

Real Hip-Hop Shines at Nat Political Hip-Hop Conf '06

Written by DJ Paradise of X-Clan ID2896
Sunday, 30 July 2006 23:42 -

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If the events of this week ends National Hip-hop Political Convention in Chicago are an indication of things to follow, the future of using Hip-hop culture for political activism in America will be huge and its impact on local and national politics will be bigger than anything seen since the civil rights movement.

This was the second National Political Hip-hop Convention. The first one was organized in 2004 with a goal to: Celebrate, encourage and energize the national work of the Hip Hop community, Share, support and develop successful strategies to be implemented and duplicated in various areas across the country, Provide training and organizational support for Hip Hop leadership, Introduce and invite youth and young adults to join the community empowerment efforts of the Hip Hop Generation, and Support Hip Hop Generation organizing efforts by raising funds and awareness to support both a national and local infrastructure and facilitating the coordinated interaction of the various groups and individuals doing work across the country.

It was a great moment for me to see large groups of energetic young people from Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, California, Indiana, New York and most major cities represent Hip-hop in a way that dispels rumors that Hip-hop is just a one dimensional fad, owned and operated by corporations. All elements of Hip-hop were represented with performances and battles by DJ's, MC's, Break Dancers and Graffiti Writers. Merging the exciting and influential culture of Hip-hop with grassroots organizing and social responsibility, plus panels and workshops to educate and inform provided an environment that was conducive to organizing, networking, having fun and celebrating life. Some of the panels/workshops included: Non-Traditional Voter Organization, Base Building, Non Violent Direct Action Training and many other information packed events, including a free outdoor concert featuring Dead Prez and Immortal Technique, an inspirational message from Chairman Fred Hampton Jr.

I also had the pleasure of participating in a Meet the Pioneers panel moderated by Lord Cashus D Of The Zulu Nation featuring Pop Master Fabel and his Queen Christi Z, The Ghetto Priest James White(1st District County Supervisor Milwaukee), Minister Server of The Temple of Hip-hop, Hip-hop activist Davey D of Daveyd.com, International spokesman for the Universal Zulu Nation Kamikaze, G2 The Juggernaut from 10 Tray and Elder Dahveed Nelson of The Last Poets who spoke about their beginnings and told an inspiring story about a storm that he had recently witnessed. He said that the winds were blowing as if it were a hurricane but there was no rain, just high winds. Some trees were up-rooted, some split in half and some just lost many

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leaves but were otherwise fine. He explained that the trees looked fine before the storm, you couldn't tell which one's were weak at the roots or rotten inside until the pressure of the wind pushed so hard against them. He advised us to heed the example from nature, check our roots to see if they are strong. He asked us to beware those who look strong on the outside but are rotten on the inside and are a threat to split and divide under pressure.

The convention was a very proud moment for Pittsburgh who had the most diverse group of young people at the conference. I was impressed by the way that everyone carried themselves and took care of business in a manner that was professional and mature. A big shout out and thank you goes out to Khari Mosley of The League Of Young Voters/ Chair: 22nd Ward Democratic Cmte., Pittsburgh, PA /One Hood who is also the National Co-Chair of The National Political Hip-hop Convention,

"The 2006 National Hip Hop Political Convention continues the momentum of the Hip Hop Movement, engaging, educating and empowering young people from all over the country in the political process. This weekend was a critical step in the process of connecting elected officials, artists, organizers and Hip Hop pioneers in a national network of Hip Hop activists. I look forward to participating in the progress of this movement." - Khari Mosley

Props also goes out to Jennifer England and Tony Lodico for their hard work and dedication, handling all the small things so well that nothing turned into a big problem for the Pittsburgh Delegates.

Respect also goes out to fellow "One Hood" members who attended:

Minister Jasiri X (Nation Of Islam/Millions More Movement), Luqman Salaam and Brother Tahir (Light Of The Age Mosque/Sankore Institute), Brother Majestic, Brother Knowledge and Sister I Madina (Nation Of Gods & Earths) who also tore the house down at the official after party! Pittsburgh REPRESENTED!

Thank you all for sharing your knowledge, wisdom and poise with the many young people of all races and religions who I saw you networking with at workshops and unofficial ciphers and conversations (some that lasted well into morning hours).

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As I returned home from this historic event I was reminded of the lessons that I learned from Elder Harry Belafonte, The Elders, Chiefs and Clan Mothers of the Onondaga Nation at "The Gathering": "Be patient! You have to see beyond the fight that you are in. In a participatory democracy all voices must be heard. The struggle is universal. We need to speak to the global community. We must reach for a universal solution to dealing with a common oppressor". - Harry Belafonte

The solution to over 500 years of oppression will not be solved in one weekend!

T.J., Biko Baker, the Brothers and Sisters of the Chicago Hip-hop Convention LOC and everyone involved in the planning and participation of this conference must be commended, respected and thanked. Your hard work has not been overlooked. You all did a great job, with a shoe-string budget and under enormous pressure you have helped lay a foundation that must and will be continued. The local organizing committees will continue to do the unglamorous hard work long after the cameras stop clicking and the media attention dies down. Haters and nay-sayers please contribute instead of criticizing. Elders, scholars, critical thinkers and political organizers please reach out and help teach these young progressive Brothers and Sisters the ways to organize and continue the struggle that so many have shed blood and even given they're life to.

Brother Tony Muhammad adds:

"Perhaps the best part of this year's Convention was networking with like-minded people seeking to make a difference in their respected communities. Those present included a combination of Hip Hop legends and pioneers, community activists, independent media representatives and average every-day young people who weren't too sure as to where to begin but who were very eager to learn. The most beautiful part about it all is that everyone treated each other as equals because it was never about the issue about who was more "well known" and who was virtually "unknown." Regardless if the Convention itself proved successful or not in achieving its ultimate goal of revising and passing a comprehensive political agenda for the Hip Hop community, those seeking to create an impact in their cities made sure they did not leave Chicago with the contact information of others that can at least help guide them in the right direction".

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A note to the people of the city of Chicago, thank you for your hospitality. In spite of warnings about thugs and gangs, the entire Hip-hop Convention was in the "Hood" on the South Side of Chicago and went off without a single violent event. Peace, Love, Unity and having fun was definitely a theme tightly adhered to by all of the National Hip-hop Political Convention participants and the hosting community.

Marcus, Martin, Malcolm, Huey, Fred Hampton, Sonny Carson, Professor X,

The Struggle Continues.....

Paradise Gray

Honorary Chairman, Pittsburgh LOC

National Political Hip-hop Convention 2006

Grand Arkitech Of The BlackWatch Movement

One Hood

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