

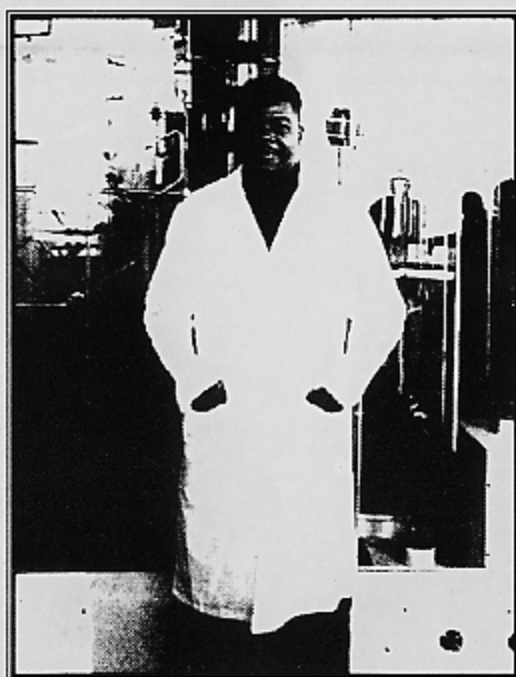
# The CChELATE

## KNOWLEDGE *is* POWER

by Clarence H. Freeman (contributions by George Mack)

In today's music world, the rap music genre has had a profound effect on young and old alike. From the risqué themes of many new artists to theater troupes performing new interpretations of Shakespeare, rap has become a viable means of musically communicating ideas. Why not use this format to educate and inform young people about science?

That's exactly what Tyraine Ragsdale, DVC-NOBCCHE member and chemist with the R.W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Institute in Spring House, Pa. decided to do.



On Friday, August 2, 1991, the rap song "Knowledge is Power" along with two others, "Education" and the "Scientist Afro-American" were performed by Ragsdale a.k.a. "Grand Hank" and the rest of his crew at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. The performance was part of a party for the soon-to-be-released singles from a forth-coming album called "Education of a Nation."

The "Education of a Nation" album is one part of an Educational Rap Lecture that Grand Hank Productions, Inc. has developed. The Educational Rap Lecture is a program that promotes education through rap music performed at area schools.

The release party started with a reception where refreshments were served and the "Grand Hank" video was shown. The video, a 30-minute promotion for the Educational Rap Lecture, starts with a jam session in Ragsdale's basement where the music and the lyrics for the album were first developed. The video then moves to the studio where the album was produced. The video

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shows the artist and his crew performing on local talk shows as well as discussing the purpose of the Educational Rap Lecture. Also shown in the video are performances at Philadelphia area schools.

The reception was followed by words of welcome by Mrs. Gwendolyn Ragsdale, Mr. Ragsdale's step-mother.

Mrs. Ragsdale spoke of her enthusiasm and support of the Educational Rap Lecture. She thanked everyone for coming, asked for their continued support and then introduced the guest speaker of the evening, Mr. J. Justin Ragsdale, her husband and the artist's father.

The elder Ragsdale expressed pleasure and pride in his son's project and said his support for the project would always be present.

A 45-minute concert followed, the three singles were performed as well as a new dance called the "Tist". "Grand Hank" and his crew taught it to the

audience. Following the concert, Ragsdale addressed the audience, saying he felt it was necessary to do his part in educating young African-American students about science and increasing their interest in education in general.

He asked everyone for their continued support and thanked them for coming.

Ragsdale gave special recognition to his family for their constant support.

The release party concluded with an autograph session where posters and cassettes were sold.

This fall, Ragsdale and his crew will continue the Educational Rap Lecture with visits to more area schools and educational institutions as requested by Philadelphia Mayor W. Wilson Goode and Constance Clayton, superintendent of the Philadelphia School District.

In a recent telephone interview, Ragsdale was asked about his involvement with NOBCCHE.

"It gives me great pleasure to be a part of NOBCCHE," Ragsdale said. "This organization is not only commit-

ted to scientific achievements, but to educational achievements as well.

It is important that we involve young African-American students early in organizations such as NOBCCHE and programs such as the Educational Rap Lecture.

NOBCCHE not only promotes education, but also serves as a support system for those who are involved."

Tyraine Ragsdale is an example of the diversity of talents possessed by African-American scientists and the commitment made by the members of NOBCCHE to prepare the community and the country for the future.

For information on cassettes and/or posters, upcoming Grand Hank Production events or to offer support for the project, contact:

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