

# Charley Pride

Becoming a trailblazing Country Music superstar was an improbable destiny for Charley Pride, especially considering his humble beginnings as a sharecropper's son on a cotton farm in Sledge, Mississippi. His unique journey to the top of the music charts includes an unforeseen detour through the world of Negro league, minorleague and semi-pro baseball, as well as hard years of labor alongside the volcanic fires of a smelter. But in the end, with boldness, perseverance and undeniable musical talent, he managed to parlay a series of fortuitous encounters with Nashville insiders into an amazing legacy of hit singles and tens of millions in record sales.

## Awards:

- ◆ Honored in 2017 with the Lifetime Achievement Award
- ◆ Three-time Grammy Award winner, including "Best Male Country Vocal Performance" in 1972.
- ◆ Three-time CMA winner, including "Entertainer of the Year" in 1971
- ◆ Received the ACM "Pioneer Award" in 1994
- ◆ Winner of three American Music Awards
- ◆ Ranked 18th on CMT's 40 Greatest Men in Country Music
- ◆ Recipient of the "Living Legend" awards by TNN / Music City News
- ◆ Trumpet Award for "Outstanding African-American Achievement" in 1996
- ◆ Cashbox award for "Top Male Country Artist of the Decade" for the 1970's

## Career Highlights:

- ◆ Recorded 41 No. 1 Country hits, along with multiple Platinum and Gold certified albums
- ◆ Inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2000
- ◆ Inducted into the Grand Ole Opry in 1993
- ◆ Received star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1999
- ◆ Served in the United States Army
- ◆ Country Music's first black superstar
- ◆ Presented President Jimmy Carter with a special award for his support of country music, alongside Willie Nelson
- ◆ From 1952 through 1958, played baseball for Negro American League teams including the Louisville Clippers, Birmingham Black Barons and Memphis Red Sox.
- ◆ Pitched, as a Negro American League All-Star player in 1956, against a group of major league players that included Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, Al Smith, Gene Baker and Ernie Banks. Also played in games with Warren Spahn, Lew Burdette, Monte Irvin, Elston Howard, Willie Kirkland and George Altman over the course of his baseball career.
- ◆ Performed for President Barack Obama and guests in the historic East Room of the White House in 2009 as part of a concert and educational workshop event that also featured Brad Paisley and Alison Krauss
- ◆ Became one of the owners of the Texas Rangers Major League Baseball team in 2010

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