

**For Immediate Release  
November 3, 2015**

**Press Contact:**  
**Lily Zaballos**  
**(510) 566-0814**  
[lilyzaballos@gmail.com](mailto:lilyzaballos@gmail.com)

**Hip-Hop Education Center to launch campaign asking President Obama to designate hip-hop as valuable public school education tool; hosts first annual awards for Hip-Hop Education pioneers**

NEW YORK — Today, the Hip-Hop Education Center (HHEC) announces that it will launch on November 11, 2015, the ***We The People for Hip-Hop Education in Public Schools***, a petition requesting that the Obama Administration designate Hip-Hop culture as a valuable and uniquely American national treasure worthy of being taught and practiced in all K-12 public schools. *“Carlos Mare and I are excited to share what we’ve been passionately working on for the past year; we know this will be game changer in education reform and will open up opportunities for millions of children.” said HHEC Founder Martha Diaz.*

For the past five years, HHEC has been conducting research, evaluating programs, and convening the teachers, teaching artists, scholars, researchers, activists, and music industry professionals to research and build a Hip-Hop Education movement. Research shows that Hip-Hop programming is making a difference with student engagement and academic outcomes. HHEC believes integrating Hip-Hop into public school education could help solve the U.S. education crisis:

- Students are not being engaged in school. Approximately, 1.1 million American high school students drop out every year. That’s a student every 26 seconds – or 7,000 a day.
- This education crisis poses direct negative consequences to poverty, crime, and economic conditions to our society.
- The poverty rate for families headed by dropouts is more than twice that of families headed by high school graduates. A high school dropout will earn \$200,000 less than a high school graduate over his lifetime. And almost a million dollars less than a college graduate.

In addition to its petition, HHEC, in conjunction with **NYU Metropolitan Center for Research in Equity and the Transformation of Schools and Wikiburg**, will pay tribute to some of the pioneers and contributors of Hip-Hop Education with its first annual **Extra Credit Awards**. HHEC will honor exemplary models that focus primarily on music education /production that are improving educational outcomes for students in the following areas: STE(A)M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), social and emotional learning, academic literacy, and high school graduation rates.

The emcee for the evening will be best-selling author, award-winning filmmaker, rapper, and professor **MK Asante**. Honorees in attendance are:

- **Afrika Bambaataa** - Zulu Nation - New York, NY / Global
- **Maureen Yancey aka Ma Dukes** - J Dilla Foundation - Detroit, MI / National
- **Tomas Alvarez and Rob Jackson** - Beats, Rhymes and Life - Oakland, CA
- **Dr. Olajide Williams, Easy AD, Artie Green, and Doug E Fresh** -Hip-Hop Public Health-Columbia University
- **Christopher Emdin and The GZA** - Science Genius High School B.A.T.T.L.E.S. - Columbia University
- **David TC Ellis** - High School for Recording Arts aka Hip Hop High - St. Paul, Minnesota
- **Toki Wright** - Hip-Hop Studies Program - McNally Smith College of Music - Saint Paul, MN
- **Donnie Smith and Che Smith aka Rhymefest** - Donda’s House - Chicago, IL
- **DJ Stephen Levitin aka Apple Juice Kid, Pierce Freelon, and Dr. Mark Katz** - Beat Making Lab - University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill / Global

**STAY INFORMED: Eventbrite Page TWITTER @hiphopeducation INSTAGRAM and FACEBOOK @hiphopeducationcenter #hiphopeducation #hiphopeducationcenter @Wikiburg @MetroCenter**

###

**WHO:** Hip-Hop Education Center, New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, and Wikiburg

**WHAT:** *We The People for Hip-Hop Education in Public Schools* Petition Launch and the Extra Credit Awards

**WHEN:** November 11th from 7-9PM

**WHERE:** New York University  
Kimmel Center  
Rosenthal Pavilion  
60 Washington Square South  
New York, NY 10012

**HOST:** The emcee for the evening is best-selling author, award-winning filmmaker, rapper, and professor MK Asante.

**HONOREES:**

- Afrika Bambaataa - Zulu Nation - Global
- Maureen Yancey aka Ma Dukes - J Dilla Foundation - National
- Tomas Alvarez and Rob Jackson - Beats, Rhymes and Life - Oakland, CA
- Dr. Olajide Williams, Artie Green, Easy AD and Doug E Fresh - Hip-Hop Public Health - Columbia University - NY
- Christopher Emdin and The GZA - Science Genius B.A.T.T.L.E.S. - Columbia University - NY
- David TC Ellis - High School for Recording Arts aka Hip Hop High - Minneapolis, Minnesota
- DJ Stephen Levitin aka Apple Juice Kid, Pierce Freelon, and Dr. Mark Katz - Beat Making Lab - University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill / Global
- Toki Wright - Hip-Hop Studies Program - McNally Smith College of Music - Saint Paul, MN
- Donnie Smith and Che Smith aka Rhymefest - Donda's House - Chicago, IL

**WHY:**

- Students are not engaged in school. Approximately, 1.1 million American high school students drop out every year. That's a student every 26 seconds – or 7,000 a day.
- This education crisis poses direct negative consequences to poverty, crime, and economic conditions to our society.
- The poverty rate for families headed by dropouts is more than twice that of families headed by high school graduates. A high school dropout will earn \$200,000 less than a high school graduate over his lifetime. And almost a million dollars less than a college graduate.

## HOW:

- PETITION - On November 11th, we are launching a We The People - White House Petition to request that the Obama Administration acknowledge hip-hop culture as a valuable culture that should be studied and practiced in all K-12 public schools. We will have 30 days to get 100,000 signatures in order for the Obama Administration to respond to our request.
- PARTNERSHIPS - In order to bring national attention to our mission, we have joined forces the Metro Center, Wikiburg, and the Disruptor Foundation to develop a social media campaign and involve some of the social change leaders in and outside of the hip-hop community. Over the next six months we will be creating an advocacy and support network.
- POLICY - We are working with political representatives on a local and national level to create a legislative bill to mandate that hip-hop culture is integrated in the parks and programs of the National Park Service and the Department of Education Common Core State Standards.
- HIP-HOP COMMUNIVERSITY - We are launching an online platform for the burgeoning Hip-Hop Education movement. The Communiversity is the first teaching, learning, and archival management system— whereby the community and university come together to develop an alternative educational space that utilizes hip-hop culture as an interdisciplinary teaching tool.

## TWEETS

The Extra Credit Awards November 11th, 2015

by [@hiphopeducation](#) [@Wikiburg](#) [@metronyu](#) [#HipHopEducation](#) tix here <https://goo.gl/9loKU5>

Tell us about the positive influence Hip-Hop has in your life

[@hiphopeducation](#) [@Wikiburg](#) [@metronyu](#) [#HipHopEducation](#)

## TWEETS

Join us in honoring Afrika Bambaataa, [@ZuluNation1973](#) with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Extra Credit Awards [#HipHopEducation](#) 11/11

The 5th element of [#HipHop](#) is knowledge. Knowledge of self and the community - Afrika Bambaataa of [@ZuluNation1973](#) [#HipHopEducation](#)

## TWEETS

We're engaging students in fresh & creative ways with [#HipHopEducation](#).  
Come learn how: [goo.gl/9loKU5](https://goo.gl/9loKU5) [@hiphopeducation](#) [@Wikiburg](#) [@metronyu](#)

## TWEETS

[#HipHopEducation](#) has the proven potential to engage students across the US  
Come learn how [goo.gl/9loKU5](https://goo.gl/9loKU5) [@hiphopeducation](#) [@Wikiburg](#)



### **About Hip-Hop Education Center**

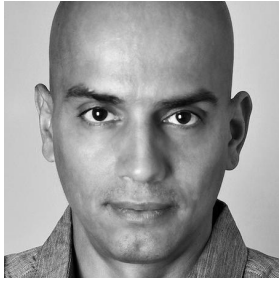
The mission of the Hip-Hop Education Center is to be a catalyst for the hip-hop and education field through the operation of a Communiversities — whereby the community and university come together to develop an alternative educational space that utilizes hip-hop culture as an interdisciplinary teaching tool of essential life skills, all of which supports the emotional, physical, creative, cognitive and civic development of young people, in an effort to transform their lives and communities. <https://hiphopeducation.org>



### **Martha Diaz**

Martha Diaz is the founder of the Hip-Hop Education Center. She's an award winning community organizer, social entrepreneur, media producer, archivist, curator, and professor at New York University. For two decades, Diaz has traversed between the hip-hop entertainment industry, non-profit sector and academia. She has worked on Hollywood productions and produced TV shows, documentaries, music videos, and PSA's. Diaz served as the executive director of the Hip-Hop Association, where she produced and curated the Hip-Hop Odyssey International Film Festival and Hip-Hop Education Summit. In 2010, Diaz founded the Hip-Hop Education Center, housed at NYU's Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, to cultivate and professionalize the field of hip-hop-based education. She is co-editor of the Hip-Hop Education Guidebook, Vol. I (Hip-Hop Association, 2007) and *Rebel Music: Resistance Through Hip Hop and Punk* (Information Age Publishing, 2015). Among her fellowships and residencies, Diaz served as resident of NJ Performing Arts Center's Alternate Routes Program, Fellow at NYU Reynolds Program for Social Entrepreneurship, Senior Fellow at the Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation - National Museum of American History, and Hip-Hop Scholar at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture - NY Public Library. In 2014, Diaz was appointed as Columbia University Community Scholar, where she collaborates with the Institute for Urban and Minority Education and the Center for Justice. Her most recent media project is the award winning *NAS: Time Is Illmatic* documentary, where she serves as Associate Producer.

[www.marthadiaz.com](http://www.marthadiaz.com)



### **Carlos Mare Rodriguez**

Carlos Mare139 Rodriguez is an internationally acclaimed sculptor/ painter/ scholar/ US Cultural Ambassador who in 1985 pioneered a novel version of urban graffiti as modern sculpture. Beyond fine art Mare 139 earned the prestigious 2006 Webby Award for his launch of the Hip Hop documentary Style Wars website. Style Wars has also garnered the COMMARTS/ Communication Arts Award, Horizon Interactive Award, as well as SXSW/South by Southwest Interactive. Not only an award winner but an award designer, Mare139 designed and created the award for the annual BET/Black Entertainment Award show. Currently he is committed to sculpture and painting and also works as a creative consultant to companies like NIKE, Jordan Brand and Red Bull. <http://www.carlosmare.com/>



### **About Metro Center**

The Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools (Metro Center) is a comprehensive, university-based center that focuses on educational research, policy, and practice. We are a partner and resource at the local and national levels in strengthening and improving access, opportunity, and the quality of education in our schools. Our mission is to target issues related to educational equity by providing leadership and support to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers. For 35 years, the Metro Center has been a transformational force inspiring positive change in schools, districts, and regions across the country. The Metro Center is powerfully focused on driving equity and access in urban, suburban, and rural school settings - especially when confronting issues of race, gender, and national origin. Under the visionary leadership of Dr. Pedro Noguera, Peter L. Agnew Professor of Education, and Professor of Teaching and Learning, the Metro Center is continually expanding and evolving its services. Persistence of vision has forged the Metro Center into a nationally recognized leader in educational equity. Our comprehensive programs serve a wide

range of constituencies - more than 5,000 classroom staff impacting 125,000 students, as well as 2,800 parents and 61 agencies, schools, and school districts.

<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter>



### **About Wikiburg**

We at Wikiburg believe that civic engagement is a fundamental part of your creative expression as a citizen. Wikiburg translates to open town. As a community, we'll create, organize and mobilize causes local to you, into national movements, while making it easy to see what your neighbors have defined as their most pressing issues. Wikiburg grew out of the Save Domino campaign – a community movement we started to keep Brooklyn's iconic pre-war sugar refinery from high-rise development. All of a sudden, we were up against a multi-billion dollar machine that didn't live anywhere, especially not in our neighborhood. Our struggles became the recipe of what is now Wikiburg, with the tools and knowledge we wished we'd had back then.

Wikiburg is your platform. Be honest. Be factual. Be issue-based. Our community is not about a grand save-the-world ideology. Instead, it's about local empowerment and the belief that from the bottom up, we can make the world come together.

<http://www.wikiburg.com>

### **Host:**



### **MK Asante**

MK Asante is a bestselling author, award-winning filmmaker, rapper, and professor who CNN calls "a master storyteller and major creative force." Asante is the author of the acclaimed memoir *Buck*, described by Maya Angelou as "A story of surviving and thriving with passion,

compassion, wit, and style.” Buck made the Washington Post bestseller list in 2014 and 2015 and is a NAACP Image Award finalist. His other books are *It’s Bigger Than Hip Hop*, *Beautiful. And Ugly Too*, and *Like Water Running Off My Back*. Asante is a Sundance™ Feature Film Fellow for the movie adaptation of *Buck*. He directed the prize-winning Starz TV documentary *The Black Candle* and wrote/produced *500 Years Later*, winner of five international film festival awards. Asante studied at the University of London, earned a B.A. from Lafayette College, and an M.F.A. from the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television. Asante has given distinguished lectures at Harvard, Yale, Stanford, as well as hundreds of other universities. He has toured in over 40 countries and was awarded the Key to the City of Dallas, Texas. Called “the voice of a new generation” by *Essence*, he has been featured on the CBS Early Show, NBC News, BBC, Revolt, NPR, BET, *The Breakfast Club*, and MTV. He was selected as “100 History Makers in the Making” by MSNBC. The Griot and his inspirational story “The Blank Page” is featured in the #1 New York Times bestseller, *Chicken Soup for the Soul: 20th Anniversary Edition*. Asante’s essays have been published in *USA Today*, *Huffington Post*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *New York Times*. Described by *Vibe* magazine as “brilliantly complex,” Asante is a rap artist who has performed on four continents. He is featured on the new album *Indie 500* by Talib Kweli and 9th Wonder. Asante is a tenured professor of creative writing and film in the Department of English and Language Arts at Morgan State University.  
<http://mkasante.com>

### **Honorees:**



### **Afrika Bambaataa**

Afrika Bambaataa was an important rap-music pioneer who, much like Grandmaster Flash, became a forgotten elder statesman as rap evolved. Bambaataa, who took his name (which means "affectionate leader") from a movie about Zulu warriors, quit the notorious Black Spades street gang in the mid-'70s and formed Zulu Nation, a music-oriented "youth organization." Among the members who became minor rap luminaries were DJs Red Alert, Jazzy Jay, and Whiz Kid, as well as Afrika Islam, who went on to work with Ice-T.

Bambaataa became a popular DJ on the nascent South Bronx rap scene, where his encyclopedic knowledge of funk grooves earned him the nickname "Master of Records." He formed two rap crews: the Jazzy 5 (with MCs Ice, Mr. Freeze, Master D.E.E., and AJ Les) and Soulsonic Force



(Mr. Biggs [Ellis Williams], Pow Wow [Robert Darrell Allen], and Emcee G.L.O.B.E. [John B. Miller]). Each made its debut 12-inch single in 1980: Jazzy 5's "Jazzy Sensation" and Soulsonic Force's "Zulu Nation Throwdown," both classic proto-hip-hop party anthems, with round-robin rapping backed by live bands playing slinky funk vamps.

In 1982 Bambaataa and Soulsonic Force dropped the live band to go high-tech. Producer Arthur Baker (who had worked on "Jazzy Sensation") and synthesizer player John Robie provided electronic "beat-box" rhythm and an eerie keyboard hook modeled on "TransEurope Express" by Kraftwerk, whose robotic trance music had long been popular with inner-city youth. The result was "Planet Rock," a pop hit (#48, 1982) that went gold and spawned an entire school of "electro-boogie" rap and dance music.

While Bambaataa continued to exert some influence on rap music, "Planet Rock" turned out to be his only hit. Bambaataa's groundbreaking tracks that failed to chart include 1982's "Looking for the Perfect Beat" (sampled in Duice's 1993 rap-dance hit "Dazzey Duks" [#12]); 1983's "Renegades of Funk" (on which G.L.O.B.E. pioneered the rapid-fire "poppin'" style of rap later popularized by Big Daddy Kane and Das EFX); 1984's "World Destruction" by Time Zone, a rap-rock fusion unit featuring Bambaataa, ex-Sex Pistol John Lydon, and bassist/producer Bill Laswell; and 1984's "Unity," which Bambaataa recorded with rap forebear James Brown. Even Bambaataa's and Soulsonic Force's appearance in the 1984 rap movie *Beat Street* brought problems: Emcee G.L.O.B.E. and Pow Wow were arrested for their roles in a 1979 Manhattan bank holdup, when a policeman watching the movie recognized Pow Wow from the bank surveillance video. G.L.O.B.E. and Pow Wow were later put on probation and received community service sentences for convictions on conspiracy to commit bank robbery.

Bambaataa has remained active if not commercially successful. *The Light* featured guests George Clinton, Sly and Robbie, Boy George, and UB40. *Decade of Darkness* collected dance-oriented tracks produced for an Italian label. Bambaataa formed his own label to release the *Time Zone* compilation. The rise of "turntablism" as its own subgenre and the ratification of "electronica" as an industry-certified trend in the late '90s brought Bambaataa renewed recognition well beyond the hip-hop community. Each year brings a new batch of remixes on multiple dance and import labels, and updates of his signature hit. *Lost Generation* sports "Planet Rock '96," and the millennium would not have been complete without the release of "Planet Rock 2000."

*Portions of this biography appeared in The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll (Simon & Schuster, 2001). <http://www.zulunation.com/>*



**Beats, Rhymes and Life:**

Beats, Rhymes and Life (BRL) is a 501(c)(3) community-based organization in Oakland, California that serves youth between the ages of 12-24 years. Our mission is to improve mental health and social outcomes among marginalized youth by using hip hop as a catalyst for positive change and development.

<http://brl-inc.org>

**Tomas Alvarez**

Tomas is a social entrepreneur and youth advocate working to elevate mental health and social outcomes among youth of color throughout the United States. In 2004 Tomás pioneered one of the country's first 'Hip Hop Therapy' programs that utilized the process of creating rap music as a tool for mental health and healing among urban teens uninterested in traditional mental health services. Today Tomás' Hip Hop Therapy model has become a benchmark and sparked a global movement to use Hip Hop Therapy as an innovative solution to addressing the mental health challenges experienced by disenfranchised youth. As a published author and passionate speaker, Tomás enjoys sharing his vision for a new mental health paradigm that centers youth people in their own healing process and empowers them to become change makers in their community and beyond. Tomás' numerous awards and recognitions throughout his career are a tribute to his vision, leadership skills and impact. In 2012 NBC Latino named Tomás Alvarez III one of the country's Top 20 Innovators, whose work is changing their fields. The top honor placed Tomás in the company of other innovators such as Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Rosario Dawson and Dolores Huerta. More recently, Tomás was elected to serve as a lifetime Fellow by Ashoka, an international organization that identifies and supports social entrepreneurs whose bold ideas have the power to transform patterns in society.



### **Rob Jackson**

A Hip Hop artist, educator and youth advocate, Rob Jackson is a representative of Oakland's multicultural community. He received a Bachelors Degree in Liberal Studies with an emphasis in Ethnic Studies from San Francisco State University. With extensive background in the field of Education and expertise in curriculum development, Rob co-founded Beats Rhymes and Life with Tomas Alvarez in 2004 to serve the mental health needs of youth of color. With over ten years of experience working with marginalized youth, and fifteen years as a Hip Hop Artists, Rob has helped BRL bridge the worlds of mental health and urban culture to effectively serve youth throughout the Bay Area and the Bronx, New York. As BRL's Chief of Staff, Rob is responsible for staff development and ensuring program fidelity.



### **Science Genius:**

Science Genius B.A.T.T.L.E.S. is an initiative that is focused on utilizing the power of hip-hop music and culture to introduce youth to the wonder and beauty of science. The core message of the initiative is to meet urban youth who are traditionally disengaged in science classrooms on their cultural turf, and provide them with the opportunity to express the same passion they have for hip-hop culture for science. Concurrently, the project aims to display the interests of science enthusiasts who have a passion for hip-hop, and introduce both hip-hop and science to a wider audience.

<http://chrisemdin.com/science-genius/>



### **Dr. Christopher Emdin**

Dr. Christopher Emdin is an Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics, Science and Technology at Teachers College, Columbia University; where he also serves as Director of Science Education at the Center for Health Equity and Urban Science Education. He is currently a Caperton Fellow and Hip-Hop Archive Fellow at the WEB DuBois Institute at Harvard University. Dr. Emdin is a social critic, public intellectual and science advocate whose commentary on issues of race, culture, inequality and education have appeared in dozens of influential periodicals including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post.



### **Beat Making Lab:**

Beat Making Lab is an electronic music studio small enough to fit in a backpack. We collaborate with communities all around the world; donating laptops, microphones and software to community centers and conducting two-week residencies with talented youth. We film workshops and shoot music videos as part of a weekly web-series with PBS Digital Studios. Our goals include cultural exchange, innovative collaboration, and social/entrepreneurial impact.. <http://www.beatmakinglab.com/>



**Piece Freelon**

Pierce Freelon is a musician, professor and organizer with afro-futurist tendencies. Co-founder/host of the PBS web-series Beat Making Lab, Freelon is an international ambassador of Pan-African art + activism. He teaches courses on music and black studies, at UNC Chapel Hill. Front man of the genre-bending band The Beast, he has been hailed as a "natural, engaging blend of jazz and hip hop" (Jazz Times Magazine). Pierce runs a network of Pan-African "Artivism" community centers headquartered in Durham, NC. These are multi-medium spaces for creating art and emancipating minds, where youth engage in digital media workshops free of charge.



### **Stephen Levitin**

Stephen Levitin aka Apple Juice Kid is a music producer, DJ and drummer. Levitin co-founded the Beat Making Lab, an Emmy award winning PBS web series which teaches electronic and Hip Hop music production for the purposes of social change. The Lab began at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and has travelled around world from Ethiopia to Fiji. Apple Juice Kid has produced music for artists such as Mos Def, Azealia Banks, Camp Lo, Wale and MC Lyte. He has released several Jazz remix albums including the critically acclaimed Miles Davis Remixed with Okayplayer.



### **Donda's House**

Donda's House, Inc. was designed to provide access to premium arts instruction to youth. Arts and music programs are routinely the first casualty in schools facing budget crises, specifically institutions in at-risk communities that directly benefit from access to safe environments and developmental opportunities. "Got Bars" was created by Chicago rappers Rhymefest and Kanye West, to simulate the creative environment of the late 90s that offered openmics, rap battles and other creative outlets for budding artists. That collaborative environment ushered in a new era of nonviolent and socially conscious music. Dr. Donda West provided the necessary recording equipment in her home and is remembered for asking "is that your truth?" to the young artists who frequently visited. Dr. Donda West will be remembered as the mother of Kanye Omari West, but she stands on her own merit as doctor of education, professor of English, curriculum

designer, entertainment manager, and world traveler who inspired her students to fulfill their potential and inspired her son to be a fearless star.

<http://www.dondashouseinc.org/>



### **Donnie Smith**

Donnie Smith is co-founder and the executive director of Donda's House Inc. Donda's House, named after the mother of Kanye West, provides access to premium arts instruction to youth. After assisting her grammy-award winning husband Che "Rhymefest" Smith with a run for City Council in one of Chicago's most violent neighborhoods and serving as a High School Teacher in the Chicago Public School system, she quickly realized that low-income youth idolized celebrities and suffered from access to artistic and cultural development. As the child of a crack-cocaine addicted mother, an absent father and a survivor of sexual assault, Donnie realized that programs like the Children's Defense Fund - Freedom Schools and a host of others exposed her to new opportunities, helped her escape her daily trauma, and empowered her to use her negative experiences as motivation to change her narrative. Donda's House was born out of the necessity to provide similar experiences to a new generation of youth in order to alter the trajectory of their lives.

### **Rhymefest**

Che "Rhymefest" Smith is the quintessential renaissance man as a father, husband, entrepreneur and artist. Inspired by his life experiences growing up in a working class, single-parent household, Che has carved out a life in art, music and social activism, always using his music career as a platform to stimulate social change. In 2005, Che won a Grammy Award for "Jesus Walks," which he co-wrote with childhood friend Kanye West. He lent his services to The Happiness Club helping to develop musical talents of at-risk youth in Chicago's inner-city, and has supported countless community organizations as a mentor and motivational speaker. Che attended Columbia College and Purdue University studying radio, communications and education. He served as a substitute teacher and youth counselor and as a community corrections supervisor working with convicted felons on completing their community service requirements. Che has testified before Congress, and was the first and only rapper to meet with British Prime Minister David Cameron in Parliament to discuss the impact the hip hop community can have on politics and social activism which resulted in a program called Hugs for Hoodies. In 2011, Che

was the first rapper to ever run for city council in Chicago. After successfully defeating 3 other candidates, he lost to the incumbent in a run-off race by a mere 200 votes. In 2013, Rhymefest launched Donda's House, Inc. along with Kanye West, to honor the educational legacy of Dr. Donda West (Kanye's mother) by implementing arts, health/wellness, and literature experiences that transform youth. To date, Rhymefest has released two studio albums and three mixtapes. He believes "the only true power is the power to empower others."



### **Hip-Hop Studies Program:**

The Hip-Hop Studies diploma program is specially designed to develop your musical talents and equip you with the business and technology skills essential for establishing a career in the music industry. The cross-departmental curriculum focuses on the fundamentals of hip-hop composition, production, and performance, with a special emphasis on entrepreneurship.

Website:

<http://www.mcnallysmith.edu/degrees-programs/majors-areas-of-study/hip-hop>



### **Toki Wright**

Toki Wright is a Twin Cities based emcee, poet, and community organizer. He is the newest artist on Rhymesayers Entertainment. Wright has been featured on recordings by Atmosphere, C-Rayz Walz, P.O.S., and more. His performance credits include Scribble Jam, SXSW, Coachella, Bumbershoot, Sons d'Hiver, and Prairie Home Companion. Wright tours throughout the United States and Canada as an opening act and hype man for Brother Ali, and is a member of the groups The C.O.R.E. and The Chosen Few. As a community organizer, Toki has led the nationally recognized youth organization YO! The Movement (featured in The Source magazine), coordinated seven Twin Cities Celebration of Hip-Hop Festivals, and taught Hip-Hop history and performance to former child soldiers in Gulu, Northern Uganda with the organization H.E.A.L.S. Toki's many awards include winner of the Twin Cities Hip-Hop Award in 2007,

Artist of the Year (KMOJ Radio) in 2006, in 2003 he was Artist of the Year (Star Tribune), a Minnesota Music Award Nominee for Best Hip-Hop Recording, and landed in the Top 10 Albums of the Year (Star Tribune). He has appeared as a Coach on MTV Made. Two of his songs with the group The C.O.R.E. are featured in the film “Justice” which was nominated for an NAACP Image Award.

<http://www.mcallysmith.edu/degrees-programs/majors-areas-of-study/hip-hop>



#### **J Dilla Foundation:**

We are leaders in the effort to enhance and participate with programs and organizations that help to develop not only talents but creative, and professional leadership skills that will extend into successful careers. We strive to extend the gift of music appreciation globally as part of a well rounded academic program.

Website:

<http://jdillafoundation.org>



#### **Maureen Madukes Yancey**

The mother of the late James Dewitt Yancey. One of the most prolific artist and producers of Hip Hop, Neo Soul and other genres of music. Producing Grammy nominated works for Common, The Roots, Tribe Called Quest, Eryka Badu, and Busta Rhymes to name a few. Madukes carries the torch high for her son. Madukes working with Timothy Burnside, has assisted in the induction of James Dewitt Yancey into the new Smithsonian African American



Museum scheduled to open early 2016. Madukes established the Jdillaafoundation in May 2016 under the guidance of J.Barber and Mannat & Stewart. Madukes works daily beside her Executive spouse Toney Smith and Administrator, Diana Boardley.



### **High School for Recorded Arts:**

The mission of HSRA is to provide youth the opportunity to achieve a high school diploma through the exploration and operation of the music business and other creative endeavors.



### **David “TC” Ellis**

David “TC” Ellis, the Founder and CEO of Studio-4 and Founder of High School for Recording Arts (HSRA), was born in St. Paul, MN. He is a graduate of the St. Paul Open School who established himself in the music business in the mid-eighties as the first rap/Hip Hop recording artist to release a record in Minnesota (Twin City Rapp).

After a couple of independent record releases with regional success, he was recruited by Prince and Warner Brothers to record and produced records at Paisley Park. After time spent working with Prince and Warner Brothers, Mr. Ellis started an independent recording studio, Studio-4 and worked with a variety of traditional and alternative educational programs. Through musical work with a number of young black men who had dropped out of high school, David discovered these young artists would often ask questions about how to copyright and publish their work. Guiding

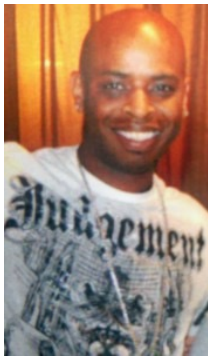
them through the process, Mr. Ellis realized that these youths could engage in educational processes while pursuing their career in music. With that realization, the High School for Recording Arts, HSRA, was born. David has recently been honored as an Oxford University Roundtable Fellow for his work with Studio-4 and High School for Recording Arts, while at Oxford, David presented his work before leading educators from around the world to wide acclaim.



**Hip-Hop Public Health:**

We are a 501(c)3 organization focused on closing the “engagement” gap between public health communication and urban life. Through a research-driven developmental process we work with notable artists and musicians to produce highly engaging health music and entertaining multimedia curricula for children, designed to improve health literacy and impart behavioral skills required for positive change. We make the healthy choice the cool choice for children and our tools are all free to the public once they register online as Ambassadors.

<http://hiphoppublichealth.org/>



**Artie Green**

A multi-platinum music producer, he has written, produced, engineered and appeared on numerous Hip Hop Public Health tracks and co-executive produced Hip Hop Public Health Vol. I. Artie Green helped create our first ever Hip Hop H.E.A.L.S. track, Watch Your Calories, as well as the widely popular Exercise and Be Calorie Wise, Go Slow Whoa Dance, Hip Hop F.E.E.T (Finding Exercise Energy Thresholds), Hip Hop POP (Pouring on the Pounds), Hip Hop FLOW and the Hip Hop H.E.A.L.S. Anthem, among others. He appears in our first ever live action educational music video and as the loveable C.O.C. (Counter of Calories) in various animated educational music videos and comic books.

**Easy A.D.**

Founding member of the Legendary Cold Crush Brothers, Easy leads Hip Hop Public Health as our resident Hip Hop expert and program ambassador. He performs at all our Hip Hop Public Health school-based programs, spreading the message of healthy lifestyle choices through the culture of Hip Hop. He appears on various Hip Hop Public Health tracks and educational videos, including Go Slow Whoa Foods, Go Slow Whoa Dance and the Hip Hop H.E.A.L.S. Anthem. A.D. co-executive produced our widely anticipated Hip Hop Public Health Vol. I album. Easy A.D.'s Hip Hop Health Ambassador is serving as the Coordinating Manager of the Hip Hop Stroke Intervention Program at Harlem Hospital and Hip Hop H.E.A.L.S. A.D. works with a clinical team to recruit other Hip Hop pioneers to conduct workshops at schools for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students on stroke prevention techniques. The stroke program was moved to Columbia University Medical Center, where A.D. took on additional job of research coordinator in the Stroke Division, Neurological Institute at Columbia. Easy A.D. also serves as The Director of Health Education for the non-profit Hip Hop Public Health.org.

**Doug E. Fresh**

Doug E. Fresh is known as the Original Human Beat Box, and is credited for creating and popularizing this pillar of hip hop music and culture. Doug is the author of several hit records, including “The Show”, and “La-Di-Da-Di” with Slick Rick. As the Vice-President of Entertainment of Hip Hop Public Health, Doug is integral to the development of all Hip Hop Public Health music and multimedia materials.



**Dr. Olajide Williams**

Dr. Olajide Williams is the Founder of Hip Hop Public Health. He currently serves Chief of Staff of Neurology, Director of Acute Stroke Services, and Associate Professor of Neurology at Columbia University. Dr Williams is a highly regarded NIH researcher and expert in community-based health education interventions targeting economically disadvantaged minorities. He is the author of numerous scholarly peer reviewed publications including the acclaimed book, *Stroke Diaries* – a collection of patient encounter stories published by Oxford University Press. Dr Williams sits on several prominent boards, including the Partnership for a Healthier America whose honorary chair is First Lady Michelle Obama and the Founders Affiliate board of the American Heart Association. Dr Williams has received numerous national awards for his work including congressional citations and state proclamations. He has been featured by several major networks which include NBC, ABC, CNN, Al Jazeera, Fox, NPR and the New York Times. Dr. Williams was profiled in Fast Company magazine's 100 Most Creative People in Business, the Root 100's most influential, BET's "A" list, and the 2015 New York Magazine's Best Doctors list.