

***JUNETEENTH**

EXCITING VISUALS

COMMUNITY EVENTS*



MEDIA ALERT

WAWA WELCOME AMERICA 2024 KICKS OFF WITH AAMP JUNETEENTH BLOCK PARTY, CONCILIO'S HISPANIC FIESTA, FAMILY-FRIENDLY PROGRAMMING, FREE MUSEUM DAYS, AND MORE!

Wednesday, June 19th marks the official kickoff of Wawa Welcome America with the **Juneteenth Block Party & Free Museum Day at the African American Museum in Philadelphia**. From there, the festival is officially in full swing with celebrations, family-friendly programming, the new **Declaration House Block Party**, and the new Celebration of Innovation and Education in honor of **Jefferson's 200th Anniversary**, and community events throughout the first week.

See below for Wawa Welcome America week 1 events & details:

WHAT: Liberation Rising: Juneteenth Block Party & Free Museum Day at AAMP

Join the African American Museum in Philadelphia for an unforgettable celebration of freedom and culture during the annual Juneteenth Block Party in partnership with Wawa Welcome America and VISIT PHILADELPHIA®. All are welcome to unite to celebrate freedom through music as we honor this year's theme, "Rhythms of Liberation: Celebrating Juneteenth Through Music," during Black Music Month. There will be live musical entertainment, a vendor village, food trucks, interactive experiences, and activities for the whole family!

**Interviews available (pre-event & on-site)*

Enjoy a lineup of sensational live performances hosted by WURD Radio personalities **Tiffany Bacon** and **Andrea Lawful-Sanders**; Get ready to jam with hip-hop legends, this year's headliners **Kid 'n Play**, groove to the beats of **Rich Medina** spinning the best in R&B, hip-hop, jazz, and more, and feel the melodic vibes of Seraiah Nicole and West Philly's favorite band, **Suede Lace**; Celebrate the essence of Juneteenth with the soul-stirring poetry of **Kai Davis**, Philadelphia's newly appointed Poet Laureate, as her words echo the resilience, triumph, and spirit of African American heritage; Free museum access courtesy of Wawa - discover the stories and legacies of African American history and culture; Explore the Vendor Village, showcasing a curated selection of small Black-owned

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businesses, offering unique treasures that celebrate Black culture, heritage, and entrepreneurship; Discover a wealth of attractions, including a Children’s Zone, delicious cuisine, educational exhibits, and interactive experiences that celebrate the spirit of Juneteenth and the pursuit of freedom and equality for all.

The event concludes with a pivotal conversation entitled “Shattering the Glass Ceiling: African American Women in Politics” between Keisha Lance Bottoms, Former Mayor of Atlanta, Keisha Lance Bottoms, and First woman Speaker of the PA House of Representatives, Joanna McClinton, moderated by Broadcast Journalist, **Soledad O’ Brien**.

Guests can enjoy free admission to the African American Museum in Philadelphia courtesy of Wawa 10am – 4pm. Entry is on a first come first serve basis.

WHEN: Wednesday, June 19, 12-7pm

WHERE: African American Museum in Philadelphia, 7th & Arch

CONTACT: Theresa Spencer, tspencer@aampmuseum.org

WHAT: **Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital Community Day**

Come together with friends and family for an evening of fun at Cherashore Playground, hosted by Jefferson Einstein Philadelphia Hospital. Guests will enjoy entertainment, free food, including samples of Rita’s Water Ice, giveaways, lawn games, local vendors, and the opportunity to learn about healthcare services and job opportunities at Jefferson Health.

WHEN: Thursday, June 20, 4:00-7:00 PM

WHERE: Cherashore Playground, 851 W Olney Avenue

CONTACT: Emily Uliano, emily@cashmanandassociates.com
Kellianne DeBlase, kellianne@welcomeamerica.com
Deana Gamble, Deana.Gamble@jefferson.edu

WHAT: **Kidchella Music Festival**

Dance, play, create! Kids of all ages can enjoy this free music festival, celebrating Smith Memorial’s 125th Anniversary, featuring Emmy® Award winning Alex & The Kaleidoscope, Johnny Shortcake, *City Love*, *Ill Doots*, and the *Soundspace Performing Arts dance troupe*. Prior to the main concert at 5:00pm, the World Cafe Live Up Next Stage will showcase talented local youth performers curated by World Cafe Live. Throughout the evening, guests can enjoy dynamic performances, art stations, mouthwatering treats, exciting giveaways, and more!

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Kidchella offers something special for everyone to enjoy. This vibrant celebration will take place on Smith Memorial's spacious front lawn, promising a comfortable and scenic experience and convenient parking. The evening will conclude with a sparkle show in the sky. Guests should expect bright lights and loud noises during this up-close fireworks experience. It's not just a concert; it's a community celebration.

*Pre-registration is strongly encouraged as there is limited capacity.

WHEN: Friday, June 21, 4:00-7:00PM

WHERE: Smith Memorial Playground, 3500 Reservoir Drive

CONTACT: Emily Uliano, emily@cashmanandassociates.com
Kellianne DeBlase, kellianne@welcomeamerica.com
Lance Washington, lance@smithplayground.org

WHAT: **Concilio's Annual Hispanic Fiesta, supported by PECO**

This two-day festival unites people of all ages through music, dance, and cuisine to celebrate Hispanic culture and heritage. New this year - Philadelphia's largest event of its kind will move to the John F. Kennedy Bridge, from 20th to 30th streets on John F. Kennedy Boulevard. Part of the PECO Multicultural Series since its inception, this year's event will happen next to the iconic PECO Building in downtown Philadelphia. Both days are jam packed with great performances, including legendary artist **Joseph Fonseca**, an icon of merengue music, and **Huey Dunbar**, one of the most prominent representatives of the history of salsa in all the Hispanic countries. While there, guests can delve into cultural cuisine at the Oasis supported by the Philadelphia International Airport and explore the many vendors and activations, including the Well-being on Wheels presented by Independence Blue Cross, featuring free health screenings, wellness information, and nutrition takeaways. This event is produced in partnership with Concilio. Concilio is a non-profit organization located in North Philadelphia that has been serving the community since 1962.

WHEN: Saturday, June 22 & Sunday, June 23, 2:00pm-8:00pm

WHERE: 20th & John F. Kennedy Boulevard

CONTACT: Emily Uliano, emily@cashmanandassociates.com
Kellianne DeBlase, kellianne@welcomeamerica.com
Grace Castro, Grace.Castro@elconcilio.net

WHAT: **(NEW!) Declaration House Block Party**

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Celebrate the opening of Monument Lab's newest exhibition at the Declaration House at Independence National Historical Park. This block party will celebrate the global debut of Sonya Clark's *The Descendants of Monticello* with special performances and will showcase several historic and artistic organizations from the area, including the African American Museum in Philadelphia, PhillyCAM, and more. This event is in partnership with Monument Lab at Independence National Historical Park. The exhibition will be live through early September.

Media please note: Sonya Clark is available for interviews on Thursday, June 20th from 11am-4pm. Interviews with Paul Farber, Director of Monument Lab, Yolanda Wisher, Curator at Monument Lab, other curatorial members of Monument Lab or descendants of Monticello are also available upon request. All media assets are available [here](#).

WHEN: Monday, June 24, 5:00-8:00PM

WHERE: Declaration House, 7th Street between Market and Chestnut

CONTACT: Florie Hutchinson, florie.hutchinson@monumentlab.com
(415) 515-4696

WHAT: **(NEW!) Celebration of Innovation and Education, in partnership with Jefferson**
In honor of Jefferson's 200th Anniversary, join us at the new Jefferson Plaza in Center City for an afternoon celebrating innovation and education with entertainment, sweet and savory treats and activities for all to enjoy. Founded in 1824 as one of the nation's first medical schools, Jefferson has grown to become a national global research university with over 200 undergraduate and graduate programs, and the region's largest health system.

DJ Hollywood will be spinning all afternoon with performances by **Mark Early Jr.**, **Benita Farmer Band**, **The Austin Woodlin Band**, and a special performance by the legendary **Kathy Sledge** ([bio](#)), a founding member of Sister Sledge!

WHEN: Tuesday, June 25, 3:00pm – 7:00pm

WHERE: Jefferson Plaza, 12th & Chestnut Streets

CONTACT: Emily Uliano, emily@cashmanandassociates.com
Kellianne DeBlase, kellianne@welcomeamerica.com
Deana Gamble, Deana.Gamble@jefferson.edu

FREE MUSEUM DAYS: For the full list of participating museums offering free and/or pay-what-you-wish admission during Wawa Welcome America, [click here](#).

FULL FESTIVAL SCHEDULE: The full 2024 festival schedule is available [here](#) in multiple languages.

MEDIA CREDENTIALS: Media interested in covering Wawa Welcome America events, [click here](#) to apply for credentials.

REMINDER! Voting for the Wawa Foundation Hero Award is open through June 28:

The Wawa Foundation Hero Award honors a non-profit organization and its volunteers serving Philadelphia by providing services that build stronger communities through preserving our independence, protecting our safety, and mentoring and inspiring our youth. Submissions are being accepted through May 31, 2024. Four of the most compelling stories will be chosen for voting by the public. Voting will occur from June 13 – June 28, 2024. The winning organization will receive a \$50,000 grant from The Wawa Foundation, and three finalists will each receive a \$10,000 grant. The Wawa Foundation Hero Award will be announced during the Celebration of Freedom Ceremony on July 4, 2024. For more information on The Wawa Foundation Hero Award terms and conditions or to submit an entry, please visit www.TheWawaFoundation.org.

Safety Tips from the City of Philadelphia to help reduce heat-related illness while attending events during excessive heat:

- Know the forecast. Humidity increases what the actual temperature feels like and severe storms can pop up during excessive heat events. You can find forecasts on the National Weather Service [website](#). Get free severe weather alerts from the City by texting AMERICA to 888777.
 - Know the signs of heat-related illness like heat stroke or hyperthermia. Watch for heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Find information on the City of Philadelphia's [website](#). If you suspect someone is experiencing distress, call 911.
 - Be aware of the effects of heat on vulnerable populations like older adults, small children, people with pre-existing health conditions, or those with access and functional needs.
 - Pack plenty of water for you and your group. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
 - Limit drinks that cause dehydration. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and sugary drinks.
 - Wear lightweight, light-colored, and loose-fitting clothing. Wear a hat or bring an umbrella.
 - Use sunscreen for protection.
 - Plan your trip! Besides deciding on a meet-up place where your group knows to go if you become separated, schedule visits that include locations that have air conditioning or shade to get a break from the sun, especially during the warmest part of the day.
 - Limit the amount of strenuous activity. If travelling a distance, consider SEPTA mass transit or ride-share options.
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About Welcome America, Inc.

Welcome America, Inc. is a 501c3, non-profit organization engaged in a public-private partnership with the City of Philadelphia which seeks to enhance the resident and visitor experience by planning and producing citywide celebrations including Wawa Welcome America and the Philly Holiday Experience. These events generate positive economic impact to the local economy and increase awareness of Philadelphia as a global destination.

Wawa Welcome America is Philadelphia's premier summer festival that celebrates freedom and independence from Juneteenth to July 4th! As the nation's largest July 4th celebration and one of the largest free festivals in the country, Wawa Welcome America offers Philadelphians and visitors sixteen days of free, family-friendly programs that celebrate the lives, voices, and experiences of all Americans through art, culture, wellness, and history. The Wawa Welcome America Festival includes concerts, firework displays, Wawa Hoagie Day and more! Welcome America was founded in 1993, and celebrates its 32nd festival in 2024. Visit july4thphilly.com to learn more, and join the conversation at:

- Instagram – www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly
- Facebook – www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica
- Twitter – www.twitter.com/July4thPhilly