



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GUITAR CENTER MUSIC FOUNDATION APPOINTS VALEISHA BUTTERFIELD CEO & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Former Recording Academy/GRAMMYs Co-President and Google executive leads the Foundation's new era of growth, access and opportunity for musicians and music communities globally

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif., Aug. 18, 2026 — The Guitar Center Music Foundation (GCMF) today announced the appointment of Valeisha Butterfield as CEO & Executive Director, effective immediately. An award-winning executive whose career has spanned music, technology and philanthropy, Butterfield will lead the Foundation's next chapter with an eye on expanding access and opportunity to the instruments, tools, education and resources that empower people to discover, create and thrive through music.

Butterfield currently serves on the GRAMMYs Television Committee and previously served as Co-President of the Recording Academy/GRAMMYs and Vice President of Global Partnerships at Google, leading organizations, teams and partnerships through periods of significant growth and transformation. She is also the founder of SEED Media. Earlier in her career, Butterfield served as Executive Director of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network, where she led national initiatives with musicians to advance financial literacy programs for young adults.

Her appointment comes during an extraordinary time for music around the world. New technologies, platforms and creative tools are opening new possibilities for how music is discovered, created, shared and experienced. Artists and musicians are reaching audiences in new ways, emerging creators are finding new pathways into the industry, and music continues to transcend geography and generations as one of the world's most powerful tools.

"Music is a universal language and the most powerful tool in the world to connect people across generations," said Ms. Butterfield. "Guitar Center sits at the center of that extraordinary ecosystem, and this is truly a full circle moment as I help lead this next chapter of the Guitar Center Music Foundation and, together, we reimagine its influence, impact and legacy. At its core, this work is about unlocking opportunities, fueling dreams and expanding what music can make possible for the next generation."

"Valeisha brings the rare combination of nonprofit leadership, music industry experience and operational expertise that GCMF needs for its next stage of growth," said Curtis Heath, Board President and Chair, Guitar Center Music Foundation. "She has spent her career building organizations, developing partnerships and bringing people together around a shared purpose."



We're excited to have her leadership as we expand the Foundation's reach and create more opportunities for people to experience the power of music."

As CEO & Executive Director, Ms. Butterfield will work closely with GCMF's Board of Directors, led by Board President and Chair Curtis Heath, to advance the Foundation's strategic plan, grow fundraising and donor engagement, develop partnerships with schools and community organizations and strengthen the reach and visibility of its programs. Ms. Butterfield's appointment builds on GCMF's expanded leadership structure announced in December 2025, when Heath was named Board President and Chair and Guitar Center executives Greg Glaser and Jerry Brandehoff joined the Board.

Guitar Center Music Foundation:

For some, music may be just a hobby. But for others, music serves as a crucial lifeline – a path to healing, an opportunity to nurture untapped talent, an escape from the grim realities of everyday life, a break from generational trauma, or the start of a social revolution. The Guitar Center Music Foundation (GCMF) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the healing, transformative power of music. Thousands of individuals nationwide benefit yearly from GCMF's grants and other efforts aiding veterans, hospital patients, the unhoused, and those affected by natural disasters, as well as youth in both schools and after-school programs. By providing these programs with all types of instruments and advocating for the benefits of music education, GCMF furthers its mission of giving people the chance to create and express themselves through music. For more information about The Guitar Center Music Foundation, please visit <http://guitarcenterfoundation.org/>.

Guitar Center:

Guitar Center is the leading retailer of musical instruments, lessons, repairs and rentals in the U.S. With more than 300 stores nationwide and one of the top direct sales websites in the industry, Guitar Center has helped people make music for more than 60 years. Guitar Center provides a range of musician-based services, including Guitar Center Lessons for players of all ages and skill levels, GC Repairs, an on-site maintenance and repair service, and GC Rentals, offering easy access to instruments and gear. Guitar Center's family of brands includes Music & Arts, which operates more than 250 stores specializing in band and orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors, parents and students, and Musician's Friend, a leading direct marketer of musical instruments in the United States. Guitar Center Business Solutions is the company's commercial division, delivering professional audio, video, lighting and integrated technology solutions for businesses, institutions and creators nationwide through a portfolio of brands including AVDG (Audio Visual Design Group), GC Pro and Custom House at Guitar Center. The Guitar Center Music Foundation is a national nonprofit that expands access to music through instrument donations and support for communities in need.

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