



2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival

FACT SHEET

What	2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival <i>Attended (Physically) by families from Baltimore, MD to Durham, NC (& Beyond)</i>
When	Streaming Nightly, December 26, 2020 - January 1, 2021, 7:00p
Where	www.efsinc.org
Who	Presented by <u>E</u>legba Folklore Society, Inc. Richmond, Virginia's Cultural Ambassador <i>A Richmond-based not-for-profit cultural arts and education organization.</i> With City of Richmond, Dominion, Wells Fargo and CBS 6 along with CultureWorks and the Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium
Features	Performances, Speakers, The African Market, Nia Sessions, Watoto Kwanzaa (for children), The Healing Place
Cost	In Lieu of Tickets Donations Requested & Cheerfully Accepted CashApp \$efs21
Donations	In Advance or During the Festival's Nightly Stream
Details	<u>E</u> legba Folklore Society's Cultural Center 101 E. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219, 804/644-3900 http://efsinc.org story1@efsinc.org
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Images Included.

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For Immediate Release

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Date: December 11, 2020

2020 CAPITAL CITY KWANZAA FESTIVAL STREAMS NIGHTLY DECEMBER 26 - JANUARY 1

Richmond, VA • Elegba Folklore Society, *Richmond's Cultural Ambassador*, will present the **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** in a **virtual edition**. Instead of the usual one-day in-person event, the **virtual edition** will stream nightly, **Saturday, December 26 - Friday, January 1st at 7:00 p.m.** Attendees can visit www.efsinc.org to join.

The **2020 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 54th year.

The festival's **nightly features** are alive alternatively with *music, dance* and message presented to strengthen families and galvanize the community. *The African Market* will be open with food and shopping. Children are invited to *Watoto Kwanzaa*, and the *Nia Sessions* engage holiday reflections in this nationally recognized 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 each evening. 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 **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival's thematic focus** is **"Love & Endurance."** which acknowledges the natural tendencies of African people.

While some of what 2020 has dramatically revealed occurred in an organic, real-time environment, much as been absorbed virtually. And, while this event is indeed virtual because we cannot gather in person, the **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** intends to embrace people in **"Love & Endurance,"** as a reminder and a prophecy.

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The Nia Sessions are ongoing workshops 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." Topics include *Creativity as Medicine*, *African Spirituality & the Restoration of Greatness* and *Engaging Your Creative Self*. **The African Market** of cultural merchandise is open each day, and African cuisine from Senegal is featured at the *Karamu*, or feast, on the sixth day of Kuumba. **Watoto Kwanzaa's** activities for children include art making and a story. The festival's **performers** are **Toby Foyeh and Orchestra Africa**, **Cheick Hamala Diabate**, **Maimouna Youssef** and, of course, **Elegba Folklore Society**.

Festival events will occur as follows:

Saturday, 12/26, 7p • UMOJA ••• UNITY

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. **Elegba Folklore Society's** president and artistic director gives an **overview of the meaning of Kwanzaa** — its philosophy and the *Nguzo Saba*. Attendees can shop in **The African Market**, then, in the spirit of Umoja, Nigeria's **Toby Foyeh and Orchestra Africa** perform.

Sunday, 12/27, 7p • KUJICHAGULIA ••• SELF DETERMINATION

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. Attendees can shop in **The African Market**, then **Elegba Folklore Society's performers** present African dance and music. The **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** welcomes **North Carolina's Poet Laureate, Jaki Shelton Green**, in this **Nia Session**, *Creativity as Medicine* and a source for Kujichagulia, self determination. Then, attendees can meditate to manifest Kujichagulia in **The Healing Place with Shanna Latia's** Sound Bowl Healing.

Monday, 12/28, 7p • UJIMA ••• COLLECTIVE WORK & RESPONSIBILITY

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. The focus of Ujima is on children as the African proverb reminds us, It Takes a Village to Raise a Child. A materials list posted on the Society's social media channels and website will prepare youthful crafters at **Watoto Kwanzaa** for *Your AfroFuturistic Self*. Then, gather around for the story, *Habari Gani? What's the News? A Kwanzaa Story*. Attendees can also take in some shopping in **The African Market**.

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Tuesday, 12/29, 7p • UJAMAA ••• COOPERATIVE ECONOMICS

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. Next, the **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** takes attendees to visit at Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center in the downtown RVA Arts District and to **The African Market** before heading to a journey of life and music in Mali.

Wednesday, 12/30, 7p • NIA ••• PURPOSE

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. Explorations of AfroFuturism continue through the **House of Bhagat's Seven Principles of Kwanzaa**. Then, **His Royal Majesty Oba Adefunmi** and **Araba Oluwo Olatunji Somorin** share their thoughts about spiritual traditions and AfroFuturism in the **Nia Session, African Spirituality & the Restoration of Greatness**. Next, attendees can shop in **The African Market** before joining a performance by Grammy-nominated singer, songwriter and activist, **Maimouna Youssef**, aka Mumu Fresh.

Thursday, 12/31, 7p • KUUMBA ••• CREATIVITY

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. Next, the **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** honors the **Mending Walls** project in its practice of Kuumba, then attendees can spend time with visual and literary artist **Iyaba Mandingo** as he facilitates the **Nia Session, Engaging your Creativity**. After a chance to shop in **The African Market**, the **Karamu**, or feast, begins when **Senegalese chef, Awa Thiam**, (pronounced cham) and her family bring *Thieboudienne*, the palatable fish and rice dish and the Senegalese drink, *Bissap*, to the festival. With plates in hand people can enjoy a performance by Mali's Cheick Hamala Diabate.

Friday, 01/01, 7p • IMANI ••• FAITH

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. Representatives of community organizations and efforts that personify this principle will assist. After a visit to the **The African Market**, the **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival's** keynote speaker, **Professor Kaba Kamene** shares his thoughts on the principle, *Imani*, and the depth of the meaning of *Kwanzaa*. Finally, **Elegba Folklore Society's performers** present another performance of African dance and music with guest dancers, Christine Wyatt and Meoleaeke Jones. This piece, along with each day's celebration, evokes the *festival's theme*, "**Love & Endurance**." In acknowledging the natural tendencies of African people, the **2020 Capital City Kwanzaa Festival** intends to embrace people in "**Love & Endurance**," as a reminder and a prophecy. We wish all well on this first day of what we hope is truly new year.

Festival Closes.

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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 *Orisa* (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, and CBS 6. CultureWorks and the Arts and Cultural Funding Consortium: Richmond and 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, *Banделе'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 Kawaiida 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, Kawaiida 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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