

# My 'painful' experience while disabled at FSU

I am a junior here at Fayetteville State University. I was also in a wheelchair for several weeks. This was my first time being in a wheelchair and the experience has been both humbling and hard. Before this experience, I did everything on my own. In many ways I had to depend on other people around me, my family, and my friends. It has been a hard and painful eight weeks since my accident, which has put me in a wheelchair and I want to share with you some of my experiences at FSU when it comes to handicap accessibility.

My first time back at FSU was two weeks after my accident. I knew it would be difficult but I did not want to miss any more days of class. This is my last year here. Nothing was going to jeopardize my graduation.

All of my classes are in Taylor Science, John Knuckles Science Annex, Butler and the School of Business and Economics. My path on the first day back was simple-get to the other side of campus as

easily as possible. As I came out of the Taylor Science building I had to make my way down the hill (where the fraternity and sorority grounds are) and back up it again to get to the east side of campus. Looking down that hill seemed like a long shot but I gave it a try, big mistake. As I rolled down hill I tried not to go too fast. I tried to avoid students who were walking, but my wheelchair hit a crack in the concrete and threw me out of it. I landed face first in the grass, in pain. A group of student's saw me and politely helped me up. I was embarrassed. I had never been in this kind of situation before. It frustrated me that the campus I have spent nearly five years at is not too handicap accessible for me or anyone else that could be in my situation. I could not understand this before my accident but I sure

do understand it now.

They say that you never know how easy you have it or what you have until it is gone. I can now relate to this more than ever. From the bathroom in the SBE building on the first floor not being handicap accessible, to the doorways not all having the handicap push button to the disheveled concrete, I encountered so many things that could be fixed in order to maintain a more handicap-accessible school. Most of the classrooms that my classes were in had no space to accommodate a student with a handicap, mainly the JKSA building.

Another problem that I ran into was the administration. All FSU syllabi state: "In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if

you have a disability or think you have a disability, please contact the Center for Personal Development in Room 155 (1<sup>st</sup> floor). Spaulding Building, 910-672-1203."

I called the infirmary only to find out that there is nothing that they can do to help me get around to my classes. Although they were very pleasant to speak with, they provided no immediate help to me getting to and from my classes. No support at all.

I also ran into a problem with the FSU police department as well. I got stuck in the parking lot in front of the Chesnutt Library one day and being that it is on a hill, I did not want to test the concepts of gravity. So the next day, with my mom by my side, we went to the campus police department. The lady at the receptionist's desk was very rude. She stated that there was nothing they (the police dept.) could do. Our request was simple; open the gate so that my mom could unload me and my chair to avoid getting hurt again trying to navigate the

campus. The officer who responded was ill-mannered, mean and boastful. He stated that it was his authority to allow us in the gate and my situation did not authorize that. I left that day feeling irritated and cheated. Here I was with a disability and it seemed as though no one in administration had the authority to help me out.

Although I am now out of my wheelchair, I saw things from a different point of view like I have never seen before. Until you are in that situation you have no idea what that person is going through.

Whether it was not being able to get into the bathrooms, proper accommodations to avoid more injury or just helpful classmates and teachers, I'd like to hope it cannot get worse. I just hope FSU can change their guideline's concerning handicap accessibility. I am not the first person in a wheelchair here and I won't be the last.

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## Hip-Hop is dead

by Junious Smith  
Voice Contributor

In 2006, Nasir Jones (better known as the rapper "Nas") released an album called *Hip-Hop Is Dead*. Nas's statements inflicted plenty of controversy and anger, especially in the Southern region where many believed the "snap" and "crunk" music diluted the quality of hip-hop. Artists such as Young Jeezy and Lil Wayne countered against the statement and most people took it as Nas getting publicity for additional album sales. In the present day; however, Nas is looking more and more like a prophet.

Hip-hop, which was once shunned throughout mainstream America, has almost turned into an urban pop circuit. Many rappers in the South, such as Soulja Boy, Waka Flocka, and Gucci Mane have cashed in with bass-heavy instrumentals and little to no lyricism. The South, perceived as the killers of hip-hop, is now heavily in demand. The industry has focused less on an artist's creativity, and more on how to get record spins. As a result, there are more one-hit wonders attempting to emulate the pioneers of those who invoked Nas's anger. Instead of making songs with meaning, the main focus has been on how to make people dance or love

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the "thug" life.

As a result, the socially conscious rappers are short-changed. Artists like Common, Talib Kweli, and Lupe Fiasco; although respected by most, won't have anywhere near the fan base of Lil Wayne or Rick Ross. Hip-hop used to provide meaning and assistance; helping people through their trials and tribulations, giving solutions. Nowadays, hit songs are more about the things most of the consumers don't have: fancy cars, expensive jewelry, mansions, and a seemingly unlimited bankroll. Although there hasn't been a correlation with robberies because of hip-hop, after a while some people get upset about not having what is shown on television or heard on the radio.

When Nas said hip-hop was dead in 2006, most people didn't believe him. With music getting progressively worse, it's pretty safe to say it has flatlined.



## Hip-Hop is alive

by Charnell Harris  
Voice Features Editor

Hip-hop is not only alive, but every few years it takes all the new stuff and uses it to rebuild itself into something stronger and much more powerful. The very essence of hip-hop music has always been the ability to change with the times, while still holding true to its technique that separates it from the other genres of music. What other kind of music permeates through six continents on the earth? Hip-hop was able to become a mainstream genre in many different cultures.

Go to Japan and play country music, and no one will notice. Go to India and play jazz music and see if the majority of the population recognizes the artist. But take a hip-hop song anywhere, and watch the crowd. They might not recognize the song, but they will understand what the distinctive beat means. No other genre of music has been that successful overseas. Face it, the most wide spread culture on earth is neither Middle Eastern nor Western and it has nothing at all to do with religion. Imagine that?

Today's lyrics in hip-hop have reached a place where nothing is off limits. The freedom to express anything

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and everything that makes you excited, sad or just flat out angry. The definition of hip-hop is not just the topic of the song anymore, but more about the feeling it evokes from the listener put into motion by the flow of the artist behind it. Think about the lyricism of Jay-Z or Kanye West. Common's flow and Ludacris' bravado, it is all about the attitude behind the music.

The beauty of hip-hop is that it is always relevant. It is a never ending cycle and a barometer of what the upcoming generation is feeling in terms of expression. The genre of hip-hop has so many sub genres that it has something special for everyone. There is gangsta rap, indie hip hop, crunk, and not to mention that all the different regions in America have their own version of it. Hip-hop is different in the south, north, east, and west. It is not a one size fits all, but rather made of 100-percent spandex, in which everybody can fit in.