

# From Courtside To Center Stage: Lil Durk's Journey Of Influence

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Contributor

*I'm a cultural critic doing the work to call out anti-Black woman and anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric.*

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When it comes to influential voices in the realm of hip-hop, it's hard to deny Lil Durk's impact. Throughout his career, the rapper has steadily built a fanbase through an ironclad work ethic with the talent to match. The Chicago native's reach continues to span worldwide and it's only growing thanks to his latest collaboration with *STARRY*, PepsiCo's crisp lemon lime flavored soda brand. The collaborative effort, *STARRY* Fizz Fest, is a basketball skills competition held across four HBCUs including Norfolk State University, Hampton University, Jackson State University and Morgan State University where students have the opportunity to win \$333,000 in scholarships with the final stop at the end of this month. The Hip-Hop artist who boasts superb basketball skills of his own, made a surprise appearance at Jackson State University and was excited to engage with the students and connect on a deeper level.

"I was excited about everything, especially the engagement with the students. We popped up at one of the colleges to surprise them and made it a big thing," Lil Durk told ForbesBLK. "I was also excited to give them motivation and hope because it drives me too. We're on the same team and can inspire one another."

In addition to wielding musical gifts, Lil Durk is also adept at basketball. So much so, that even LeBron James [would agree](#). The intersection of sports and music is something the musician relishes in when the opportunity presents itself.



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"Everyone has different talents and basketball is one of mine. I'm from Chicago where basketball is prevalent and that's where my passion really started," Lil Durk said. "The opportunity to combine music with sports and play with different rappers, athletes and basketball players is fun."

This intersection is not only something that he's achieved success in but where he picked up pertinent knowledge on how to excel in both.

"Growing up, I couldn't make a basketball team to save my life. So that just lets you know never to give up and practice your talent no matter what it is. If it makes you happy, that's what it is. Even if you don't make it to the NBA or college, sticking to what you do and believe in will work out for you in the end."



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As Lil Durk continues to progress in his musical endeavors, he keeps this lesson close to his heart as it helps him to continue to elevate.

"I look at everything as motivation. And by me being in that situation myself, it's like I feed off my own energy. From being unable to make a basketball team to being acknowledged by LeBron James, it just reaffirms that the sky is the limit for me. So, if I feel a certain type of way in music, I know I can get everything together and really just make it happen."

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I am a freelance pop culture writer and on-air whose content focuses on the intersections of Blackness and pop

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