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'Make Hip-Hop, Not War' tour will stop in Cedar Falls

By KARRIS GOLDEN

You've heard the slogan, "Make love, not war." It has spawned many spin-offs: "Make films, not war;" "make robots, not war;" even "make money, not war."

So why not lay down arms to pick up a microphone? That's what organizers of a national tour hope audiences will consider.

The "Make Hip-Hop, Not War" national tour will stop in Cedar Falls from 2 to 8 p.m. April 14. The event will take place at Overman Park on the corner of Second and Franklin streets. The Cedar Falls stop is sponsored by University of Northern Iowa Students for Social Justice, Cedar Valley United for Peace and Justice and Iowans for Sensible Priorities as part of Step it Up! National of Day of Action. National tour sponsors include sponsored by the Hip-Hop Caucus, Campus Antiwar Network and Iraq Veterans Against the War.

The Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr., president of the Hip-Hop Caucus, will serve as emcee for the event. The tour's featured artists include Papoose, Killer Mike, A Alikes, Akir, Hasan Salaam, Timz, Son of Nun, Fam Famil, Bedouin, DJ Chela, Will B, Head-Roc, La Paz, Myself, ReadNex Poetry Squad, local artists and others.

Other representatives from the music community include Rosa Clemente, a national leader and hip-hop activist; national radio commentator, writer and Iraq war critic Jim Hightower; Malia Lazu, a national leader and hip-hop activist; Nicole Lee, executive director of TransAfrica Forum and a member of the "hip-hop generation;" and Sunsara Taylor of The World Can't Wait.

The tour also features parents of soldiers killed in Iraq as speakers. Anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan is among the tour's notable speakers. She is known for establishing Camp Casey in Crawford, Texas, in honor of her son, Casey Sheehan, who was killed in Iraq.

Elaine Johnson is also a tour speaker. Her son, Army Spc. Darius Jennings, 22, was killed in November 2003 in Iraq when a Chinook helicopter he was aboard was shot down by insurgents.

Carlos Arrendondo, father of Marine Lance Corporal Alexander Arrendondo, is also on the tour's list of speakers. Alexander was 20 when he was killed in August 2004 in Iraq during his second tour of duty.

Tina Richards' son Corp. Cloy Richards of the U.S. Marines, served two tours of duty in Iraq. She is among the tour's speakers.

Other speakers include Steve Cobble, an associate fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies; writer Phyllis Bennis, who is an analyst and activist on Middle Eastern and United Nations issues; and members of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

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