9-4-2003

The Midnight Forum: Empowering Youth Through Hip-Hop

The Midnight Forum, Inc.

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About The Midnight Forum, Inc.

The overview of the free youth program in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area will consist of fourteen sessions per a semester (Spring, Summer, and Fall), each lasting approximately three hours and serve fifteen youth per a semester. The youth program will be held at community sites. Currently, the youth programs are held at the DC Stead Recreational Center (16th and P, NW). Each session will have three components: first a Hip-Hop training for one hour period of time, followed by one hour life skills workshop, and followed by one hour to work on their creative statement project.

There are two sets trainers per a program semester. One, four Hip-Hop trainers who teach one of these four areas: DeeJaying, Breakdancing, MCing, and Graffiti. Two, four life skill trainers who teach one of these four areas: asset-based mapping, entrepreneur, leadership, and organizing. Participants will apply their improved understanding as they develop and produce a creative statement small group projects using one of the four the Hip-Hop techniques and/or in one of the four life skills areas by getting assistance from the staff, peers, and trainers. Projects, such making a T-Shirt Design, Record Album Design, Making and Recording Songs, and creating a Youth Business Plan.

The Midnight Forum DC Metro Youth Program June 4 to August 14, 2003
Ages: 14 to 22 Program Size: 17
Location: Stead Recreation Center, aka Wizard of Oz and Humanity Wall and BasketBall Courts
1625 P Street, NW 2nd Floor (16th and P)
Metro: Du Pont Circle or "S" Bus
Weekly on Wednesday, 4:30 to 7:00 PM
Bi-Weekly on Saturday, 12 to 3:00 PM
www.MidnightForum.org or 202-276-5632

The Midnight Forum Youth Development Program Schedule and Bench Marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6-4-03</td>
<td>Orientation and Hip-Hop History - Watch the Freestyle movie, Choose Team Project, Pre-Survey Filled Out</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6-11-03</td>
<td>Entrepreneur/DJ Picking the MC Topics and Song Beats Draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-14-03</td>
<td>Saturday Drop-In Center (Watch WildStyle Movie, Critical Think Session 2/3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6-18-03</td>
<td>Asset-Based Mapping/Graffiti - Mural/T-Shirt Design Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6-25-03</td>
<td>Leadership/MC - Picking the MC Topics Final</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6-28-03</td>
<td>Saturday Drop-In Center (MC Lyrics Draft, Critical Think Session of 5/6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7-2-03</td>
<td>Organizing/Music Producing Song Beats Final</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7-9-03</td>
<td>Entrepreneur/DJ - Draft Youth Business Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-12-03</td>
<td>Saturday Drop-In Center - Final Day for T-Shirt Design/ Final MC Lyrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-16-03</td>
<td>Asset-Based Mapping/Graffiti - Start on the Mural</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-23-03</td>
<td>Leadership/MC - Final Practice and Edit of MC Song Lyrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-30-03</td>
<td>Organizing/Breakdance History</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-2-03</td>
<td>Saturday Drop-In Center - Recording the Record Album and Work on Mural and Final Day of the Album Cover</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-6-06</td>
<td>Recording the Record Album and Preparation of ShowCase Night and Work on Final Day of Mural and of the Album Cover</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-13-03</td>
<td>Saturday Drop-In Center - Recording the Record Album and Work on Mural and Final Day of the Album Cover Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-14-03</td>
<td>Thursday, ShowCase of Youth Projects To The Public at Friendship House 619 D St SE near Eastern Market Metro- Final Youth Business Plan and Final Survey's Filled Out.</td>
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For more information email TheMidnightForum@Yahoo.com or call 202-276-5632.
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Web: www.MidnightForum.org

Staff: Daniel Berry AKA DINO, Executive Director and Founder

Board of Directors: Dominic "Tru" Painter, Chair; Javier Griffiths, Vice-Chair Secretary; Tyrone Alvin, Treasurer; Jihad Isaac Mengen, Steve "Steve-O" Jones, Shanna "Shae" Lim, and Daniel Berry AKA DINO.

The Midnight Forum, Inc

Grants ($) and In-Kind Donations (K)

Multi Platinum Album Supporter - $10,000 and Above
Arent Fox Law Firm (K), The Midnight Forum Volunteer Board of Directors, Consultants, and Trainers (K)
Platinum Album Supporter - $5,000 to $10,000
D.C. Department and Recreation at Stead Recreation Center (K) and Metro Teen AIDS (K)
Gold Album Record Supporter - $3,000 to $5,000
DC Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation ($), Red Sparks Inc (K), Veteran's Memorial YMCA (K)
Album Record Supporter - $2,000 to $3,000
Latin American Youth Center/ Youth Opportunities (K), NEA/DC Arts and Humanity (K), DC Rotary Foundation ($) 
Platinum Single Record Supporter - $1,000 to $2,000
The Berry and Hynes Family (K) DC Mayors Summer Youth Work Program (K), George Mason University (K), Rawkus Records (S)
Gold Single Record Supporter - $250 to $1,000
Anonymous($), Dian H. Painter($), Exxon-Mobil Foundation Matching Grant Program($), Lawrence "DJ Sixth Sense" Kelly (K), LaTonya St. Claire with LaStreet Promotions (K), James "Yankee Boy" Mills (K), National Congress Community Economic Development, Dominic "Tru" Painter (K), Public Allies D.C and National (K), and Triple 5 Soul Inc (K)

The Midnight Forum Wish List

- Office Space
- Youth Program Facility Space in DC, MD, VA, and other Cities in the United States
- DJ Turntables and Mixers
- Beat Machine
- Electric Keyboard to make Beats
- Professional Microphones
- 50 to 500 Watt Speakers
- 100 Heavy Weight Grey, Blank, White, and Dark Blue Blank T-Shirts
- Printing T-Shirts
- Color Markers and Color Pencils
- Composition Books
- Drawing Books
- Hip-Hop: How To and History Books, Magazines, and Video/DVD
- Leadership, Community Organizing, Entrepreneur: How To Books, and Videos and DVD
- Copy Machine
- DVD Player
- Blank Photocopy Paper
- Pencils
- Color Markers and Pencils
- Aerosol Paint
The Mission: The Midnight Forum empowers youth to generate positive changes through Hip-Hop within their communities.

The Vision: The Midnight Forum believes in individuals and communities to unify the ideas and resources of society.

Founded in Fall 2000, over seventy-five youth, varying in ages between fourteen and twenty-two, have successfully completed a youth program fifteen-session semester.

The overview of the free youth program in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area will consist of fifteen sessions per a semester (Spring, Summer, and Fall), each lasting three hours and serve fifteen at-risk youth per a semester. Also, we offer youth program multi-day workshops at community sites.

The Midnight Forum has taken young people's inherent interest in Hip-Hop culture (an interest often seen as negative by the dominant culture) and used it to help participants set and meet a variety of positive goals that range from gaining an understanding of one's own roots, to developing and carrying out a business plan or organizing a community event.

Each session will have three components: first a Hip-Hop training for one hour period of time, second by one hour life skills workshop, and third by one hour to work on their creative statement project.

There are two sets trainers per a youth development program semester:

One, four Hip-Hop trainers who teach one of these four areas:
1. DeeJaying
2. B-Boy and B-Girl History
3. MCing
4. Graffiti

Two, four life skill trainers who teach one of these four areas:
1. Asset-Based Mapping
2. Entrepreneur
3. Leadership
4. Organizing

Participants will apply their improved understanding as they develop and produce a creative statement small group projects using one of the four the Hip-Hop techniques and/or in one of the four life skills areas by getting assistance from the staff, peers, and trainers.

The Midnight Forum Youth Projects:
Wrote business plans. Designed two posters at UMD-College Park Hip-Hop Show, Artwork for CD's, T-Shirt and Stickers. Painted eight murals, recorded five original songs, and performed at seven public venues such as Eastern Market Day.
The Midnight Forum Youth Visual Arts
Business Plan Spring 2003

I. Mission Statement
The Midnight Forum Visual Arts Youth Group name is Culture. We will use our home grown creativity to produce and sale of art. The diverse style of our art can be altered and perfected to fit our potential customer needs, which is one of the key successful traits of our group, Culture. We have the ability and experience to artistically design flyers, stickers, murals, t-shirts, album covers. In addition, we are young leaders in the Washington, DC Metropolitan community for we have the knowledge of leadership, entrepreneurship, and organizing skills.

II. Product
The product is to produce creative design's to be used on a wall, canvas, and sticker. The mural on a wall is located at 10th and U Street, NW for Capitol City Records. The design will incorporate the logo of the record shop and a new creative image, see drawings. The sticker, a new logo for The Midnight Forum will be used on a sticker to promote The Midnight Forum Youth Program in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area, see drawings. The mural's on a canvas design is the sticker design logo and other design., The purposed of the mural on canvas is to be used as a backdrop at all Midnight Forum Youth Showcases.

Reference:
1. Anti-Smoking Campaign Logo for W.A.Y. Too Cool to Smoke! in Summer of 2002 which was used on canvas, flyer, t-shirt, and album cover
III. Organization

A. The Midnight Forum
   Daniel Berry AKA DINO, Executive Director
   Dominic "Tru" Painter, Chairman of Board of Directors
   Mike, Visual Arts Trainer
   Nico, Visual Arts Volunteer Trainer

B. Culture
   William B.
   Alex G.
   Eduardo O.

V. Production
Culture will design all of the images for the sticker, and the mural on a wall and canvas. The mural on a wall and canvas will be done primarily by Culture and assisted by the veteran Visual Arts Trainers to guide and enhance the design. Mike and Nico both have 10 year experience in creating murals and drawing’s.

VII. Uniqueness
The creativity of the images is produced by youth for youth and adults

VIII. Demographics
To serve all ages, and profit and non-profit businesses in Washington DC
What Does The Midnight Forum, Inc Do? The overarching purpose of the Midnight Forum is a non-profit organization to develop young leaders, artists, organizers, and entrepreneurs (youth ages 14-21) through a free after-school program and a summer work program where the youth receive free training via trainers to develop their own youth development projects that are inspired by the hip-hop culture that will bring a positive image of their youth culture to their neighborhoods in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area (DC, MD, VA).

Our Success With Virtually Nothing? The first year has been successful primarily through in-kind donations, trainers, advisors, equipment, program supplies, and facility space that trained over 25 youth directly to create a positive impact on society and then told over 500 youth about the program. Its goal this upcoming year is to pay and hire a Program Manager this year and to enhance the Youth Program by purchasing more program supplies and administration supplies to spread the word to the public in creative artistic ways like a T-shirts, CD, and etc.

Fall 2001 Youth Program Success:
The Midnight Forum was successful for its first ever semester in getting quality trainers that allowed the youth to attend and return to the program. Another goal was to have fun and to make a impact of learning something new for everyone (Board, Staff, Trainer, and Youth). Here are some quotes from the youth about the program: “It kept me off the streets. I learned something new.” and “Comprehensive and Bold.”

Spring 2001 Youth Program Success:
This semester the trainers empowered more youth by having group discussions and hands-on experience that enabled the youth to perform their, MC songs, and DJ; and display their graffiti style images on poster board at ShowCase Night. Here are some quotes from the youth: “Having confidence and style. How to properly flow.”, “That it shows us how to learn new things and appreciate new things and urban Hip-Hop.”, “Positive way of hanging out.”, “I learned leadership and entrepreneurship.”

Summer 2001 Youth Program Success:
This was the first of many summers where the youth will be paid via D.C. Mayor’s Office to participate in the program. This happened when a brand new group of youth met for five weeks every weekday for three hours. The trainers came in and taught the youth to: create written and freestyle songs, enhance your business, become a DJ, draw in a new style, and be a leader by displaying your projects at the ShowCase Night. Here are some quotes from the youth: “How to set goals, scratch on a turntable, and freestyle”, “Its fun cause you get to meet different people.”

Staff: Daniel Berry, Executive Director and Founder. Board of Directors: Dominic Painter, Chair; Shanna Lim, Vice-Chair; Javier Griffiths, Treasurer; Jason Shiggs, Secretary; Jihad Isaac Mursen, Darrell Perry, and Daniel Berry.


Grants: Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School For Public Policy, D.C. D.O.E.S. Passport-To-Work Summer Youth Program, Rawkus Entertainment, LLC, and NCCED.


Technical Assistance: Arent Fox PLLC Attorneys at Law. Fiscal Agent: Metro Teen AIDS.
The Midnight Forum, Inc Anti-Smoking Summer 2002 Session was located at Youth Opportunities – Latin American Youth Center, Stead Recreation Center, and Art on the Move Day in Downtown DC. The Midnight Forum, Inc Youth MC Artists are - Los, Jabari, Nate, and Guests MC’s: Isaac, Lee Majors, Interstellar, Rude Kid. Guests DJ’s: Tru and Baby Face. The Visual Artists are: Best, and Javier and assisted by Tale.
The Midnight Forum Arlington Youth Program

The Midnight Forum Arlington Youth Program was partnered with Veteran's Memorial YMCA in South Arlington, Virginia and was lead by the first-ever Program Manager, Damien Southall who reports on his experience.

During the Spring 2002 Session, we accomplished a number of tasks. One, we imparted the message of leadership to the youth participants. After reviewing the students Pre-Survey, Final Survey, and also written notes taken after the leadership class, I was relatively happy about the youth responses to the leadership training session. One student remarked, "Wow! That was deep."

The student responded positively toward the leadership training session. Other accomplishments achieved during this season's training included teaching the various Hip-Hop elements. In particular, deejay training went favorably well. Student enthusiasm reigned high. As a result, they excelled in the skill. This was equally true of graffiti and emcee training. By the closing class, two freestyle battles ensued.

The battles included youth participants DJing the events and also rhyming. Hip-Hop culture bolstered forward as these two elements stood at the forefront. Although emcee training went well, we did not record a song. However, the graffiti artists created enough design work to produce a tee shirt for the Arlington Midnight Forum Program. Plus we generated the beginnings of a solid business plan. The youth responded through final surveys "Learned how to freestyle better", "Comfortable environment", "You get to learn new things. Learned how to use the turn-table. Achieved to make a design for the T-shirt." "Keep you off the streets and learn(ed) new stuff."

Midnight Forum Success Story

It might not seem very impressive to say that the Spring 2001 recruitment session at Bell Multicultural High School in Columbia Heights only brought in one actual Midnight Forum participant. But that one has ended up with some pretty impressive achievements. Walter Chavez a.k.a. DJ Menace parleyed what he learned about hip-hop and life skills in the Spring and Fall 2001 Saturday Sessions into an internship with DJ Six-Sense (DJ at Platinum and WKYS). As an intern, he is learning more about the professional business side of being a radio, club, party, and music group DJ.

However, Walter is staying loyal to the Midnight Forum—he taught the art of DJaying to youth during the spring 2002 semester time at Latin American Youth Center. He also has created a draft business plan to do a fundraiser around with Youth and Hip-Hop to talk about ending youth violence in the community in the Summer or Fall of 2002.

Walter's story shows the strength of our program. Chavez's heritage is El Salvadorian but he grew up on the streets of Mount Pleasant and Columbia Heights, listening to hip-hop. He became interested more about DJaying from his cousin, DJ Geo who was a local celebrity who spun Spanish, house, hip-hop music at local clubs, and house parties.

However, the day DJ Geo was killed, Walter began to think about keeping his cousin's tradition alive. In pursuit of his ambition to be a professional DJ and music producer, Walter went out and bought the equipment and played his parent's old records to practice. Still, something was missing to achieve his dream. Then, during his senior at Bell H.S. Mr. Williams, the Career Counselor, told him about The Midnight Forum Youth Program recruitment session. Walter attended and has been active ever since. In the Saturday Youth Program, Chavez learned the tricks of the trade of DJaying through the guidance of Tru. Tru showed him how to blend beats, how to match up the same beats, how to scratch, and how to listen to the beats and words in the music, and how to have fun. Walter also learned in TMF Youth Program a little bit about how to be music producer, draw graffiti style letters, and how to be leader without even knowing it.

Walter sums up the reaction to the overall experience at The Midnight Forum? "It was excellent! If not for The Midnight Forum I would not have been able to mix well which enabled me to be a party DJ and DJ Instructor at Latin American Youth Center."
3 Cheers for 501(c) 3 and Other Achievements

It's official—as of April 22, 2002, the Midnight Forum has been legally recognized by the Department of Treasury as a non-profit organization, a 501 (c) 3. That means we can directly process and administer grants that the organization receives. We could never have achieved this step without the generous pro-bono efforts of Arent Fox Law lawyers who assisted in the 501 (c) 3 and Incorporation Process. Also, we owe special thanks to Metro Teen AIDS Staff who acted as our fiscal agent as our non-profit status was being arranged.

It seems like perfect timing—we'll be using our new status as we use several grants we've just received, including a small grant to be used for the Anti-Smoking Youth Campaign from D.C. Children's Youth Investment Trust Corporation, and several small grants from Diann H. Painter, Mobil Oil Foundation Matching Grant Program, and an anonymous donor.

The 501 (c) 3 status also allows us to directly work out partnerships for youth program space. And we are moving ahead in that direction as well: we've made arrangements with the Stead Recreation Center, Veteran's Memorial YMCA, Latin American Youth Center, Drew Recreational Center and Fort Henry Youth Center, for Summer and Fall 2002, and Spring 2003.

In addition to our new status, we also are celebrating completion of the first draft of The Midnight Forum Youth Program Curriculum Book, thanks to the tireless efforts of the The Midnight Forum, Inc Program Committee.

DC Metro Midnight Forum Youth Spring to Success

Building on past achievements, the DC Metro Midnight Forum Youth had a very successful Spring 2002—they enhanced the business plan developed in Fall 2001 and went on to record another song. A core group of alum's joined efforts with new recruits from local high schools. As they worked on their rap skills, participants also learned about leadership, asset-based mapping, and the history of various dancing styles around the world.

Throughout the spring, participants kept coming back for more. While everyone agreed that working on their song was great, getting to know and work through the whole process was humbling.

A few comments from the final questionnaire give a good sense of what the youth took away from their participation: "Fun, Keeps youth out of trouble, Responsibility, Rap and basics, Achieved: Making a great CD How the (recording) studio is and (works), writing lyrics, and Need to first learn about becoming an entrepreneur in order to make it big in the rap world."
**Fall 2001: DC Metro Youth Program**

The Midnight Forum DC Metro Youth Program was the best all-around session with alum and new youth participants. The program moved to its new central location at D.C. Stead Recreational Center at 16th and P, NW. There the youth learned how to become entrepreneur's, leaders, and using the asset-based mapping skill. They demonstrated their skills by creating a draft version of their Youth Business Plan called the *Da Midnight Society*. In addition one of the youth created the draft album cover and t-shirt design by learning how to use Adobe and how to draw graffiti style letters.

The youth are most proud of recording one song. The name of their music group is the *Unknown Youth* with the album called *Watch Us Rise*. These entrepreneur artist youth participants' are eager to return with more friends for the Spring 2002 Program to create a final version of their record album, record album/t-shirt design, and youth business plan.

The Midnight Forum, Inc. web site was re-designed by students at George Mason University.

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**Fall 2001: Arlington Youth Program**

The Midnight Forum, Inc formed a partnership with the Veteran’s Memorial YMCA in South Arlington, Virginia (a historic African-American community in the suburbs of Washington, DC). The Arlington Youth Program was a small group of youth that operated for three sessions in late November to Mid-December of 2001. These new entrepreneur artists youth participants are eager to return with more friends to the Spring 2002 Program to create record album, T-shirt design, and youth business plan.

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**Spring 2002: Arlington and DC Metro Youth Program Goals**

Goal I: The Arlington Youth Program will have his or her own Program Manager, who will be the first-paid person by The Midnight Forum, Inc. Another goal will be for the youth participants to learn the skills of how to become a community leader and entrepreneurs along with creating a draft record album, T-shirt design, youth business plan, and showcase their skills and what they learned to the public.

Goal II: The DC Metro Youth Program goals will to create a final version of their record album, t-shirt/album cover design, youth business plan, and show case their skills and what they learned to the public. Also, for these youth to sign-up for the D.C. Mayor’s Office Passport-To-Work Summer Youth Employment that will allow them to be paid-interns at The Midnight Forum, Inc Summer Session.
The Capitol City Records Proposed Design
From The Midnight Forum Visual Arts Group Culture