



2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival

FACT SHEET

- What** **2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival**
Attended by families from Baltimore, MD to Durham, NC (& Beyond)
- When** **Saturday, December 28, 2019 • 1:00 p.m. • 8:00 p.m.**
- Where** **Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School**
1000 Mosby Street
Richmond, Virginia 23223
- Who** **Presented by Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.**
Richmond's Cultural Ambassador
A Richmond-based not-for-profit cultural arts and education organization.
- With City of Richmond, Dominion, Wells Fargo, CBS 6 and [Radio One](#) Richmond with CultureWorks and the Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium
- Features** OSHUN, Dr. Runoko Rashidi, Tunji Band, Elegba Folklore Society, Happiness Dance Studio, The African Market, Nia Sessions, Watoto Kwanzaa
- Cost** \$6 Advance General Admission. \$7, Door.
\$5 Students (12-18) & Seniors (65+), Advance. \$6, Door.
\$5 Group Rates, 10 or More, Advance, Only.
Free for Children Under 12.
- Tickets** **Group and Advance Sales**
Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center
101 E. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219, 804/644-3900
<http://efsinc.org>
- At the Door**
Day of Show Only. No Group Sales.
- Media Contact**
Janine Bell
804.644.3900
jaybee@efsinc.org

Images Included.

Capital City Kwanzaa Festival
101 East Broad Street • Richmond, Virginia 23219
804/644-3900 (phone) • 644-3919 (fax) • story1@efsinc.org
www.efsinc.org

For Immediate Release

Contact: Janine Bell
804.644.3900
jaybee@efsinc.org

Date: December 7, 2019

2019 CAPITAL CITY KWANZAA FESTIVAL DECEMBER 29 AT MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MIDDLE SCHOOL

Richmond, VA • Elegba Folklore Society, *Richmond's Cultural Ambassador*, presents the **2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** on **Saturday, December 28, 1:00 p.m. – 8:00pm**, at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, 1000 Mosby Street, Richmond, Virginia.

The **2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** presents a carefully planned series of events that please the palette of attendees and capture the spirit and the significance of the Kwanzaa holiday, created by Dr. Maulana Karenga, now in its 53rd year.

The festival's **main stage** is alive with music, dance and message presented to strengthen families and galvanize the community. The African Market will be open with food and shopping. There will be children's events, workshops and more in this nationally recognized, regionally attended observance of the Kwanzaa (quahn-zah) holiday. ***The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival is one of the largest Kwanzaa celebrations on the east coast.*** Because of it, Dr. Karenga has said, "Richmond is a major center for the celebration of Kwanzaa; it is an important site of African American history and culture, and it has been a very welcoming and enjoyable experience for my wife, Tiamoyo, and me."

The **Ancestral Libation and Candle Lighting Ceremony** set the tone for the day. Attendees are invited to come and experience the Kwanzaa holiday right from the start. To observe this Pan-African holiday of unity, strength, clarity and solidarity based on reconnection with essential African value systems, the **2018 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival's thematic focus is "Ascension,"** which marks the crossing from the 400th year of the recorded arrival of African people, 2019, into the clear vision and promise of 2020.

It is serendipitous, then, that the festival's location is **Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School**. Dr. King proffered the ideals of Kwanzaa such as *Umoja* or unity, *Ujima* or collective work and responsibility, *Imani* or faith and *Nia* or purpose in his community-building and action strategies. In this sense, the Legacy, of Dr. King meets the Legacy, of Dr. Karenga, at the 2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival.

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The Nia Sessions are ongoing workshops for all ages that will offer perspectives toward personal and community triumph. Nia is the fifth of the seven principles of Kwanzaa, the *Nguzo Saba*. It means purpose, which, according to Dr. Karenga is "to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness." **The African Market** of cultural merchandise and African-inspired cuisine is open all day. The event's **keynote speaker** is the widely respected **Dr. Runoko Rashidi**, an internationally recognized cultural historian and documentarian of the African presence globally.

Festival events will occur as follows:

1:00pm The African Market Opens, filled with delicious foods plus books, unique handcrafted and imported items, art, home décor, natural body care, clothing, jewelry and more. Remains open throughout the event.

2:00pm The Pouring of Ancestral Libation and Kwanzaa Candle Lighting Ceremony, Affirmation of the Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles and the ancestors upon whose shoulders we stand. The lighting of candles and the ceremony will feature a call-and-response affirmation. The **Elegba Folklore Society's artistic director, Janine Bell**, will lead the ceremony.

2:30pm Happiness Dance Studio. In this tribute to Bill Robinson, Richmond, Virginia's native son was a humanitarian at home, and he influenced the evolution of tap dance everywhere. His contributions and style still inspire. This retrospective, performed by children and adults, will inform as much as it entertains.

3:15pm Elegba Folklore Society. The **Society's performers** will offer ***African Dance, Music and the Oral Tradition***. These dancers, percussive and melodic musicians, singers and masquerade share the performance traditions of the Manding cosmology of West Africa to spur an evolving understanding of the cultural and historical underpinnings of the dance and its music while showing its relationship to the United States. Further, audiences develop an appreciation for the dynamic nature and contemporary influence of this timeless art form. They will introduce this concert with a processional through the house where the leaders of **The Nia Sessions** join to greet the audience and present an overview of each session.

4:00pm The Nia Sessions and Watoto Kwanzaa Begin. Included are Reiki Master, Richard C. Yates and others of ***The Joyce M. Branch Healing Place*** – health maintenance alternatives, ***Trading with Africa*** with Ghanaian international trade expert, Bismark Agbemble, ***Numerology's Spiritual Insights*** with Bruce Tyson, and ***Why You Need a Doula*** with Birth in Color RVA. The Kwanzaa holiday is based on the concepts of harvest as an essential and galvanizing time in African societies. **Watoto Kwanzaa** activities include art making and the cultural lesson, ***Red, Black and Greens*** as facilitated by Duron Chavis of RVA Beautiful. **The Nia Sessions** will be ongoing from 3:00p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

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4:30pm Dr. Runoko Rashidi Speaks. An anthropologist and historian with a keen focus on the global African presence — the presence of African people outside of Africa before and after enslavement. He is the author or editor of eighteen books. Some titles include *My Global Journeys in Search of the African Presence*, *Assata-Garvey and Me: A Global African Journey for Children*, *Black Star: The African Presence in Early Europe*, *African Star over Asia: The Black Presence in the East* and *Uncovering the African Past: The Ivan Van Sertima Papers*. His research, lectures and tours take him around the world to uncover the influences of African people everywhere, and he has worked with and under some of the most distinguished scholars of our generation like Ivan Van Sertima, John Henrik Clarke, Asa G. Hilliard, Edward Scobie, John G. Jackson, Jan Carew and Yosef ben-Jochannan. He is currently pursuing a major work on the African presence in the museums of the world.

5:30pm Tunji Reggae Band. Since 1981, The Tunji Band has been a staple provider of reggae music. The band has performed widely with Ziggy Marley, Gregory Isaacs, Third World, Steele Pulse, The Wailers and Burning Spear, among others. Audiences will be treated with songs of revolution, peace, love and unity that deliver a tasteful selection of original music and covered standards.

6:45pm OSHUN. This Hip-Hop / Soul duo is the sonic manifestation of AfroFuturism. Using digital and acoustic sounds, heavy drums and bass and ambient harmonic textures, OSHUN connects with the spirit of the ancestors to manifest a sweeter tomorrow for us all. Since the release of their debut mixtape ASASE YAA in 2015 and followed by Bittersweet Vol. 1, OSHUN has amassed a social following of over 150k people between Youtube ([youtube.com/oshun](https://www.youtube.com/oshun)), Instagram (@oshun), and Facebook ([facebook.com/oshuniverse](https://www.facebook.com/oshuniverse)). They have enjoyed media attention in publications like Paper Magazine, Rolling Stone, The FADER, Viceland, Huffington Post, NPR, Essence and Vogue among others. While still students at NYU, OSHUN toured the U.S. and Brazil. Breaking away from the studio and recording Bittersweet Vol. 2, OSHUN's appearance at the **2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** is their first in Richmond.

8:00 p.m. Festival Closes.

Advance tickets for the **2019 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** are \$6, general admission, \$5 for students, 12 - 18 and \$5 for seniors, 65 +. At the door tickets are \$7, general admission, \$6 for students, 12 - 18 and \$6 for seniors, 65 +. Tickets for groups (at least 10 persons) are \$5. Group tickets must be purchased in advance only. Single advance tickets can be purchased online at <http://efsinc.org> or at the Eleggba Folklore Society's Cultural Center, 101 East Broad Street in Richmond, VA, 804.644.3900, where group tickets are also available. Admission is free for children under 12.

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Elegba Folklore Society, *Richmond's Cultural Ambassador*, presents the **Capital City Kwanzaa Festival**. The Society is a not-for-profit tax-exempt organization that offers services in cultural arts programming and communications. These include planning and managing special events and programs, organizing exhibitions of art and artifacts, presenting programs in dance theatre and music and guiding cultural history tours. Elegba is an *Oriṣa* (ohr-REE-shah) or deity from the Yoruba tradition of West Africa who opens the roads. The Elegba Folklore Society hopes this event and each of its programs are road-opening experiences for its audiences.

Elegba Folklore Society thanks its program partners including the City of Richmond, Dominion, Wells Fargo, Radio One Richmond and CBS 6. CultureWorks and the Arts and Cultural Funding Consortium: Richmond, Henrico, Hanover partially support Elegba Folklore Society.

A HISTORY OF THE FESTIVAL

Janine Yvette Bell, the founder and artistic director of the Elegba Folklore Society, Inc. and the festival's coordinator, has produced annual Kwanzaa programs in Richmond since 1986. **The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival was first presented in 1990. Because of this programming, observance of the Kwanzaa holiday has consistently increased in Richmond and surrounding areas.** The festival provides a particular contemporary significance against the backdrop of Richmond's history. Richmond, a center of the trade of enslaved Africans, is known as the capital of the Confederacy *and* the "birthplace of black entrepreneurship." The recognition of Kwanzaa as a cultural mediator of this history and the embracing of its concepts is evident not only in the festival's attendance, but also in the volume of requests for information and assistance from schools, churches and community groups.

The event has **featured such notables** as Kwanzaa's national creator, professor, author and lecturer, Dr. Maulana Karenga, activist Dick Gregory, TV journalist/entrepreneur, Tony Brown, Melba Moore, television star, the late Helen Martin, The Last Poets, Dr. Leonard Jeffries, Professor James Small, Bilal, Ms. Iyanla Vanzant, Mr. Anthony T. Browder, Professor Griff, Runoko Rashidi, Phil Valentine, the late Ruby Dee and former Governor L. Douglas Wilder, among others. **Nationally**, the Capital City Kwanzaa **Festival has received attention** on the Food Network, in Chicago's Black Gold magazine, Bandele's Guide to African American Festivals and Events (Washington), American Visions, the magazine of Afro-American Culture (Washington), Upscale, The Magazine for the Success-Oriented (Atlanta), Black Enterprise (New York), which recommended this event with Kwanzaa festivities in Los Angeles, New York and Philadelphia and Essence magazine. A growing percentage of attendees travel from other cities and states. **The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival helps to make Richmond and Virginia tourist destinations. It is the largest event of its kind in Virginia and one of the largest on the East Coast.**

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ABOUT ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

The festival is presented by Richmond's Cultural Ambassador, **Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.** a not-for-profit organization, offering a variety of services in cultural arts programming. From the Yoruba tradition of West Africa, *Elegba* is an *Orisa*, or intercessor, who opens the road, bringing clarity out of confusion. Elegba Folklore Society's programs are to provide road-opening experiences for the participants. In addition to events planning/program development and performances, the organization presents exhibitions of art and artifacts and guides cultural history tours.

ABOUT KWANZAA

The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival embodies the principles of the Kwanzaa holiday. Kwanzaa, a seven-day holiday, is a family and community strengthening observance based on traditional African harvest festivals. The word Kwanzaa comes from the Swahili phrase "matunda ya kwanzaa" (mah-TOON-dah ya KWAHN-zah) which means "first fruits of the harvest." Celebrated by an estimated 28 million people December 26 - January 1, Kwanzaa is a time of thanksgiving for the accomplishments (or the fruits of our labor) of the year ending while projecting new growth into the year ahead. For African Americans, it is a time for reaffirming the holistic value system of African heritage, for paying homage to ancestors and elders. It is also a time for enjoying the blessings of the children while preparing them for the future.

The Nguzo Saba (n-GOO-soh SAH-bah), or seven principles, derived from Dr. Karenga's Kawaida philosophy, provides the foundation for the Kwanzaa holiday. They are: 12/26 - Umoja (Unity); 12/27 - Kujichagulia (Self-Determination); 12/28 - Ujima (Collective Work & Responsibility); 12/29 - Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics); 12/30 - Nia (Purpose); 12/31 - Kuumba (Creativity); 1/1 - Imani (Faith).

According to Dr. Maulana Karenga (mah - OO - lah - nah kah-RING - gah), the creator of Kwanzaa, Kawaida philosophy is built around:

- 1) An ingathering of the people,
- 2) A reverence for the creator and creation as it applies to nature and humanity,
- 3) A commemoration of the past — history, heroes and heritage,
- 4) A commitment to our highest ideals, and
- 5) A celebration of the good.

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TICKET OUTLETS

Downtown

Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center
101 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia
804/644-3900

Group Tickets and Advance General Admission.

Advance:	General Admission	\$6
	Students, 12 – 18	\$5
	Seniors, 65+	\$5
	Children under 12	Free

	Groups (10 or more)	\$5
	Children under 12	Free

Online Same prices plus convenience fee of \$1

<http://efsinc.org>

Box Office (Day of Show, Only)

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School
1000 Mosby Street, Richmond, VA 23223

	General Admission	\$7
	Students, 12 – 18	\$6
	Seniors, 65+	\$6
	Children under 12	Free

No Group Sales.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Special rates at Quality Inn Central
3207 N Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23230
804/359-9441

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