

Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship Launches to Preserve the Legacy of Women in Hip-Hop

The Hip-Hop Education Center announces the launch of the Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship, in partnership with the Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 30, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- To celebrate its 15th

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The Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship exemplifies our commitment to activating the community to take ownership of our shared history & invest in its preservation for future generations.”

Martha Diaz, Executive Director, Hip-Hop Education Center

anniversary, the Hip-Hop Education Center (HHEC) proudly announces the launch of a new community archiving initiative and [the Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship](#), in partnership with the [Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive](#) at the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. These efforts are part of a growing movement to preserve and amplify the voices of women in Hip-Hop culture.

“Fifteen years feels like a flash of light when I reflect on all the work we’ve done. I’m honored to reach this milestone and deeply grateful for the journey. In the coming months, the Hip-Hop Education Center will be announcing several

major projects that reflect our continued evolution. The Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship exemplifies our commitment to activating the community—inviting people to take ownership of our shared history and invest in its preservation for future generations.”

— Martha Diaz, Founder and Executive Director, Hip-Hop Education Center

At the heart of this initiative is the Fresh, Bold & So Def (FBSD) Women in Hip-Hop Collection, a groundbreaking archive documenting the powerful legacy of women across the Hip-Hop spectrum—from music and dance to fashion, education, activism, and visual art. The Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship will support the ongoing processing of the FBSD Collection and ensure public access for students, scholars, and curators. The initiative calls on community members to contribute personal stories, memorabilia, and testimonials that reflect the cultural and historical impact of Hip-Hop. This collective archiving effort seeks to build a rich, inclusive archive centered on community memory and representation.

“Women in Hip-Hop have not been afforded the respect and recognition they so honestly deserve. The #FreshBoldSoDef initiative, through the Hip-Hop Education Center, has been

documenting women's significant contributions to Hip-Hop for over a decade. I am privileged to be part of this journey and to house the FBSD collection in the Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Our mission is to make Black women (and women of color) visible and heard."

— Dr. Irma McClaurin, Founder, Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive

Thanks to support from the Society of American Archivists Foundation's Catalyst Grant, HHEC was able to hire India Mallard as the inaugural archivist to begin processing the FBSD Collection, which includes ephemera, books, films, apparel, toys, and other culturally significant materials.

The Lisa Cortés Fellow is not required to be a trained archivist but should have experience in community-based preservation or cultural work. Fellowship training and mentorship will be provided through HHEC's collaboration with the Alliance for Media Arts + Culture's Digital Archivist Apprenticeship Program. This partnership is part of a broader effort to build a sustainable ecosystem for creative careers and entrepreneurship in the digital arts and preservation fields.

"I am honored to support the archival work of the Fresh, Bold & So Def (FBSD) Women in Hip-Hop Collection. As a woman deeply rooted in the music industry and Hip-Hop culture, I believe it is essential to preserve the stories, voices, and artifacts of female Hip-Hop artists. Their contributions—often overlooked—are integral to the genre's evolution. Archiving their work is not just about honoring the past; it is about ensuring future generations understand the full scope of Hip-Hop's rich and diverse legacy."

— Lisa Cortés, Founder, [Cortés Filmworks](#)

The Lisa Cortés Archiving Fellowship will take place during the Fall 2025 semester (September–December). The selected Fellow will work closely with Taelore Marsh, the inaugural archivist for the Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive, at the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

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