

FAMU alumni seek talented students

Contributed by Shoaleh James--Black College Wire
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Project gives promising students an opportunity to create original music

Two Florida A&M alumni are giving students a musical opportunity to be heard around the world through their mixtape that will be released later this month.

Jonathan Presha and Peter McCurdy, two School of Business and Industry graduates, created a project that would give unsigned singers, rappers and songwriters an opportunity to create original music for a mixtape that will be made by another FAMU graduate, Anthony Washington, also known as DJ Venom, a local Tallahassee disc jockey. "We're looking forward to showing off the skills we have as producers and to be able to take some artist that aren't at a very high level yet and develop them," Presha said.

He said the name of the mixtape, "Independence Day," is a nod to the independent nature of the artists. According to Presha, all of the artists are not obligated to a major record deal, so the mixtape will provide them with the chance to show their talent.

"There is a lot of musical talent to be found on these college campuses," he said.

Presha and his team sent out fliers and used social media sites to connect with students at FAMU, Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College to generate interest in the upcoming project.

Two FAMU business administration students, Charlie Sky and Ronnie Eriic, are enthusiastic about working on music projects for the upcoming mixtape. The students have their own music group, Leaders Of The Dreamers, and the duo said they want to inspire others to follow their dreams.

Sky, a senior from Jacksonville, Fla., became interested in music after he underwent foot surgery.

"That's what brought the musical side [out] of me," Sky said.

Because he was unable to do many activities, writing songs became a big part of Sky's life. After being a dancer in his earlier years, he felt that making music was similar when following a beat.

Sky believes his musical style combines Northern lyricism and a Southern beat while his groupmate Eriic prefers a '90s era feel that could be compared to rapper Kendrick Lamar.

Eriic, a senior from Scotch Plains, N.J., said he hopes to be an inspiration by being involved with this project. He wants to inspire people to make music in a positive way and give hip-hop a more positive image.

Sky and Eriic have worked with many of Tallahassee's musical talents, such as Cash Chris, Willie Beema, up-and-coming rapper Alyrics and NMB Stunnaz, who produced the song "Clap Them Thighs."

Presha and McCurdy see a lot of positivity coming from the mixtape and hope FAMU students support the project. The mixtape will be available for free download on their site.

"I've been doing this since 1999, and this is the love I have," Presha said. "If you would do it for free, it's a passion."

Shoaleh James writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.