



March 23, 2016

Dark and Lovely®, LG G5® and Coca-Cola® Announced as Official 2016 "BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™" Sponsors

2016 M.A.D. GIRLS ("Making A Difference") Celebrants Are Marley Dias, Maya Penn and Haile Thomas

"BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™" Returns to BET Networks on Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 8:00 P.M. ET/PT Hosted by Tracee Ellis Ross

#BLACKGIRLSROCK

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- BET Networks has partnered with **Dark and Lovely®**, **LG G5®** and **Coca-Cola®** for **"BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™" 2016**, celebrating the accomplishments of Black women who represent inspirational and positive role models making a difference in the world of arts, philanthropy and their local communities. **"BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™" 2016** tapes on Friday, April 1, 2016 at the historic New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, NJ, and will premiere on Tuesday, April 5, 2016 on BET Networks.

Dark and Lovely®, the brand that is proudly dedicated to the legacy of serving haircare and styling needs of African-American women, will be the exclusive beauty product sponsor of the *Black Girls Rock 2016 Star Power Award* and the Black Girls Rock 2016 Pre-Reception. The *Star Power Award* is given to an outstanding woman dominating her field. The *Walking Dead* actress and *Eclipsed* playwright **Danai Gurira** is the 2016 celebrant and will be added to a list of strong Black women including past recipients, Jada Pinkett Smith and Kerry Washington.

LG G5® will be the sponsor of the *Rock Star Award*, which is presented to women who are trailblazers in the industry and continuing to change the game. The 2016 celebrant is international superstar **Rihanna** and past recipients of this award include Erykah Badu and Queen Latifah.

Coca-Cola® will be this year's sponsor of the **M.A.D (Making A Difference) GIRLS**, an honor bestowed upon young girls who strive for excellence within their communities. Each year, **"BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™"** celebrates dynamic young women and girls who have been recognized as change agents due to their resolve to come up with enterprises and ideas that promote progressive change in their communities.

The 2016 "Making a Difference" a.k.a. "M.A.D. GIRLS," are **Marley Dias**, **Maya Penn** and **Haile Thomas**, young women who remind us that there is not an age requirement for community action and social responsibility.

2016 M.A.D GIRLS

Marley Dias, 11 - Orange, NJ

Marley Dias is the young image activist behind #1000BlackGirlBooks, an international movement to collect and donate children's books that feature Black girls as the protagonists. She launched the #1000BlackGirlBooks drive in 2015. With international media attention the initiative quickly gained the support of seasoned authors Jacqueline Woodson and Rita Garcia as well as literary partners Barnes & Noble, My Very Own Library, Scholastic, and Putnam Books. Having collected over 4,000 books to-date, Marley has more than quadrupled the campaign's original book-raising goal. In February 2016, Marley donated the majority of the books raised to Retreat School in her mother's hometown, Parish of Saint Mary, Jamaica. In addition to launching this campaign, Marley is also the co-founder of the BAM Collective. On a humanitarian mission in December 2015, Marley and the BAM Collective traveled to Ghana, West Africa as health ambassadors for African Health Now to provide meals for children at local orphanages. This April she will travel to Liberia to lay the foundation for an international exchange program where she will meet President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in furthering her efforts to foster international relations among girls of the African diaspora.

Maya Penn, 16 - Atlanta, GA

Maya Penn wears many hats. She is a 16-year-old animated-filmmaker, artist, eco-designer, entrepreneur, coder, illustrator, writer, speaker, Simon & Schuster author, philanthropist, environmental advocate and girls rights activist! Penn is the

founder and CEO of Maya's Ideas, an eco-friendly clothing and accessories manufacturer that she started in 2008 when she was just 8 years old. Maya donates 10-20% of the companies profits to local and global charities, environmental organizations and other causes that she advocates for. She is also the founder of an NPO, Maya's Ideas 4 the Planet, where she creates and distributes eco-friendly sanitary pads for girls in developing countries. A three-time TED speaker, her 'talks' have gone viral worldwide and have over a million views. She recently partnered with Google's MADE WITH CODE project as a tech mentor and is currently traveling the country to promote her first book, "You Got This."

Haile Thomas, 15 - Tucson, AZ

Haile Thomas is a youth health advocate, motivational speaker, teen vegan chef, and founder-executive director of HAPPY Organization, Inc. Haile's organization works to engage, educate, and inspire youth and their families to embrace healthy habits through fun cooking classes, basic nutrition education, physical activities, and youth-based service activities. Her experience in the healthy eating movement includes personally engaging over 5000 kids across the country in schools, summer camps, special community events, and HAPPY organization's public programs and special events. Her tremendous efforts and expertise in the field has granted her invitations to the White House's for several occasions including the State of the Union Address, as a guest of First Lady Michelle Obama, and the White House Kids' State Dinner. Studying to become a certified health coach, Haile is currently the youngest student at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, she is the ambassador chef for Wholesum Harvest Family Farms, Inc. and she's a certified healthy living ambassador with the University of Arizona's Cooperative Extension 4H Program. She served a 3-year term on the Clinton Foundations' Alliance for a Healthier Generation Youth Advisory Board and she is currently an intern working with former surgeon general Dr. Richard Carmona doing public health research. She is also a Health Ambassador for Hip Hop Public Health, a junior chef advisor for Hyatt Hotels' For Kids by Kids Menu, and a contributing magazine writer sharing healthy recipes and encouraging readers to explore new plant-based foods and flavors. Haile also hosts the "Plant-Powered Haile" YouTube Channel featuring her delicious and nutritious healthy recipes!

For updates or more information about "**BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™**" visit <http://www.BET.com/blackgirlsrock> and www.blackgirlsrock.org

Join the conversation on social media by logging on to BET's multiple social media platforms:

- On Twitter by using hashtag: #BlackGirlsRock; follow us @BET and @BLACKGIRLSROCK
- On Facebook by liking the fan pages at [facebook.com/BET](https://www.facebook.com/BET) and [facebook.com/BLACKGIRLSROCK](https://www.facebook.com/BLACKGIRLSROCK)
- On Instagram @betnetworks and @BLACKGIRLSROCK

ABOUT BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™:

Founded by celebrity DJ, model and executive producer, Beverly Bond, BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™ is a multifaceted movement dedicated to shifting the culture of media images depicting Black women and girls. Since 2006, BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™ has been committed to empowering women through media and enriching girls through leadership, education, and positive identity development programs. For additional information on BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™, visit <http://www.blackgirlsrock.com>.

ABOUT BET NETWORKS:

BET Networks, a subsidiary of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIA.B), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 90 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and sub-Saharan Africa. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of business extensions: [BET.com](http://www.BET.com), a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; CENTRIC, a 24-hour entertainment network targeting the 25- to 54-year-old African-American audience; BET Digital Networks - BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Event Productions, a full-scale event management and production company with festivals and live events spanning the globe; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET in the United Kingdom and oversees the extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

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