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## GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING PRODUCER DON WAS NAMES LANITA SMITH WINNER OF GUITAR CENTER'S FOURTH ANNUAL SINGER-SONGWRITER PROGRAM

### ANNOUNCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- *Lanita Smith receives opportunity to record an E.P. with producing legend Don Was, be mentored by Colbie Caillat, perform on Jimmy Kimmel Live!, take home new gear, pocket \$25,000 cash and more*
- *As the winner, Memphis native Lanita Smith topped nearly 16,000 entries*
- *The evening included performances by all three previous Guitar Center Singer-Songwriter winners and concluded with a special set by Grammy Award winner Colbie Caillat*

**Los Angeles, CA (March 10, 2015):** Guitar Center has announced Memphis native Lanita Smith as the winner of the fourth annual [Guitar Center Singer-Songwriter](#) artist discovery program. As the winner, Smith will receive a career-boosting package including the opportunity to record a four-song EP with Grammy Award-winning producer Don Was, mentorship from Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Colbie Caillat, a performance on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, \$25,000 cash, new musical equipment, and more.

Out of nearly 16,000 entries this year, five finalists were chosen to perform live at the finals Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at The Troubadour in Los Angeles, CA, hosted by established singer-songwriter Clara C. Following an opening performance by previous *Guitar Center Singer-Songwriter* winners Josh Doyle, Jeff Campbell and Tess Henley, each of the finalists took to the stage to perform live in front of the audience and judges. Colbie Caillat treated the crowd to a special live set as program judge Don Was deliberated, and ultimately, named Smith the winner.

Watch Lanita Smith's winning performance here: <http://youtu.be/E4pQnTIsAxk>

### **As Guitar Center's Singer-Songwriter 4 Winner, Lanita Smith Will Receive:**

- A 4-song E.P. with Grammy Award-winning producer Don Was
- Mentoring songwriting session with Grammy Award-winning Singer-Songwriter Colbie Caillat
- \$25,000 Cash
- An on-air performance on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* which airs weeknights at 11:35 | 10:35c on ABC
- New gear from Martin Guitar, Gibson, Shure Microphones, Bose, D'Addario, Acoustic Amps, Avid, Casio, GoPro, and TC-Group
- A feature on the award-winning webseries: [At: Guitar Center](#)
- Feature story in *American Songwriter* magazine

"All of the finalists this year were extremely talented and unique. What really impressed me about Lanita was her ability to take control of the stage. She had everyone in the room enraptured with her soulful songs and emotional delivery. I'm thankful to Guitar Center for supporting the arts with programs like Singer-Songwriter that continuously unearth new talent and inspire musicians across the country."

**- Don Was, Grammy Award-winning producer and Guitar Center Singer-Songwriter Judge**

"*Guitar Center Singer Songwriter 4* has already opened so many doors for me, and winning means I can continue to follow my dreams and show the world who I am as a musician. When I heard my name announced as the winner, I was filled with so many emotions. It felt like every thing that has happened in my life, all of the ups and downs, had led me to that exact moment."

**- Lanita Smith, Winner of Guitar Center Singer-Songwriter 4**

**About Lanita Smith:**

A native of Fayetteville, NC, Lanita's love of music began while sitting next to the piano player at church. From taking private lessons to learning "by ear", she has worked hard through the years to perfect her skills as a pianist. Lanita later moved to Memphis, TN where she expanded her skill set to include the violin, saxophone, guitar, vocal performance, and songwriting. A graduate of Overton High School and the University of Memphis, she has been featured in the University of Memphis group Sound Fuzion as lead keyboardist, and has accompanied Isaac Hayes, Aaron Neville (The Neville Brothers), Lil Rounds and many more. Lanita currently teaches music at KIPP Academy of Opportunity and hopes to pursue her dream of becoming a musician, artist and composer.

**About Guitar Center:**

Guitar Center is the world's largest retailer of guitars, amplifiers, drums, keyboards, recording, live sound, DJ, and lighting equipment. With more than 260 stores across the U.S. and one of the top direct sales websites in the industry, Guitar Center has helped people make music for more than 50 years. In addition, Guitar Center's sister brands includes Music & Arts, which operates more than 120 stores specializing in band & orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors and students, and Musician's Friend, a leading direct marketer of musical instruments in the United States. With an unrivaled in-store experience, an industry-leading online presence and passionate commitment to making gear easy-to-buy, Guitar Center is all about enabling musicians and non-musicians alike to experience the almost indescribable joy that comes from playing an instrument. All we sell is the greatest feeling on earth. For more information about Guitar Center, please visit [www.guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com).

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