

New PSA from Hip-Hop Artist Luda's Foundation

Written by Robert ID2268

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United Cerebral Palsy, one of the nation's leading advocates for Americans with disabilities, and The Ludacris Foundation announced today the launch of a new public awareness campaign featuring Grammy- nominated hip-hop musician and actor rap artist Chris "Ludacris" Bridges. While the nonprofit partners aim to raise awareness for all 54 million Americans with disabilities, the campaign will also shed light on the disproportionate rate of disability in minority communities.

According to multiple studies, African Americans account for nearly 20 percent of all people with disabilities despite making up just 13 percent of the U.S. population. In addition, more than 35 percent of all African American families reported having a family member with a disability in 2000, the second highest rate of disability for any racial group.

To highlight the need for greater awareness and acceptance of disability, rap artist Ludacris appears in the recently released United Cerebral Palsy public service announcement "Dream" featuring Ruje"anne Duplessis, a teenager born with cerebral palsy.

When prom season arrived last year, Ruje"anne wished for the same magical evening that all high school seniors want. So she wrote Black Entertainment Television (BET) to ask for help in reaching her dream prom date hip-hop rap MC Ludacris. BET passed Ruje"anne's letter to the down south rapper and Luda flew to Massachusetts to accompany her to the Central High prom.

"The prom is a very important part of a young lady's life, and it hit my heart to share it with her," said Ludacris. "Ruje"anne might have a disability, but that doesn't make her different from anyone else. She's still dreaming and making a difference."

Ruje"anne is now in college preparing for a career in the music industry. With help from United Cerebral Palsy, Ruje"anne found a personal care attendant and lives independently at school.

"Ruje"anne Duplessis is an example of a person with a disability living without limits," said Stephen Bennett, president and CEO of United Cerebral Palsy. "Through her story, we hope to raise awareness for millions of people with disabilities while informing the public about the

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services United Cerebral Palsy affiliates provide to their communities."

The new public service announcement featuring hip-hop star Ludacris will appear in select broadcast markets nationwide and is available on the Internet at <http://www.ucp.org> .

The Ludacris Foundation is a non-profit organization created to help young people achieve their dreams through the encouragement of "Principles of Success." We aim to show young people in America that they are the builders of their future. We primarily use music and the arts to connect with young people by listening to their views, issues, and challenges. Our efforts reach youth at all age levels.

Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, William Engram, and Chaka Zulu are the inspiration for the development of The Ludacris Foundation. These men have a deep-rooted tradition of Community Service that has only broadened with their celebrity status. The Ludacris Foundation was formally established in December of 2001 to sustain their commitment to make a difference in the lives of youth. For more information, visit <http://www.theludacrisfoundation.org>