



INSTITUTE
OF HIP-HOP
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Institute of Hip Hop Entrepreneurship will turn visionary young minds into entrepreneurs

Powerful, new initiative uses hip-hop as a vessel to provide hands-on business
trainings to non-traditional, entrepreneurial young people

Philadelphia, PA -- The Institute of Hip Hop Entrepreneurship (IHHE), a program that uses the ethos of Hip Hop to empower enterprising young people from nontraditional backgrounds with the skills necessary for entrepreneurial success, has been awarded \$308,640 as a winner of the Knight Cities Challenge, an initiative of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The program, forged by Little Giant Creative, aims to level the playing field for ambitious, nontraditional youth who -- due to a variety of barriers are denied or have limited access to the knowledge, resources, and networks necessary to take ideas from concept to reality.

It is one of 37 winners of the Knight Cities Challenge announced today. Each of the ideas focuses on helping cities attract and keep talented people, expand economic opportunities and create a culture of civic engagement.

The IHHE program eschews America's outdated education paradigm -- i.e. classroom lecturing, rote learning, and standardized testing -- for one that is experiential, participatory, and culturally relevant, in order to bring off-disenfranchised young people into a community of praxis and empowerment. In recognition of the important role Hip Hop plays in the social and cultural lives of urban youth, the Institute integrates Hip Hop culture and practices into a substantive hands-on training program. Meegan Denenberg, partner at Little Giant's parent company, Meta Global explained, "Far too often, young people with real ambitions are overlooked by existing educational and business communities and programs. Our goal is to have graduates with the skills, confidence, and networks to be successful in Philadelphia's wider business community."

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The 9-month program will recruit a group of promising Philadelphians between the ages of 18 and 32 to participate in a course designed and taught by renowned creative professionals, businesspeople, technologists, and musicians. Each weekend-long session will focus on a new aspect of building a business, from business proposals and marketing plans, to staffing and finding funding. Throughout the duration of the institute, students will engage in group work and team projects, compete in friendly competitions, and ultimately pitch their businesses to investors in the final session to make their venture a reality.

The timing for IHHE is propitious and the program perfectly fitted for Philadelphia -- a city known for both a restless creative energy, as well as an entrenched socio-economic inequality. "With a poverty rate at 28.4 percent and a failing public school system, today's youth face significant barriers to finding success, let alone a platform on which to build their dreams," said Tayyib Smith, Founder of Little Giant Creative. "It's an ironic status quo considering Philadelphia's historic role in the development of Hip Hop as a genre and cultural movement. Through the IHHE, we'll build on this creative legacy by empowering nontraditional, underserved youth with the tools they need to achieve success on their own terms."

Open to any individual, business, government or nonprofit, the Knight Cities Challenge attracted more than 4,500 ideas to make the 26 communities where Knight invests more vibrant places to live and work. It asked innovators of all kinds to answer the question: What's your best idea to make cities more successful? Four of the 37 winning projects are based in Philadelphia.

"The project aims to cultivate a new generation of talent in Philadelphia by using Hip Hop as medium to give young people the skills they need to create, innovate, and scale their ideas," said Patrick Morgan, Knight Foundation program director for Philadelphia. "In this way it can bring new economic prospects to Philadelphia neighborhoods and contribute to the city's growth."



AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS:

Tayyib Smith, Outreach and Creative Lead at IHHE. As Founder of Little Giant Creative and partner at Pipeline Philadelphia, Tayyib has long served as conduit between artists, niche brands, and multicultural audiences. Smith developed his business acumen from humble beginnings as a music enthusiast, eventually serving as US label manager for BBE music and working with artists such as The Roots, John Legend, Jazzy Jeff, Jill Scott, Pete Rock, J Dilla, and The Foreign Exchange. He serves on the Boards of the BlackStar Film Festival, Temple's Urban Apps and Maps, and Philly Tech Week planning committee.

ABOUT LITTLE GIANT CREATIVE

Little Giant Creative (LGC) is a full service creative agency that has worked with a variety of local and national companies to develop and execute custom brand strategies & events, design collateral and awareness promotions for clients including Heineken USA, KEYSLOT, Drexel University, UPENN, Wharton, PAFA, Adidas, Remy Martin, Center City District, OACCE, Red Bull, PhillyCarShare, Visit Philly, and vitaminwater. We have successfully connected our clientele's message to desired audiences with our signature methodology -- keeping each interaction, no matter how large the concept, focused on its recipient.

LGC is a boutique agency with an experienced staff whose core competencies of creative thinking, style aesthetics and consistent execution translate into successful regional, national and international campaigns. LGC keeps a streamlined infrastructure to allow for open lines of communication with our clients that translate objectives into effective campaigns, that are fluid and customized.

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