

# DONNIE NICOLE BELCHER

Art of Culture Inc.

2014 Black Male Achievement Fellow



## BIG BOLD IDEA

Close the achievement gap for black boys in Chicago by providing pathways to success and career opportunities using high quality, arts based apprenticeship programs.

## ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Art of Culture Inc. (formerly Donda's House, Inc.) provides access to premium arts instruction to youth. Art of Culture harnesses the influence of celebrities and professionals to inspire, challenge, and transform tomorrow's problem solvers. The organization utilizes an apprenticeship model to engage, enhance, and ultimately employ artists. Art of Culture combats violence by engaging perpetrators and potential victims. They teach conflict mediation, goal setting, and career readiness by functioning as a nonprofit label. Ultimately, Art of Culture will have a global impact by serving as a lantern of light and network of influence for youth who would otherwise not have access to artist development.

## PERSONAL BIO

Donnie Nicole Belcher is co-founder and the executive director of Art of Culture Inc., an organization that provides access to premium arts instruction to youth. After assisting her grammy-award winning husband Che "Rhymefest" Smith with a run for City Council in one of Chicago's most violent neighborhoods and serving as a high school teacher in the Chicago public school system, she quickly realized that low-income youth idolized celebrities and suffered from access to artistic and cultural development. As the child of a crack-cocaine addicted mother, an absent father, and a survivor of sexual assault, Donnie realized that programs like the Children's Defense Fund – Freedom Schools and a host of others exposed her to new opportunities, helped her escape her daily trauma, and empowered her to use her negative experiences as motivation to change her narrative. Art of Culture Inc. was born out of the necessity to provide similar experiences to a new generation of youth in order to alter the trajectory of their lives.

### Organization/Fellow Location

Chicago, United States

### Impact Location

Africa  
Europe  
North America  
Canada  
United States  
South Africa  
United Kingdom

### Organization Structure

Nonprofit

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