

Calloway studio is a gift to city

By Phyllis Cruze
Post contributor

On the outside, it looks like the renovation of an old Cincinnati recording studio.

Inside Crystal Clear Sound Studio on Spring Grove Avenue, aspirations are much loftier than mere renovation of a building.

Studio manager and co-owner Gloria Larson wants to attract national recording talent to Cincinnati and to have it become a community-oriented center where Cincinnati youngsters and adults can learn about the recording industry.

Ms. Larson already has one nationally known R&B group working with her — Calloway — the duo composed of her sons, Reggie and Vincent "Cino" Calloway.

And Calloway already has linked one other national recording artist — R&B superstar Teddy Pendergrass — to the Cincinnati recording studio.

Calloway may be best known for its 1989 No. 2 pop hit single, "I Wanna Be Rich," but the group has accolades dating back several years.

The brothers, now in their 30s,

New in music

helped found the local band Midnight Star in 1976.

The band's "No Parking on the Dance Floor" was one of the biggest hits of 1983 and helped make it that year's best-selling R&B band.

Reggie and Cino left Midnight Star in 1985 to concentrate on writing and producing — then giving the singular name to their partnership: "Calloway."

Calloway went on to create four gold or platinum

Grammy-nominated recordings: Pendergrass' Grammy-nominated hit "Joy" (No. 1 R&B); Natalie Cole's single "Jump Start my Heart" (No. 2 R&B and No. 13 pop); Gladys Knight's Grammy-winning hit "Love Overboard" (No. 1 R&B and No. 13 Pop); and LeVert's debut "Casanova" (No. 1 R&B and No. 5 pop) which earned Reggie Calloway a songwriting Grammy nomination.

This week, Calloway's newly-released single, the title track off "Let's Get Smooth" on

the Epic label, is No. 51 on Billboard's Hot R&B Singles.

The album has 15 new Calloway songs and remakes of Sly and the Family Stone's "Family Affair" and the Delphonics' "La La La Means I Love You."

In addition to promoting "Let's Get Smooth," Reggie and Cino are working on Pendergrass' new project at Crystal Clear Sound Studios.

Renovation of the studio will allow the Calloways to spend more time working in Cincinnati.

And, if the studio is successful in recruiting other nationally-known recording artists, the city will benefit from the recording industry as well, Ms. Larson said.

"It's going to be a national operation with the Calloways, and they'll be working with other major recording artists," she said. "A lot of them will be coming here, generating income for the city."

Ms. Larson's co-owner at the studio is her oldest son, Greg Calloway. They are revamping the

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Reggie and Vincent "Cino" Calloway have a new release, new project with R&B superstar Teddy Pendergrass and a new Cincinnati recording studio run by their mother, Gloria Larson.

Calloways

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recording studio adjacent to Queen City Album.

Ms. Larson is also putting together programs that reflect her pride and appreciation for the city that helped launch her sons' careers. They include:

■ **"Calloway Classics,"** an evening designed to showcase talent from the Tristate area taking place June 14 at Music Hall. Auditions on April 25 are open to children ages 6 to 13; young adults and adults. (Place to be determined.) Applications will soon be available at area music stores and shopping malls.

■ **The Reggie Calloway Scholarship** fund benefits children who are making strides toward a music career.

■ **Educational seminars** for school-age children and adults about the music industry.

"This is going to be more than just a recording studio," Ms. Larson said. "We're going to get the community involved in all kinds of music."

If you would like more details about Crystal Clear Sound Studios and its programs, call



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Gloria Larson in her office at the Crystal Clear Sound Studio on