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TENILLE TALKS ABOUT 'PLAYING IT FORWARD'

Posted by: [Casadie Pederson](#)

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< TC-RADIO

We caught up with recent CCMA winner **Tenille** to talk humanitarianism, 'playing it forward', and she dishes about some of her favourite things.

Q

Where were you when you found out that you were named the CCMA Slaight Music Humanitarian of the Year?

A

I was in Nashville at our hotel. I answered the phone from the hotel lobby and will never forget finding a seat in the corner of the room. Hearing Don Green on the other end of the phone was a surprise in itself! It is always so awesome hearing from the CCMA Office! But as soon as he told me the news, I fell completely silent and cried my eyes out. It honestly took me a second to realize the conversation was real and was actually happening. I will forever remember that phone call.... I went up the elevator and into our hotel room where I met my mom all full of tears. She was so worried about me until I managed to find the words to tell her and then we sat and cried together haha!!!

Q

What did it feel like accepting the award at the Gala Dinner?

A

It is so hard to describe that feeling. It was an overwhelming honor looking out past the microphone into an industry that I admire so much. To me, humanitarianism is such a huge part of Canadian Country Music; music is a unique way to communicate and bring people together and so many Canadian Country Artists and Industry members do that so well. I felt so honored accepting it on behalf of all the volunteers, artists, sponsors,

committee members, and audience members who made "Big Hearts For Big Kids" the success that it was. It was a moment I will forever cherish.

Q

What was your highlight of Country Music Week (other than accepting your award?)

A

The entire week is a highlight for me every year!!!! I so love seeing everyone and watching the celebration of Canadian Country music occur. It was a blast playing with a full band at the Royalty Records Party!! I also loved being a part of the Songwriter's Café- it is one of my favorite atmospheres to share and listen to music in! It is so personal and great to hear the inspirations and stories behind the songs. Another highlight was watching my musical brothers and sister/ huge mentors Hey Romeo receive the CCMA for Group of the Year!!!! I was so excited for them!!

Q

Who is your biggest musical influence?

A

Shania Twain. I've been singing along to her songs when I was barely walking! She is a huge idol of mine for her originality and her Canadian success. When I was nine years old, I attended her Edmonton concert dressed just like her Miami show, with the yellow, orange, and red stripes and the yellow ponytail on top of my head! I had a sign that read "Shania, Can I please sing with you?" and she pulled me up on stage. I danced around and sang with her. It was a dream come true. I will never forget standing on that stage next to my idol thinking, "this is what I want to be doing for the rest of my life". I can't wait to someday play the Rexall Place and pull up some nine-year-old girl to pay forward that opportunity.

Q

What are you most looking forward to in the year ahead?

A

I'm really excited about the Play It Forward School tour project this year! I can't wait to be out on the road visiting Grades 4-9 with a presentation that inspires youth to do what they do best: Play.... And then play it forward. At each school we visit, we are handing out honorariums to selected leaders who make a positive difference within their environments. At the end, we are drawing a winner for a \$10,000 prize to also be played forward. We are starting out in Alberta this fall and expanding across Canada in the Spring! I also am really looking forward to releasing my second album this coming year!! Can't wait to share new music soon!!

TC'S QUICK 5

1. Sweet or salty? – Sweet!!!! ☺
2. Mountains or beach? – Beach.
3. Stage or studio? – Stage. I love the live energy!!!
4. Dolly or Loretta? – Dolly. Coat of Many Colors is one of my favorite songs of all time.
5. Car or plane? – Car! Music up and windows down!