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Woodland Mall to Host Unity Walk and African American Live Museum to Honor Black History Month

Events Offered in Partnership with City of Kentwood, New Hope Baptist Church

Kentwood, Michigan, Feb. 14, 2024 – Woodland Mall will once again recognize Black History Month by hosting community events in partnership with the City of Kentwood and New Hope Baptist Church on Saturday, Feb. 24.

The day will kick off with the third annual Unity Walk with the City of Kentwood at 11 a.m. Community members are invited to gather at the food court inside Woodland Mall, 3195 28th St. SE, for a walk that will end in front of Von Maur at 11:20 a.m. A ceremony will immediately follow and feature welcoming remarks from Kentwood Mayor Stephen Kepley, live music from Kevin Brewster, an educational session with George Bayard, director and curator of the Grand Rapids African American Museum & Archives, refreshments and more.

“We’re pleased to once again come together with our partners at Woodland Mall and New Hope Baptist Church to put on a day of programming focused on recognizing Black History Month,” Kepley said. “We welcome community members of all ages to join us for these impactful events.”

Following the Unity Walk, New Hope Baptist Church will present its 10th African American Live Museum. Starting at 1 p.m., community members can see a cast of 35 people ages 8 to 66 put on more than 20 live performances featuring remarkable African American figures throughout history and in current culture from politics, sports, science, arts, entertainment and more. Mary McLeod Bethume, The Temptations and Coach Deon Sanders will be among the legends appearing throughout the mall until 5 p.m.

The Live Museum provides an engaging experience for community members as performers bring their persona to life, adopting mannerisms of the legendary figures they are portraying while sharing facts and stories from their lives. Visitors can watch and listen to the performances to learn about each historic figure.

“Through the African American Live Museum, we share history in an engaging way that allows us to connect with the community and educate them about the historic accomplishments of Black Americans, while also showcasing our talented performers,” Dr. Cathy Large, drama ministry leader of New Hope Baptist Church said. “We’re grateful to Woodland Mall for hosting us for the 10th year.”

Kennedy Vancalbergh, marketing manager for Woodland Mall, says the mall is looking forward to continuing its partnership with each organization for these events.

“We are proud to be part of this collaborative effort to recognize Black History Month and share the stories of historic Black figures,” Vancalbergh said. “Both events offer an interactive, engaging and educational experience for mall visitors.”

For more information, visit ShopWoodlandMall.com/events.

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