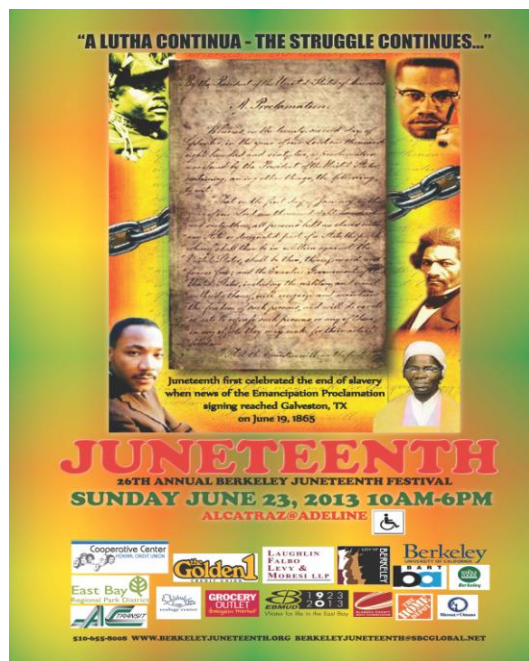


MEDIA RELEASE

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BERKELEY'S JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL WILL KICKOFF ON SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2013

BERKELEY, CA-- Berkeley's 26th Annual Juneteenth Festival will be on Sunday, June 23, 2013 from 10 AM to 6 PM along Adeline Street, between Ashby and Alcatraz streets in South Berkeley. The festival is free and open to the public, and Ashby BART is the easiest access to the event.

The exciting lineup of entertainment for this year's event on the main and community stages will include performances by: Pat Wilder; Aisha Fukushima (Neo Soul); George "Jazzbeaux" Spencer (Jazz); Misa Malone (R&B); Purple Smoke (Blues), The Washington Sisters (Neo Soul); Dr. Terrence Elliott (Jazz), Platinum Status (R&B) and Samba Funk (Samba).

Juneteenth's festival theme, "A Lutha Continua – The Struggle Continues... is a testament to the sacrifices that were made by those who came before us who fought the "good fight" for the freedoms that we enjoy today," said Delores Nochi Cooper, Festival Publicity Chair. "It is also a call-to-service battle cry for the next generation to prepare themselves to exert strenuous effort (struggle) to ensure that those hard fought freedoms persevere."

This year's festival is a special recognition to honor and remember former Berkeley City Councilmember Maudelle Miller Shriek, who passed away last month ago just shy of becoming 102 years old. As the granddaughter of slaves, Ms. Shriek was dedicated to community service and civil rights.

This year also marks the 150th year anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln in 1863. Juneteenth celebrations started in Galveston, Texas two years later, because the "good news of freedom" did not reach Texas slaves until June 19, 1865.

Berkeley Juneteenth co-president Ken Tramiel noted that, "To the next generation: the baton of our history is firmly in your hands. We need working volunteers, computers and social media persons, writers, etc., to continue to tell our story of struggles and successes to the community and to the world."

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The Berkeley Juneteenth Festival brand is simple. A family-oriented, alcohol and tobacco free event which celebrates the spirit and the talent of the African American culture in a safe and festive environment. “While celebrating is at the core of our Festival intent, the Berkeley Juneteenth Association, Inc. is also committed to offering healing components in our programming,” said Cooper.

“Non-profits like our sponsor, Farm Fresh Choice, will be out in full force promoting healthy eating. There will also be available a tasty variety of culinary delights and tons of ethnic arts and crafts, as well as Friends of Negro Spirituals, to showcase the preservation of our sacred music,” she added.

Another Berkeley Juneteenth staple is showcasing the art of homegrown artist who contribute their talent to the creation of our uniquely designed posters. This year’s poster which depicts abolitionists and civil rights icons was designed by Minister Rick Murdock, and the new street banners hanging high on flagpoles above the festival grounds, depicting a 19th century newly freed slave, was designed by local South Berkeley artist, Mildred Howard.

Northern California’s original and longest-running Juneteenth festival offers a dynamic lineup of performers to entertain festival-goers with a vast array of blues, jazz, reggae and new school music, along with a multitude of arts, crafts, cultural events and ethnic foods.

Festival-goers who come with their children will enjoy a plethora of activities in the Kid’s Zone, sponsored by the Emeryville Home Depot. Hands-on crafts and activities including face painting, train rides, jumpers, and a Wild Kingdom animal-encounters show is sponsored by Mutual of Omaha.

In addition to a Kid’s Zone, the 3-on-3 Basketball Tourney returns for the youthful and athletic. The festival will also include dozens of booths offering a variety of clothing, jewelry and gifts, special ethnic cuisines, and live entertainment on two stages.

Festival-goers are encouraged to take BART to the festival as the recommended method of transportation. Riders will need to exit at the Ashby BART station in South Berkeley. For more information on fares and schedules when planning your trip to the festival, visit www.bart.gov.

Event sponsors include the City of Berkeley, Alameda County Art Commission, Berkeley Civic Arts, University of California, Co-op Credit Union, Golden One Credit Union, the law firm of Laughlin, Falbo Levy, & Moresi LLP, EBMUD, East Bay Parks, AC Transit, Grocery Outlet, BART, Inter-City Services, and People’s Bazaar. For more information about the Berkeley Juneteenth Festival, call 510-655-8008, or visit www.berkeleyjuneteenth.org.

The Berkeley Juneteenth Festival is produced by Berkeley Juneteenth Association, Inc. (BJAI), a nonprofit organized in 1987, whose mission is: “To promote greater societal growth and community cohesiveness in the City of Berkeley and surrounding environs through educating and involving people of color in historical family, economic business, and cultural activities, culminating in the annual Berkeley Juneteenth Festival.”

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