

# GENESIS BRIGGS

**2009 Reynolds Scholar**  
**Tisch School of the Arts**  
**Bachelor of Fine Arts, May 2011**  
**Clive Davis Department of Recorded Music**



Genesis Briggs is a hip-hop artist and student in the Clive Davis Department of Recorded Music. She is currently writing and producing a series of educational hip-hop albums that will be performed by children. The albums for elementary school students will include topics such as grammar, arithmetic, health and hygiene, while the albums for junior high and high school students will cover teen pregnancy, teen drug use, and AIDS prevention among other topics. She will release the album under her production company Open Sky Artworks (O.S.A., [www.openskyartworks.com](http://www.openskyartworks.com)). O.S.A focuses on promoting and developing young talent who show an interest in positive social change through art. Genesis' company does not just focus on music but is receptive to all artists including painters, poets, filmmakers, illustrators, authors and more.

At age 14, Genesis Briggs (AKA Genesis Be) released her first mixtape, which introduced the young lyricist to the grimy underground rap scene brewing in The Gulf Coast Region (New Orleans, Biloxi, Mobile and East Florida). She became a regular at rap battles and was soon winning talent shows all across the coast. Her lyrics ranged from politically conscious to humorously parodic and it wasn't long before local DJs and radio stations began taking notice. By age 17, Genesis had opened for major acts such as Lil Webbie, The Ying-Yang Twins, Trillville and 8Ball & MJG. That same year, she released the first in a series of three albums, titled "17 In America." Unable to find a reliable manager, she put her budding entrepreneurial skills to work by seeking her own distribution, booking her own shows, printing her own promotional materials and carrying out an intense marketing campaign in Southern Mississippi and New Orleans. She began receiving recognition in the form of radio spins, newspaper/magazine articles and a demand for live performances at schools and community centers.

After Genesis's hometown of Biloxi, Mississippi was devastated by Hurricane Katrina, she took a break from her music to help rebuild her community. Seeing her neighbors come together to help each other inspired her to work harder to bring attention to the issues she saw harming her community. Along with her three brothers, she rebuilt homes and worked closely with youth in the community to bring back a sense of hope. Partnering with The Mississippi AIDS Task Force, she produced, recorded and shot a video for "HIV/AIDS", a song that educated local children about AIDS prevention. During this time, she released her second album "18 In America" and shot a video for the popular single "Did U Get Ya FEMA Check." The song was a comical satirical reference to her experience during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The song was played in heavy rotation in The Gulf Coast area and was deemed very controversial.

Genesis's community service includes participating in the cause "Justice For Jess Williams," creating a petition to re-title a community college named for Jeff Davis, protesting along with members of The Society of the Open Sky to remove the Confederate Flag from public places in Mississippi, and volunteering with The Gulf Coast Youth Symphony and Mississippi AIDS Task Force. Genesis continues her community service in New York at elementary schools in Harlem and the Lower East Side. Her third album, "19 In America", is set to be released in August 2009.

In May of 2010, Genesis won The Nia Award for Academic Excellence after being nominated by Chairman of The Clive Davis Department, Jeff Rahban.

# GENESIS BRIGGS

## EDUCATION

**New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY**  
Candidate for Bachelor of Fine Arts, May 2011

**Jefferson Davis Community College, Gulfport, MS**  
2005-2006

## HONORS/SCHOLARSHIPS/AWARDS

- NYU Reynolds Undergraduate Scholarship in Social Entrepreneurship, 2009

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

### **Open Sky Artworks**

**Founder, Producer, Promoter & Artist, Feb. 2006 – Present**

- Founded production company focused on promoting and developing young talent who show an interest in positive social change through art
- Produced, wrote, performed, manufactured, distributed and promoted albums *17 in America*, *18 in America*, and *19 in America*
- Each album contains social and political issues including but not limited to teen pregnancy, the War in Iraq, child molestation, teen drug use and more

### **Art For Change**

**Intern, Event Coordinator and Gallery Management**

- Curated/Produced two events in NYC to bring attention to Art For Change. Events involved live music, guest speakers and live painters.
- Daily management of Gallery Exhibit in East Harlem. Office tasks and hosting.
- Drafting grant proposals and press.

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**Yates Contractors, Biloxi, MS**

**Volunteer, Fall 2005 – 2006**

- Participated in rebuilding The Beurivage Casino and The Capris Casino in the wake of Hurricane Katrina
- Cleaned and restored East Biloxi residential areas
- Participated in collection and distribution of food during the first two weeks immediately after Katrina hit the Gulf Coast Region

**Gulf Coast Youth Symphony Orchestra, Ocean Springs, MS**

**Songwriter & Performer, 2003-2005**

- Wrote orchestral song "Rhapsody," an educational piece that describes the elements of an orchestra
- Performed "Rhapsody" with the Youth Symphony (ages 6-13) for elementary schools to benefit The Beurivage Casino, Saenger Theater and The Mary O'Keefe Cultural Center

**Mississippi AIDS Task Force, Gulfport, MS  
Producer, Songwriter, & Performer, 2006-2007**

- Produced a song called “HIV and AIDS” that was used as the soundtrack to The Mississippi AIDS Task Force educational movie.
- Wrote rap for children to sing and perform.
- Participated in the music video for “HIV and AIDS”

**ACTIVITIES**

**That’s Wellness Hip Hop Workshop Harlem, NY  
Featured Artist & Guest Teacher, Summer 2008**

- Taught children ages 8-11 in Washington Heights Harlem how to write and perform music

**Justice for Jesse Rally, Biloxi, MS  
Co-Organizer and Participant, June 2005**

- Coordinated a peaceful demonstration with members of the Society of the Open Sky to protest the fatal beating of Jesse Williams by officers at the Harrison County Jail
- Offending officers were subsequently indicted and sentenced to jail time

**“FEMA Check” Video**

**Co-Director & Performer, Sept. 2005**

- Made video for her song that satirizes both the government’s failure to adequately compensate Hurricane Katrina victims and the outlandish purchases made by some after receiving their federal aid
- Song received regular rotation on Mississippi radio station WJZD

**Petition to Change Name of Jefferson Davis Community College, Gulfport, MS  
May 2006**

- Drafted and presented petition with brother to change name of community college in protest of Jefferson Davis’ racist and anti-American views and actions