the greatest night in Gospel music.

# # #

To view the complete list of winners, [Click Here](#)

To view the complete list of nominees [Click Here](#)

To view downloadable logos, assets, photos and bios: [Click Here](#)

To view downloadable photos of nominees [Click Here](#)

Follow The Stellar Awards on social media for updates and more!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StellarAwards>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/TheStellars>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/TheStellars>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/TheStellarAwardsChannel>

[Click Here to Download the Full Press Release](#)

[Click Here to Download 2020 Winners List](#)



## 35TH ANNIVERSARY STELLAR AWARDS TOP WINNERS 2020

Kirk Franklin - 6

Donald Lawrence - 4

John P. Kee - 3

Kurt Carr - 3

Tasha Cobbs Leonard - 2

Le'Andria Johnson - 2

The Walls Group - 2

Pastor Mike Jr. - 2

---

## 35TH ANNIVERSARY STELLAR AWARDS PERFORMANCE CAPTURES

Photos Courtesy of CCP



**CECE WINANS**



**TAMELA MANN**



**KORYN HAWTHORNE**



**JONATHAN MCREYNOLDS**



**TRAVIS GREENE AND DOE**



**TRAVIS GREENE**



**JJ HAIRSTON**



**TAUREN WELLS**



**TYE TRIBBETT**



**TYE TRIBBETT**





**35TH ANNUAL STELLAR GOSPEL MUSIC AWARDS**  
**WINNERS 2020**



**Kirk Franklin** takes top honors, winning six Stellar Awards (five as an artist and one award for his project, *Love Theory*) as the show's top winner for *Male Vocalist of the Year*, *Album of the Year*, *Producer of the Year*, *Contemporary Male Vocalist of the Year*, *Contemporary Album of the Year*, and *Music Video of the Year*



**Donald Lawrence presents the Tri-City Singers** receives four Stellar Awards for *Song of the Year*, *Choir of the Year*, *Urban/Inspirational Single or Performance of the Year*, and *Contemporary Choir of the Year*



**John P. Kee** was awarded three Stellar Awards for *Traditional Male Vocalist*, *Traditional Album of the Year* and *Traditional Choir of the Year*



**Tasha Cobbs Leonard** wins two Stellar Awards as *Artist of the Year* and *Contemporary Female Vocalist of the Year*



**Pastor Mike Jr.** was awarded two Stellar Awards for *New Artist of the Year* and *Rap/Hip Hop Gospel Album of the Year*



**The Walls Group** received two Stellar Awards for *Duo Group of the Year* and *Contemporary Duo Group of the Year*



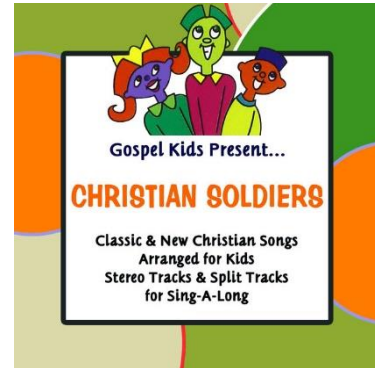
**Ben Tankard** (*Instrumental Album of the Year*)



**JJ Hairston** (*Praise and Worship Album of the Year*)



**Keith Wonderboy Johnson** (*Quartet of the Year*)



**Gospel Kids** (*Youth Project of the Year*)



**Greenleaf; Season 3** (*Special Event Album of the Year*)

**Step on the Stellar Awards Virtual Red Carpet 2020 with Host Jekalyn Carr and Gospel Artists, James Fortune, Bishop Marvin Sapp, Pastor Mike Jr., Bishop Paul Morton, Jonathan McReynolds, Cece Winans, Kurt Carr, John P. Kee, Tauren Wells, Anthony Brown, Kirk Franklin, and JJ Hairston (in order of appearance)**

Courtesy of Central City Productions

**[Click the Image to View](#)**





**Watch Highlights of Stellar Performances of Tye Tribbett, Tauren Wells, Travis Greene and DOE, and Koryn Hawthorne (in order of appearance)**

**Courtesy of Central City Productions**

**Click the Image to View a Performance Reel (Youtube Link)**

**Embed Code:** `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/SQ4PZBn_N3o" frameborder="0" allow="accelerometer; autoplay; encrypted-media; gyroscope; picture-in-picture" allowfullscreen></iframe>`



**For More Inspiration, Listen to the Stellers on Spotify. Hear Uplifting Music by Stellar Award Winners, Kirk Franklin, Donald Lawrence, Tasha Cobbs Leonard, Kurt Carr, JJ Hairston, Pastor Mike Jr., and Other Notable Gospel Artists**

Courtesy of Central City Productions

[Click the Image to Listen on Spotify](#)



## HOSTS OF THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY STELLAR AWARDS

Photos Courtesy of CCP



35th Stellar Awards Co-Hosts (left to right) Koryn Hawthorne, Kirk Franklin, Jonathan McReynolds



35th Stellar Awards Co-Hosts (left to right) Koryn Hawthorne, Kirk Franklin, Jonathan McReynolds



35th Stellar Awards Co-Hosts (left to right) Koryn Hawthorne, Kirk Franklin, Jonathan McReynolds



35th Stellar Awards Co-Hosts (left to right) Koryn Hawthorne, Kirk Franklin, Jonathan McReynolds wearing Stellar Awards masks

## FIRST RESPONDER HONOREES

Parkland Hospital - Dallas, TX

Host: Kirk Franklin



**Spokesperson(s):**

**Pamela Bryant, MBA, Senior Vice President, Supply Chain,  
Parkland Health & Hospital System**

**Herron Mitchell, Director of Operations-East Region for the  
Population Health Division, Parkland Health & Hospital**



**Jackson Park Hospital - Chicago, IL**

**Host: Jonathan McReynolds**

**Spokesperson(s): Dr. William Dorsey**



**Meharry Medical College - Nashville, TN**

**Host: Koryn Hawthorne**

**Spokesperson(s): Dr. Cherae Farmer-Dixon**





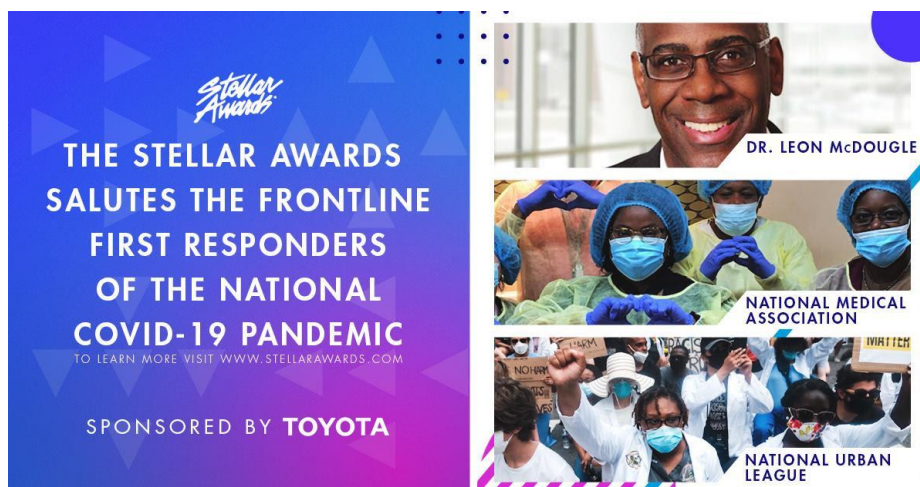
### Additional Tributes

**Dr. Angela Mosby - Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Urgent Care / Telemedicine**

**Dr. Michelle Reed - Queens, NY: Family Medicine Practitioner/  
Caught & Recovered from COVID-19**

**Dr. Leon McDougle - 121st President of National Medical Association /  
Member of the NCAA Coronavirus Panel /  
Chief Diversity Officer of OSU Medical School**

**Honoring National Urban League  
Honoring National Medical Association**



# 35 YEARS OF STELLAR AWARDS PHOTOS

## MILESTONE MOMENTS

[Click here to view more](#)

*Courtesy of Central City Productions*



**Don Jackson and Oprah circa 1986**



**The Legendary Aretha Franklin**



**Destiny's Child and Shirley Caesar**



**Idris Alba and Gabrielle Union**



**Patti LaBelle**



**Snoop Dogg**



## SNAPSHOT OF STELLAR AWARDS RECENT PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Click The Logos to View Featured Coverage



### ABOUT CENTRAL CITY PRODUCTIONS, INC.

Founded in 1970 by Don Jackson, Chicago-based Central City Productions, Inc. is a national broadcast television producer and syndicator of its exclusively owned African-American programming. Celebrating over 50 years of broadcasting Black excellence with uplifting and entertaining original television content, CCP's award-winning television programs include The Stellar Awards ([www.thestellarawards.com](http://www.thestellarawards.com)), Black Music Honors ([www.blackmusichonors.com](http://www.blackmusichonors.com)), Stellar Tribute to the Holidays, The Black College Quiz Show Series ([www.blackcollegequiz.com](http://www.blackcollegequiz.com)), Mentoring Kings ([www.mentoringking.com](http://www.mentoringking.com)), and Stellar Sunday ([www.stellarsundays.com](http://www.stellarsundays.com)), among many others.



### ABOUT BET NETWORK

BET Network, a subsidiary of Viacom CBS Inc. (NASDAQ: VIACA, VIAC), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news, and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel is in nearly 90 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, sub-Saharan Africa, and France. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of business extensions including BET.com, a leading Internet destination for Black

entertainment, music, culture, and news; BET HER, a 24-hour entertainment network targeting the African-American Woman; BET Music Networks - BET Jams, BET Soul and BET Gospel; BET Home Entertainment; BET Live, BET's growing festival business; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET Networks around the globe.

---

## **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

**Tosha Whitten Griggs, Stellar Awards Executive in Charge of Publicity**

[StellarsPR@marchandproductions.com](mailto:StellarsPR@marchandproductions.com)

**Jalila Larsuel, JL Media PR**

[jlmediapr@gmail.com](mailto:jlmediapr@gmail.com)

## **VIRTUAL RED CARPET AND MEDIA CENTER BY:**

**Marchand Productions, Inc.**

**[Sonya@marchandproductions.com](mailto:Sonya@marchandproductions.com)**