

Star Swain  
Bio

*"Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift to God." – Leo Buscaglia*

A family trip on June 16, to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. thrust Star Swain into the national spotlight when her compelling rendition of the Star Spangled Banner went viral with more than 50 million views online. Her reach has been international with social media posts from across the world including Singapore, Bahrain and Australia describing the impact her spirited rendition of the national anthem had on listeners. A moment of moving beyond fear has propelled Swain along her path to fulfilling her dreams.

"My message is dare to dream, dare to take risks. You never know when that moment is going to happen."

Since her impromptu performance that stopped tourists in their tracks, Swain has become an Internet sensation covered by media outlets throughout the country. She has appeared on major network broadcasts from CBS Evening News with Scott Pelly and Inside Edition, to CNN and FOX and Friends. Swain made her television performance debut on July 1, when she sang the national anthem live on Good Morning America. She was also featured as the ABC News "Person of the Week."

Swain has made several guest appearances singing the Star Spangled Banner on national platforms including the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, where she sang the anthem on July 28, 2016 — the same day Secretary of State Hillary Clinton accepted the party's historic nomination for president of the United States. After her DNC appearance, Swain traveled to Washington D.C. to perform during a July 31 taping of BET's "[Joyful Noise](#)," a new Sunday morning gospel show hosted by award-winning recording artist Tye Tribbett. Swain will be featured in the "Artist Spotlight" segment of the show's debut episode scheduled for October 9.

On June 23, Swain sang the national anthem live on HBO in the center of the ring at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas before the Terence "Bud" Crawford and "The Iceman" Viktor Postal welterweight world championship fight. She has shared her voice at several national sporting events including the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series at the Charlotte Motor Speedway, in Concord, NC and National Football League games featuring the Jacksonville Jaguars and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

On September 17, Swain performed with legendary country music artist and activist, Willie Nelson, during Farm Aid 2016, in Bristow, Va. She opened the annual food and farm festival and later joined a star-studded concert lineup that featured: Nelson, John Mellencamp, Neil Young, Dave Matthews, Alison Krauss and many more.

Swain's voice has also been a blessing to others. During a September performance at the Toyota's Annual Dealers Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Toyota Foundation made a \$25,000 donation to Jefferson County Middle/High School, where Swain serves as assistant principal. Swain said the company's contribution will be used to advance students' learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Swain is using her new public platform to address social issues currently plaguing the United States. Troubled by social unrest that emerged in June after the shooting deaths of two civilians and five police officers, Swain was moved to use her voice to inspire national unity and healing. She teamed up with close friends to produce her first single titled "Home of the Brave," [released](#) July 28.

For Swain, singing is part of her life's calling to use her voice as an instrument to inspire, uplift and empower people through music. "It is always important to me that the singing has a purpose, whether it's bringing people together, encouraging someone who has been down, or providing hope. It's not just singing in vain and not just to sound good. It is about someone being able to connect based on their need." Swain, who calls her voice a gift from God, is also an Elder at the Family Worship & Praise Center church, where she serves as director of the Worship & Arts Ministry.

Born Genleah Star Swain in Macon, Georgia, Swain is the daughter of Bennie Crawford, III and Sheila Crawford. She has one brother. Swain is a graduate of Northeast High School. She has been married to Craig Swain for seven years. The couple has two children.

Swain has been an educator for 14 years. She earned her master's degree in Educational Leadership Administration from Florida State University, where she is currently pursuing a doctorate degree in Educational Policy and Evaluation. In 2003, she graduated from Florida A&M University, where she was a member of the acclaimed Marching 100 from 1999-2002

under the direction of Dr. Julian White. During her time in the band, Swain played the trombone and sang during major halftime performances.

Although she was introduced to the world while singing the national anthem, Swain is a diverse musician whose singing ability embraces a broad range of genres including R&B, jazz, funk and gospel – her roots.

“When you are open to being creative in all forms of music, you are able to touch more lives throughout the world. I want to be free to become lost in music of different genres in order to reach people beyond one style of music.”

The newfound fame is opening many doors for Swain, whose dream is to have a professional singing career.

“It has afforded me the opportunity for exposure at a magnitude I would not have been able to do on my own. The platform has already been laid out there. All I have to do is walk into it.”

#### **MEDIA CLIPS:**

Star Swain: Viral Video, youtube.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G11O4uZg4-c>

Farm Aid 2016

[https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/road2farmaid?source=feed\\_text&story\\_id=305939933120804](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/road2farmaid?source=feed_text&story_id=305939933120804)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/farmaid/albums/72157670690469533/with/29662566481/>

ABC: Good Morning America – July 1, 2016

Live Performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PY49jSG2fmY>

Entire Segment: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DlJf61QXao>

ABC News “Person of the Week” – July 1, 2016

<http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/video/assistant-principal-catches-fire-rendition-national-anthem-40292988>

CBS Evening News with Scott Pelley – June 28, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NyQr0bgeb8>

NPR – July 2, 2016

<http://www.npr.org/2016/07/02/484474040/star-swains-impromptu-national-anthem-performance-goes-viral>