

DeDe McGuire: The Blueprint for Grace, Grit, and Greatness

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There are radio voices that fill the airwaves — and then there are the ones that fill the culture. DeDe McGuire, host of *DeDe in the Morning*, has done both. And this year, her legacy was officially sealed when she was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame — one of the highest honors in broadcasting.

For those of us who know her story, this isn't just an accolade. It's a homegrown Texas victory — a reflection of decades of persistence, purpose, and poise.

From Killeen to K104: The Rise of a Legend

DeDe McGuire's journey began in Killeen, Texas, where a young woman studying telecommunications took a receptionist job at a country radio station just to get her foot in the door. One day, she was invited on-air for playful banter. The station owner's wife told her she had "a great voice and an unbelievable personality" and should be trained for radio — but not there. They said they couldn't "have a Black girl hosting." And that rejection became DeDe's redirection. She landed her first hosting opportunity at a Black-owned local station, later working her way through multiple markets across the country. She recalls that the biggest challenge wasn't learning radio — it was convincing people that a woman could be a successful radio host.

Her persistence paid off. When DeDe arrived at Dallas's K104 (KKDA-FM) — initially to fill in for someone for a day or two — she blew minds. Under Chris Arnold's advisement, DeDe was hired full-time after just one show. She had found her calling and her community.

"I'm trying my best to kick down some doors for women," DeDe told [The Dallas Morning News](#).

Breaking Barriers, Building Empires

Since 2011, DeDe has hosted *DeDe in the Morning* on K104 — a five-hour weekday show blending humor, heart, and real conversation. By 2018, the show was syndicated nationally by Compass Media Networks, expanding into more than 80 markets across the U.S. The weekend version, *DeDe's Weekend Kickback*, brought her signature mix of laughter and relatability even further into homes nationwide.



L-R. Aye Treg, David “Breeze” Carter, DeDe McGuire and J Kruz of the “DeDe In The Morning Show”. Photo Credit: Steven D. Hill

Before launching her own show, DeDe co-hosted *The Doug Banks Show* and *The Ride with Doug and DeDe* — sharpening her skills in national syndication long before the industry was ready to give a woman a morning mic.

Now known as “the hardest working woman in radio,” DeDe has appeared on CNN, BET, and FOX, and has interviewed an extraordinary roster of cultural and political heavyweights: Presidents Barack Obama and Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, Hillary Clinton, Jay-Z, and Beyoncé.

Her producer David “Breeze” Carter says it best:

“I personally see women come up and just tell her she was their inspiration. She knows somebody’s watching her — somebody’s drawing energy from her.”

DeDe didn’t just step up to the plate of morning radio — she had the audacity to do it in the shadow of one of the greatest icons in not just radio history, but Black history itself — the incomparable [Tom Joyner](#). When Tom Joyner officially retired from *The Tom Joyner Morning Show* in December 2019, it marked the end of an era for Black radio — and just a few years before that transition, DeDe McGuire had already stepped into her own spotlight at K104, launching *DeDe in the Morning* in 2013 (and later syndicating it nationally in 2018), proving that the next chapter of Dallas radio would continue to be led by a powerful Black voice. Joining DeDe on *DeDe in the Morning* are her dynamic co-hosts J.Kruz, comedian J.J. Williamson and Aye Treg alongside producer David “Breeze” Carter and the show’s operations and content lead George “Geo” Cook, together forming the powerhouse team that keeps one of America’s top morning shows running strong every day.

Following a legend like Tom Joyner is no small feat — it’s stepping into a space carved by a man whose voice defined generations, whose laughter woke up America, and whose platform elevated Black stories before it was popular to do so. In Dallas, Tom Joyner isn’t just a radio icon — he’s part of the city’s DNA. So, for DeDe McGuire to emerge in that same arena, not as a replacement but as her own force, speaks volumes about her talent and tenacity. The gravity of following someone like Joyner is immense; it requires not imitation, but innovation. DeDe didn’t try to fill his shoes — she built her own, and in doing so, proved that legacy isn’t something you inherit, it’s something you earn.

The Hall of Fame Moment

In June 2025, DeDe was officially announced as part of the Radio Hall of Fame’s Class of 2025, joining an elite group that includes Alice Cooper, Julie Talbott, Mike McVay, and Sheri Lynch, among others. The selection process, managed by the Museum of Broadcast Communications, involved more than 900 radio professionals and a distinguished nominating

committee. To rise from Killeen to K104 to a place among radio's greatest isn't just a career arc — it's a cultural statement. DeDe McGuire is proof that preparation meets destiny. Her colleagues, including Director of Operations George Cook, describe her influence as "local, national, and expanding." He's right — DeDe's reach transcends airwaves.

The Heart Behind the Mic

What sets DeDe apart isn't just her hustle — it's her heart. Through the [DeDe McGuire Foundation](#), she has awarded over \$125,000 in scholarships to single mothers and students through programs such as Achieve the Dream (HBCU Scholarship), DeDe's Do-Over Scholarship, and the We Got You Girl daycare giveaway for working moms. She also serves as a board member for Women Called Moses Domestic Violence Outreach, supports Minnie's Food Pantry, served as chair of the Dallas Arboretum's Black Heritage Celebration and acts as Community Ambassador for Dress for Success Dallas.

Her accolades include being named one of Radio Ink's Most Influential Women in Radio for six consecutive years (2019–2024), recipient of the Gracie Award, AirBlazer Award, and International Black Broadcasters Lifetime Achievement Award — and now, a Radio Hall of Fame inductee.

A Celebration of Love and Legacy

At her recent celebratory happy hour, I watched DeDe do what she always does — make everyone else feel seen. She looked around the room, visibly emotional, as friends, family, and colleagues toasted her success. Yet instead of centering herself, she centered her crew, producers, supporters and managers, giving special love to those who encouraged her when the leap into national syndication felt uncertain.

In a world where many claim their victories as self-made, DeDe never forgets to uplift her advocates — the ones working behind the scenes. That humility, paired with her unrelenting drive, is what makes her so magnetic.



DeDe McGuire addresses her crowd. Photo Credit: Steven D Hill.

A Voice That Stands Firm

As Publisher of The Dallas Weekly, I want to underscore what this moment truly represents — not just for DeDe, but for Black women in media. In an era marked by the systematic erasure and politicized marginalization of Black women's voices, DeDe McGuire represents a vital counter-narrative — one that underscores the intellectual, cultural, and civic necessity of Black women's leadership in media. Her presence on the airwaves is not merely entertainment; it is an act of resistance, reclamation, and representation. As institutions continue to curtail diversity initiatives and public discourse increasingly seeks to undermine the authority of outspoken Black women — from journalists like Joy Reid to elected officials such as Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett — DeDe's sustained visibility and authenticity serve as a stabilizing force in an unstable sociopolitical climate. She occupies a crucial intersection of gender, race, and media power, using her platform to inform,

uplift, and affirm communities that are often silenced in both mainstream and local narratives. In doing so, McGuire's work extends beyond the boundaries of radio; it becomes a living archive of resilience, an embodiment of the intellectual and emotional labor Black women perform daily to preserve truth and community in the face of persistent cultural erasure.

I've seen her at political events, community meetings, and voter initiatives, not for the "gram," but because she genuinely believes in advocacy, empowerment and accountability.

Let me be clear, it's my job to watch how people move in this city. And in my nine years at Dallas Weekly, I cannot recall a single instance where DeDe didn't command respect or handle her leadership with poise and humility — and heavy on the humility, because this is *Dallas* and we all know what that means.

Full transparency — I measure character by action under pressure. One of DeDe's most public tests came when longtime co-host Lady Jade exited the DeDe in the Morning Show. The internet did what it does — speculated, criticized, sensationalized. But DeDe did something rare: she got vulnerable. She addressed it on-air with transparency and emotion, even through tears. I'll never forget that moment. I didn't know DeDe formally, one thing I knew was that she didn't play about her name and what she had built. And years later, when she could have moved on without looking back, she instead took time to thank Lady Jade publicly for being part of her journey. Was it necessary? Not at all. But that's what authenticity looks like.

The Blueprint

DeDe McGuire is, without a doubt, the blueprint for leadership, longevity, and a love of craft. She works tirelessly, travels frequently, and still makes time to mentor others, especially women in broadcasting and podcasting. Even as her celebratory event was coming to a close, she was literally already checked in for a flight to Atlanta the next day, but still hugging every single guest on her way out the door. She hopes to continue *DeDe in the Morning* for another 10 to 20 years — this time with full ownership. But if history is any indicator, she's not just planning to stay — she's planning to elevate everyone around her in the process.

Congratulations, DeDe. You are not only a Hall of Famer — you're a national treasure, a cultural architect, and living proof that grace and grit can take you anywhere.

From all of us at The Dallas Weekly: thank you for blazing the trail and doing it with heart.