

2024 ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT HONOREE

Donald Katz — CLASS OF 1970

Don Katz is the founder of Audible, the leading creator and provider of premium audio storytelling. He led the company from founding in 1995 until 2022. Today, Audible serves millions of listeners globally and offers nearly 900,000 Audible Originals, audiobooks, audio editions of periodicals, and other programs.



Under Don's leadership, Audible commercialized the first portable digital audio player in 1997, four years before the introduction of the iPod. The company was publicly traded on NASDAQ until it was acquired by Amazon in 2008, becoming an independently operated subsidiary. Don moved Audible's global headquarters from suburban New Jersey to downtown Newark, the largest city in the state, and has long been committed to the Brick City's comeback and focused on programmatic solutions that address urban inequities. He is the founder of Newark Venture Partners, a social impact early-stage investment fund and ultra-bandwidth accelerator that seeks to connect Newark to the early-stage technology start-up innovation economy.

Don was previously a journalist and author for 20 years, writing five books and serving as contributing editor at Rolling Stone, Outside, Esquire, and other publications. His work won an Overseas Press Club award and a National Magazine Award, and his book *Home Fires* was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award. His two books about businesses – *The Big Store: Inside the Crisis and Revolution at Sears* (winner of The Heartland Prize for Non-Fiction); and *Just Do It: The Nike Spirit in the Corporate World* – were both best-sellers.

Recognized as one of America's Top 25 Disruptive Leaders by Living Cities for his work on behalf of urban transformation, Katz was named New Jersey's most influential tech leader by ROI-NJ in 2021. He was the recipient of a Tribeca Disruptive Innovation Award in 2013. For his leadership and founding vision for Audible, he was honored by both PEN America and Gotham Film & Media Institute in 2022.

Don graduated from New York University, where he studied with novelist Ralph Ellison. He also holds an MSc Econ from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

