

Honourable Mention



2019 Dr. Paul E. Garfinkel Awards for **Entrepreneurial Achievement**



Brittany Exmiranda Manu-Otchere

is a Toronto-based rapper who is emerging onto the Canadian scene. Three years ago, she decided to take the leap into music, leaving behind a line of precarious jobs to chart a new path where she could pursue her artistic passion, challenge herself, and express her creative flare while earning an income.

Brittany realized that in her working life up until then, she was living for the approval of others and not being true to herself. She identified a possible gap in the Toronto music scene – diverse, female rappers equipped with an androgenous sound that eschewed the typical gender roles and images associated with hip hop.

After developing a business plan and graduating from Rise's Youth Small Business Program, Brittany exceeded her financial goals by receiving four grants from local arts councils in 2018, totalling \$50,000.

Rising Up

Grant funding allowed Brittany to create art freely, grow professionally and develop content. Since graduating from

Rise, she has headlined five concerts, had songs reach the radio, and was a finalist in a Toronto Arts Foundation competition. Brittany has also grown her fanbase, earning 500,000 views on Instagram and 400,000 streams on an industry website for independent artists.

By investing in a publicist and online influencers, she now understands how to market herself as an artist, after first finding it difficult to perform such promotion. Meanwhile, her successful efforts to secure arts grants gave her the time necessary to create new music. Next, Brittany plans to release a debut album and continue building her growing fanbase.

"Rise allowed me to see my art as a business; before Rise I wasn't sure others would acknowledge the relevance of this career path. This program gave me newfound confidence and allowed me to thrive as an independent artist."
– Brittany



Empowering people
Launching ideas

Rise Asset Development is a registered **charity** that provides low interest small business loans, training and mentorship to men and women with a history of mental health and addiction challenges.



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