

Hip-Hop Gets Healthcare

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Saturday September 18, 2004 was a historic day for the Hip-Hop union Grassroots Artists MovEment (G.A.ME). Artist members of G.A.ME were able to receive free health care. Yes, FREE! The check-up, the consultation, the dentist and nutritionist visit for the following week, and the four prescriptions filled out that day were all free to the members. The visit to the doctor's office was a sign of accomplishment for the developing G.A.ME HealthCare Network.

All members' bills will be forwarded to the Grassroots Artists MovEment

(G.A.ME) address. The members of G.A.ME pay a small \$5.00 a month for membership benefits, which include organized performances, promotion, studio discounts, production, and health benefits. The Health Network is available to all members, artist and non-artist members.

G.A.ME was able to accomplish such a feat and continue its results by simply implementing the tedious task of locating which health facilities have the resources and which doctors are willing to volunteer. The G.A.ME HealthCare Network is piloting the program in New York City, NY and Philadelphia, PA.

Members are offered areas and dates when doctors are available for check-ups, HIV/AIDS and STDs testing, prescription referrals, appointments for specialists, and much more. Other G.A.ME Locals will begin executing plan towards the end of the year.

Currently, the music industry has a policy of not insuring artists on their record label. Medicaid and other programs such as those providing Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus offer insurance only to very low-income people. For instance, if you make \$10,000 a year as a single adult you are not eligible for any of the above health plans.

Director of Operations L. James who designed the G.A.ME HealthCare Network said "there is a serious problem when your government can show a trillion dollars spent on health care and still not accommodate the nation's health crisis. We unite with Congressman John Conyers' bill HR 676, but, at the same time our resources are concentrated on applying our grassroots health solutions right now . . .we're very grateful for doctors participating in the network and look forward to building with thousands more across the states by middle of 2005."

The 2nd Annual "Hip-Hop for HealthCare" Benefit Concert featuring artist heavyweights will take place at City College in New York on Wed. Nov. 24th.

Source: DaveyD