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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Heart of the City Festival Returns to Rahway, Showcasing Local Black and Brown Talent

RAHWAY, NJ (July 16, 2024) – The 2024 Heart of the City Festival is set to captivate the Rahway community once again. Mayor Raymond A. Giacobbe and the Rahway City Council invite all to attend the fourth edition of the festival on Saturday, August 3, from 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Festivities will be centered at the corner of Irving St. & E. Cherry St.

Under the coordination of Rahway local, Parisse Dawkins, the Heart of the City Festival aims to shine a spotlight on the immense talent of the local Black and Brown community in the New Jersey area, with a special emphasis on Rahway creatives.

“I founded the Heart of the City Festival with the mission to uplift and celebrate local Black and brown creatives. As we enter Heart of the City’s fourth year, we’re bringing optimism to the forefront and curating a space filled with hope, confidence, and positivity,” **said founder Parisse Dawkins**. “It’s always been a mission of mine to uplift and contribute to the growth of arts here in Rahway, New Jersey. I’m so honored to once again partner with The City of Rahway to bring this event to fruition.”

Established in 2021, Heart of the City promises an array of immersive family-friendly activities. Attendees can look forward to a variety of vendors, small businesses, and talented artists showcasing their unique creations. This year’s event will feature captivating performances by local musicians, music by a live DJ, and an interactive art installation that allows festivalgoers to enjoy a photoshoot moment.

With this year’s theme being 'Optimism', the Heart of the City Festival seeks to support creative talents by curating a space filled with hope, confidence, and positivity with the local community.

“Optimism to me is being bold enough to stand in the present and welcome the future with open arms. I am so proud to be a part of the fourth year of this event,” **said artist Kaishon Way**. “With this [year’s] installation, I hope to inspire others to be bold the same way the Black and brown creators within Rahway and the Heart of the City Festival have inspired me.”

To foster a sense of unity and expression, a community art project will be available for all to participate in and unleash their creativity.

“This year’s Heart of the City Festival embodies the spirit of optimism, bringing together our community to celebrate diversity and reinvest in the hope of what is yet to come,” **said Mayor Raymond A. Giacobbe**. “The City Council and I invite everyone to join us in uplifting our local artists, enjoying family-friendly activities, and fostering a sense of unity found only here, in our great City of Rahway.”

Heart of the City Festival is a free event that welcomes people of all ages. Attendees are encouraged to RSVP through Eventbrite to be entered into a raffle to win Heart of the City Festival merchandise. To sign up, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/heart-of-the-city-festival-2024-tickets-939028558697>.

In the event of inclement weather, a rain date is scheduled for Saturday, August 10. For more information and updates, please contact the Rahway Recreation Center at (732) 669-3600.

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