

Martha Diaz to Speak at 6th Annual Hip Hop Congress Conference

Written by Robert ID3707

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The 6th Annual Hip Hop Congress Conference is rapidly approaching. The conference will be located in Athens, Ohio at Ohio University, July 4th – 8th. This year's conference will reflect many of the movements taking place within the world of Hip Hop organizing while remaining true to the values and history of Hip Hop Congress.

The Hip Hop Congress is a non-Profit organization that was started as an arts and culture collective, that has evolved over the course of the years into a cultural organizing model that includes campus organizing through students and faculty, cultural organizing and networking through artists, activists and journalists, and the development of a national and international service infrastructure.

With over 50 chapters across the country-both community and campus-at various stages of development, Hip Hop Congress aims to balance the critical importance of supporting the growth and collectivity of these chapters, while emphasizing the relevance of various partnerships throughout the US. This type of activity is reflected in such conference details as Keynote Speaker Martha Diaz, President and Founder of H2A. At a time when Don Imus and the leadership and position of Women in Hip Hop is a center piece of discussion, Martha Diaz as an individual, and H2A as an organization is a shining example of what is possible through the imagination, determination and vision that ever present in the Hip Hop Community.

The goal of this year's national conference will be to continue refining a national service infrastructure alongside a variety of other national organizations, student groups, artists and partners. In addition, we will explore important organizational and cultural concepts and the critical issue of sustainability. We will also be revisiting our mission statement to reflect the changes taking place in the Hip Hop community as well as within the organization. We invite the Hip Hop and Ohio community to come and participate in and observe this process.

Workshops are scheduled to include intensive sessions on the initial four elements of Hip-Hop, interactive discussions on, Hip-Hop and Education, Women in Hip-Hop, Event Planning, the Recording Industry (Independent and Corporate), Audio Production, Youth Violence, Media Production and Justice and more. One element that Shamako Noble, president and Executive Director of Hip Hop Congress says is key is Regional Networking. "A lot of people say that all politics is local. Well there's also a lot to be said for regional organization in culture and how it plays a role in what we do and how we do it. I am excited about approaching that as something to explore during this year's conference."

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HHC will also be delving a variety of different human rights and social justice models as presented by Advisory Committee Co Chairs Alyssa Macy (Political Consultant) and Dr. James G. White (Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors), The Midwest Regional Education and Mobilization Department of Unite Here, Cheri Honkala and other members of the Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign and many others. Further, the Conference will feature and present information and direct connections to the Health Care for All Ohioans Act and the SPAN campaign, who is a key organizer in that movement.

Additionally, each night will feature performances showcasing independent acts that reflect the diversity of music and spoken word poetry emerging from this country. Some of these acts include Mykill Miers, Dlabrie, The Chicago Community Collective, DJ Roosevelt Treasure Chest, Blueprint, and many acts yet to be named. The conference will also host central conversations on how this network can continue to develop and offer economic and social opportunity to independent artists and cultural producers throughout the country in performances, education, digital distribution and a variety of other areas. We invite artists, labels and cultural collectives to participate, bring promotional materials, and network with our chapters, artists and partners. We especially invite the Ohio Hip Hop Community out to participate and be a part of what goes down.

Previous performers that have participated in Hip Hop Congress events include Ghostface, Silent Lambs Project, Brother Ali, Zion I, Percee P, Living Legends, Jurassic 5, Tha Jacka, DJ Crucial, Common Market, and All Natural.

Current Sponsors include: Midwest Regional Unite Here, PPERC, BIOHH (Blame It On Hip Hop), Rockrap Confidential, Silicon Valley De-Bug, The Chicago Community Chapter of Hip Hop Congress, The Hip Hop Association, the Ohio University Chapter of Hip Hop Congress, Ohio Students for Health Care Reform, The Seattle Urban Debate League, Mississippi Artists and Producers Coalition, The Hip Hop Chess Federation, Community Against Hate, and many others. The Hip Hop Congress 6th Annual Conference has also received support and endorsement from such groups as the N.H.H.P.C., local chapters of the Zulu Nation, and artists and organizations at local and regional levels all around the country.

Registration for the entire conference is \$30 and for all daytime conference events and includes a T-shirt. You can register on www.hiphopcongress.com or e-mail berkowitz@hiphopcongress.com for advance signup. The best airport to fly into is Columbus, and shuttle service will be provided to and from that

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location.