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**HIP-HOP SUMMIT YOUTH COUNCIL  
ENLIGHTENS PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE  
“12 STEPS” TO GETTING A RECORD DEAL WITH  
UNCLE RALPH MCDANIELS OF HOT 97/VIDEO MUSIC BOX, THE  
PERSUADERS & MUSIC INDUSTRY VETERAN MIKE ABBOTT**

**PLANS ARE UNDERWAY FOR MONTHLY SUMMITS AND A STATEWIDE  
PROGRAM WITH SENATOR MALCOLM SMITH**

August 30, 2006—The Hip-Hop Summit Youth Council launched the first of their “How to get a Record Deal” summits created to provide music entrepreneurs with the wisdom they need to improve their chances of success in the music industry. The event, which was free of charge, was hosted by music industry veteran Charles Fisher, Founder and Chairman of the Hip-Hop Summit Youth Council and the former manager of LL Cool J & the Lost Boyz and co-discovered R. Kelly. The panel consisted of Hot 97 & Video Music Box’s Ralph McDaniels, the hit R&B group the Persuaders, and Mike Abbott, the first black VP for MCA records. Each panelist shared their years of experience with the audience from a different perspective. Mike Abbott talked about the history of the business and how the racism during his days is still a part of the industry today. Ralph talked about the marketing aspect of the business from making a hit record to getting your song and video on the air. The Persuaders talked about the trials, tribulations and many steps you have to go through as an artist to obtain a recording contract and how you have to protect yourself with a good attorney.

The event was held at the plush Club Opia located on east 57<sup>th</sup> street, down the block from many of the trendy clothing boutiques that so many current rappers mention in their rhymes. The panelists let the crowd know that they didn’t have to have an enormous budget and a flashy video to get started in the business. All you needed to do is don’t give up on your dream, read books about the industry and consult with those that have had some success.

“I really like the spot where we held this event” mentioned Randy Fisher, executive director of the Hip-Hop Summit Youth Council. “We’ll be conducting a series of summits with Opia’s owner Antoine Bleck because he is committed to supporting the community and helping others. As a Jazz artist who just released his new album, ‘Mes Illusions’, he understands the road to becoming successful in the music industry and wants to help anyone he can achieve their dreams. This unselfish attitude is a breath of fresh air in a very competitive, cut throat industry. The information shared by the panelists was right on target and will surely help someone take their dreams and aspirations to the next level.”

“The Get A Record Deal Summit was very informative. I think this event will be an industry standard for real information to help out the growing independent market for new music and new artist. I look forward to the next one” stated Hot 97’s Ralph McDaniels, host of Video Music Box and the Bridge.

“I thought it was a great event—very informative. I learned a lot myself and there definitely needs to be more events like this where people can learn how to get into the business. They need to speak to the veterans so that they learn from their experiences and not fall into the same pitfalls” said Big Ron Cartier of the Persuaders.

“After my years of being in the music business it’s good to see people giving back. I look forward to participating in more events like this with more artists and executives sharing my years of experience, contacts and resources” stated Mike Abbott, President of Harlem Records and former VP of MCA.

“The event was a ray of light in the dark corners of the music industry. I look forward to working with the Fishers in the future and having more events of this nature at my club that reach out and help those that are trying to land a deal or just get into the business” ended Antoine Bleck, musician & owner of Club Opia.

“I have known Hip-Hop Icon ‘Uncle’ Ralph McDaniels for over 25 years. He is the first VJ to play Hip-Hop music videos on TV, setting the stage for MTV and BET. I’m looking forward to working with him on a host of ground-breaking projects that will definitely set a new trend for the industry to follow. His commitment to help others and support community projects is what I admire most. This brother is long overdue for being recognized for all his accomplishments in the Music and Film industries. With him as a panelist and part of our team, I knew that the audience would get a wealth of knowledge to help them in their endeavors.

The History of the business that was shared by my long time friend, Mike Abbott, was stunning. Can you imagine what it was like for the first black VP of a Major label back in the days when people of color were shut out of the game? It reminded me of the Jackie Robinson story. As the VP this guy had access to people and information that is still being used today by the Major labels and he is willing to share this knowledge with us before he drops his book, which I know will be a best seller. The wisdom shared by the Persuaders was also important because young people need to hear directly from those that have hit it big in the industry. I’m looking forward to working with the group on their new album and sharing their years of knowledge with those that want to get ahead in the music industry without falling on their face and stepping on others while they move up the ladder

After years of research and consulting with the best minds in the business, the Hip-Hop Summit Youth Council and P.O.G. Management & Business consultants have developed a ‘12 Steps’ program that will effectively help any entrepreneur turn their music industry dreams into reality. It is now our intent to take our show to communities and countries throughout the world helping young people empower their lives. I believe we can take a bite out of poverty, unemployment and crime by helping young people become successful in the music industry. We plan to take this show on the road with State Senator Malcolm Smith who is working with a committee he formed that will address issues related to the failure of the African-American male in our society. It is not all about becoming an artists, but you can also become a manager, lawyer, musician, accountant, marketing executive, designer, video director, music producer, or a number of other occupations in the vast and complex music business” ended Charles Fisher.



Back: Mike Abbott, Ralph McDaniels, Big Ron (Persuaders), Charles Fisher, Antoine Bleck  
Front: Vincent Ballard (Persuaders), Randy Fisher, Roz Shepard (HHSYC)

Photo by Larry Moore