

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****ACCLAIMED PERFORMER, DIRECTOR AND CHOREOGRAPHER  
DEBBIE ALLEN SELECTED AS TELEVISION ACADEMY'S  
2021 GOVERNORS AWARD RECIPIENT**

**(NOHO ARTS DISTRICT, Calif., Aug. 12, 2021)** — The Television Academy announced today that entertainment industry trailblazer Debbie Allen will receive the 2021 Governors Award in recognition of her numerous contributions to the television medium through multiple creative forms and her philanthropic endeavors around the world.

The entertainment icon was chosen by the Television Academy's Board of Governors for her unprecedented achievements in television and her commitment to inspire and engage marginalized youth through dance, theater arts and mentorship. Allen will receive her Emmy® statuette during the 73<sup>rd</sup> Emmy Awards telecast on Sunday, Sept. 19.

The award honors an individual or organization in the television arts and sciences whose achievement is so exceptional and universal in nature that it goes beyond the scope of annual Emmy® Awards recognition.

In a career spanning three decades, Allen remains one of the most honored and versatile artists in the entertainment industry. An internationally recognized dancer, choreographer, actress, writer, producer and director, Allen has choreographed the Academy Awards an unparalleled 10 times, holds four honorary doctorate degrees and was appointed by former President George W. Bush to represent the United States as a Cultural Ambassador of Dance. Through the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, she has reached and enriched the lives of a legion of rising young dancers across the globe through world-class dance and theater training with a focus on providing comprehensive support for disenfranchised Black and Latino communities.

"Debbie Allen has been a creative voice for a generation of performers and storytellers and has left an indelible mark on the television industry," said Governors Award selection committee Co-Chair Eva Basler. "Debbie's commitment to mentoring underserved communities has been nothing short of extraordinary. She has shared her gift and love of dance and choreography with countless aspiring performers across the globe," added committee Co-Chair Debra Curtis.

"This has been an amazing year for me," said Allen. "To be celebrated by the Television Academy is an overwhelming honor that humbles me and says to my community of dancing gypsies, actors, writers and musicians that if you stay passionate about your craft and do the work, you can go far."

Among her vast body of work, Allen has choreographed for legendary artists such as Michael Jackson, Mariah Carey, James Earl Jones, Phylicia Rashad, Janet Jackson, Whitney Houston, Gwen Verdon, Carmen de Lavallade, Diane Carroll, Lena Horne, Sammy Davis Jr., Dolly Parton and Savion Glover. Her directing and producing credits include television classics such as *Fame*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, *How to Get Away With Murder*, *Jane the Virgin*, *Empire*, *Insecure*, *A Different World*, *Everybody Hates Chris*, *Stompin' At The Savoy*, *Polly*, *That's So Raven*, *Cool Women*, *Quantum Leap*, *The Fantasia Barrino Story* and *Christmas on the Square*.

Allen has been an artist in residence at the Kennedy Center for over 15 years, creating original works with the legendary Arturo Sandoval and James Ingram, such as: *Pepito's Story*, *Brothers of the Knight*, *Dreams*, *Alex in Wonderland*, *Soul Possessed*, *Pearl*, *Dancing in the Wings* and *OMAN...O Man!* Additionally, she serves as executive producing director of *Grey's Anatomy* where she stars in a recurring role as Dr. Catherine Fox.

In 2000, Allen opened the Debbie Allen Dance Academy to expand the reach of dance and theater arts to marginalized students in Los Angeles and around the world through a comprehensive dance curriculum spanning numerous dance styles. Under Allen's direction, the nonprofit school today provides services on-site to over 3,000 participants annually; grants extensive scholarships to students; and invests in classes specially designed for cancer patients, seniors, and women and children who have experienced domestic abuse. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Allen is expanding her curriculum with the Debbie Allen Dance Academy Virtual Dance World, a series of custom and on-demand classes available through Zoom for a small donation.

The three-time Emmy Award winner in choreography (*Fame* and *The Motown 25th*) is a Kennedy Center Honoree and the recipient of 10 Image Awards, the Olivier Award, multiple Tony nominations, a Golden Globe and the Drama Desk Award.

Previous recipients of the Governors Award, which debuted in 1978, include Tyler Perry; *Star Trek*; *American Idol*; William S. Paley; Hallmark Cards Inc.; *Masterpiece Theater*; Comic Relief; and ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC and A+E networks.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Emmy Awards will be broadcast on **Sunday, Sept. 19, (8:00-11:00 PM, live EDT/5:00-8:00 PM, live PDT)** on the CBS Television Network and will be available to stream live and on demand on Paramount+.

### **About the Television Academy**

The Television Academy seeks to expand the horizons of television excellence. Through the programs, publications and events of the Academy and its Foundation, it strives to empower storytellers who shape the evolving television space. And it celebrates those who have excelled by recognizing their achievements through accolades and awards, including television's most coveted prize the Primetime Emmy<sup>®</sup> Award. For more information, please visit [TelevisionAcademy.com](https://www.televisionacademy.com).

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