

Jimmy Wayne

Inspirational New York Times Bestselling Author & Award-Winning Musician

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

Topics

- Abuse / Domestic Violence
- Activism / Philanthropy / Civic Engagement
- Children and Youth Health
- Entertainment
- Musicians / Bands
- Overcoming Adversity

About Jimmy Wayne

Jimmy Wayne is a former foster kid turned award-winning country music artist whose songs and story highlight his mission to raise awareness for kids in foster care.

A powerful storyteller through a mix of narration and original song, Jimmy Wayne takes audiences on an unforgettable journey as he reflects on his transformation from a foster child whose youth was overrun with adversity and pain to an award-winning musician, New York Times bestselling author and celebrated activist.

Hailing from a tiny North Carolina town with his mother in prison, Wayne was in and out of foster care throughout his childhood, in juvenile detention at 15 and homeless at 16. It was then that he met Bea and Russell Costner, an elderly couple who gave him a home, the means to complete his education, and most significant of all, stability and love.

Wayne went on to earn a college degree, realize his passion and talent for storytelling through song, and at 25, went to Nashville to pursue a career as a singer-songwriter. With multiple number one hits from three albums, Wayne's deft approach to weaving his life experiences into his music provides listeners with refreshing authenticity while bringing attention to society's downfalls. He has since established himself as a leading advocate for foster care reform.

In 2010, Wayne walked 1,700 miles from Nashville to Phoenix, AZ to raise awareness of at-risk youth in the foster care system who age out at 18 and often find themselves homeless and created Project Meet Me Halfway to continue his impassioned mission benefiting at-risk youth.

He is the author of the novel (and made-for-TV movie) Paper Angels and the New York Times bestselling author of "Walk to Beautiful," an emotive account of his life. In 2012, he helped get the bill passed extending the foster care age to 21 in California and Tennessee. His humanitarian deeds have earned him the distinction as the youngest-ever recipient of the Salvation Army's William Booth Award.

Jimmy's hits include "Stay Gone," "Paper Angels" and "I Love You This Much," which was featured by Coca-Cola during its #ShareASong campaign.

•His three-week Number One, "Do You Believe Me Now" earned BMI's prestigious Million-Air Award for receiving one million radio spins in America.

Timeline of achievements:

•In 2009 Jimmy toured with Brad Paisley and recorded "Sara Smile" with rock 'n roll Hall of Fame duo Daryl Hall and John Oates.

•In 2010, Jimmy walked halfway across America (from Nashville to Phoenix) to raise awareness for kids aging out of the foster-care system.

•In 2011, Jimmy released the novel Paper Angels, which became a made-for-TV movie of the same title.

•In 2012, Jimmy helped get legislative bills passed extending the age of foster care to 21 in both California and Tennessee, and in 2015, he did the same in his home state of North Carolina.

•In 2014, Jimmy released "Walk to Beautiful", his three-time New York Times Bestselling memoir.

•In 2017, Jimmy released "Ruby, The Foster Dog", a children's book for all ages.

• Jimmy Wayne is the youngest recipient to receive the Salvation Army's William Booth award.



- In June of 2016 President George H. W Bush presented **Jimmy** with the prestigious Points of Light award.
- In 2017 Jimmy was honored with the inaugural Community Maker award by Verizon.
- In 2017 Jimmy received an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from William Woods University.
- in 2018 Jimmy received an honorary doctorate in Fine Arts from California State University of San Marcos
- Jimmy has performed the Grand Ole Opry more than 220 times.
- He lives in Nashville and continues to work tirelessly on behalf of at-risk foster youth by performing, writing books, keynote speaking and through ProjectMMH.org .

Select Keynotes

- **The Power Of One**

A powerful storyteller with an inspiring tale of triumph over hardship, Jimmy Wayne takes audiences on an unforgettable journey as he reflects on his transformation from a foster kid who, abandoned by both family and the system, would go on to become a highly acclaimed musician, bestselling author and activist. This could never have been accomplished alone. With refreshing authenticity, Wayne delivers a powerful message of hope, inspiration and overcoming the odds—all made possible from a gesture of kindness from a wonderful couple that went on to resonate throughout a lifetime.

Select Book Titles

- **2017:** Ruby the Foster Dog
- **2014:** Walk to Beautiful: The Power of Love and a Homeless Kid Who Found the Way
- **2012:** Paper Angels: A Novel

Select Articles

- [Speaking From The Heart: The Reinvention Of Jimmy Wayne](#)

Jimmy Wayne, already a country music star with No. 1 hits, leads these days what one can say is an expanded career.

- [Your Circumstances Don't Define You](#)

Jimmy Wayne remembers, "There are so many memories about sleeping outside and being hungry and, now, look where I am in life. It's just an amazing metaphor of it's not where you've been; it's where you're going."

- [Jimmy Wayne's Humble Beginnings Were Full of Heartaches](#)

Starved, abused and abandoned, country singer Jimmy Wayne had a heartbreaking childhood — the stuff of make-you-cry music lyrics. Home was a violent drug den, a stepfather pulled a gun on him and life seemed hopeless — until he was rescued by a chance encounter with a kind stranger and a guitar.

- [Jimmy Wayne on His Foster Care Journey and Upcoming Children's Book: Kids in the System 'Need Love'](#)

Jimmy Wayne is a country music star, but he's also a hero for foster kids across the country. In an exclusive interview with PEOPLE, the "Stay Gone" singer discusses the scarring childhood that inspired his activism, and reveals details about his upcoming children's book intended to raise awareness for kids in the foster care system: Ruby the Foster Dog.

- [Jimmy Wayne Releases Children's Book This November](#)

On their adventure, Mr. James teaches Ruby about integrity, honesty, loyalty, faith, forgiveness, and trust, but mostly she learns how love can rescue someone and forever change lives.

- [Abandoned at 13: How one man went from homelessness to Nashville](#)

As a young boy, his father wouldn't even acknowledge his existence. His mom was in and out of trouble and his step-dad was running from the law. He survived with his sister in North Carolina, and should have been one of those kids who got lost in the system.

- [Country Singer and Author Jimmy Wayne Honors His Sixth Grade Teacher: 'She Taught Me a Lot of Discipline'](#)

When country artist, author and advocate for foster children Jimmy Wayne was approached by the Krystal fast-food chain about doing a promotion for their new menu items, he immediately thought of a way to spin it that would recognize educators.

Select Client Feedback



Jimmy Wayne did a great job. The audience was really engaged and he touched the hearts of everyone there and on the web. He really helped put a cap on our employee giving campaign. I'm glad you and I were able to get him on stage.

— **Representative** *Anonymous*