



An Open Letter to the Bay Area Community:

Take Back The Mic™ (TBTM) is a new youth and young adult centered cultural movement. Via innovative uses of technology coupled with the power of local networks of youth, community organizations, educational institutions and businesses, TBTM will help to develop a new generation of young people armed with the tools to tell their own stories using digital and social media.

TBTM is the brainchild of Derrick N Ashong also known as DNA, a Harvard-educated, critically-acclaimed musician, public speaker and social entrepreneur. Ashong has lectured on five continents and is the host of “The Derrick Ashong Experience”, a weekly radio show on Oprah Radio (SIRIUS/XM), "The Derrick Ashong Experience" is a mash-up of politics, pop culture, social media, music and the arts, informed by Ashong's experiences and travels across the globe.



Take Back the Mic™ will officially launch in April of 2011 with an inaugural tour and suite of products designed to introduce the brand to a global audience. TBTM products will include: an album by Ashong's breakout indie Afropolitan Fusion band – Soulfège, a documentary film, a 5 city tour, an interactive website (www.takebackthemic.com), community workshops and a scholarship program.

We are currently seeking community organizations to partner with in each of our inaugural tour cities – Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, Chicago, Newark and Boston. In addition to receiving training in the TBTM philosophy and creation model, community partners will have a chance to be featured in the “Take Back the Mic” documentary and will share branding in their local scholarship program. The partner organizations in each city will also benefit from inclusion in a national promotional campaign and prominent logo placement on the TBTM website.

The overall goal of the TBTM movement is to empower and equip communities to tell their own stories while also providing a platform for them to amplify their voices to a global audience. We will accomplish this through a series of trainings and workshops in combination with a national promotional campaign to raise awareness as well as funds for local scholarships, thus creating an immediate financial impact in each community by providing educational funding for a local resident. Through existing relationships and developing sponsorships, we will amplify local efforts to have a national impact.

We hope that you will join us on this journey as we launch the movement in the Bay Area. It is our intention to make the SF Bay Area the pilot community for the kickoff of TBTM and your participation would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

DNA & The Take Back the Mic™ Team.