

Grammy Bound?

By Elizabeth C. Axford

In 1999, I received a letter from John Braheny at the National Academy of Songwriters (NAS) in Los Angeles. NAS was soon to be closing its doors. John suggested that members join the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) aka The Recording Academy, the organization responsible for the Grammys.

My perception of the Grammys was that it was a high end, exclusive event intended only for major label artists, mega-hit producers, and songwriters with platinum records. It never occurred to me that I myself could become a member. I inquired about joining NARAS and, much to my surprise, discovered I was eligible for a voting membership as well as being invited to the Grammys live telecast ceremony and other NARAS events. Because I had recently recorded my Merry Christmas Happy Hanukkah CD the summer of 1999 with producer/engineer Kris Stone, including 32



Liz and Bridget at the Grammys

tracks on which I was the performer, arranger, and/or songwriter, and I had physical distribution, I was eligible.

From my many trips to Los Angeles and Nashville as the original San Diego NSAI Workshop Coordinator from 1992-2011 and the Miami NSAI

Workshop Coordinator from 1990-1992, I had learned about independent record label distribution through Amazon.com, CDBaby.com, and TheOrchard.com. Back in 1999, the eligibility requirement was to have at least 6 physical tracks on recordings commercially released in the U.S. through physical distribution outlets. With the coming of digital music distribution, the eligibility requirement came to include 12 qualifying physical or digital tracks released online only.

Since joining NARAS in 1999, I have voted on 15 Grammys and have attended 10 Grammy Awards Ceremonies at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. I will be attending for the 11th time this coming January 26, 2014 joined by former SDSG President **Bridgette Brigitte McDonald**.

To learn more about the levels of membership offered by The Recording Academy, visit www.grammy365.com/join/membership-types. You might be surprised to find out you, too, are eligible to vote on and attend the Grammys!

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