



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

News Release

Montgomery County to Host 23rd Annual Juneteenth Celebration with Music and Theatrical Performances, Movie, Barbecue Dinner and African American Living Legend Awards

For Immediate Release: Monday, June 3, 2019

Montgomery County's 23rd Annual Juneteenth Celebration will be held at the BlackRock Center for the Arts located at 12901 Town Commons Drive in Germantown on Saturday June 15.

The event will feature the traditional events, which include the award recognition ceremony and Juneteenth barbecue dinner. New this year, the festivities will include an uplifting line-up of musical and theatrical entertainment, for the whole family, in both inside and on the lawn of the arts center.

The Montgomery County Office of Human Rights and the County Executive's African American Advisory Group are coordinating the program with special sponsorship from BlackRock Center for the Arts which commemorates the 154th anniversary of the events of June 19, 1865. On that day, Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to take possession of the state and enforce the emancipation of its enslaved persons. The event today is known as Juneteenth and is celebrated widely across the United States.

This year's theme *Sing of the Harmony of Liberty* recollects the African American struggle with a voice of praise and hope of freedom for all.

Schedule of events:

- 3:30 p.m. Doors Open

- 4 p.m. Reconciliation or Human Right: Conflicting Views of the Civil War" presented by Dr. Alonzo Smith, retired professional at Montgomery College and a community activist.

- 4:30 p.m. County Executive Marc Elrich will host the African American Living Legend Awards, to honor distinguished individuals who are living legends in Montgomery County and have helped shape the cultural heritage of the African American community. The

honorees have dedicated their lives to service and excellence, with accomplishments in such as business, health, media, sports, educations, law, ministry, community organizations, medicine or the arts.

The Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological & Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO) students of the Montgomery County NAACP Branch will perform as part of the presentation.

- 6 p.m. Traditional Barbecue dinner with all the "fix-ins."
- 7 p.m. Harriet Tubman's Road to Freedom, written and directed by Percy Thomas featuring Ms. Eunice L. Seagraves in a powerful one-woman show about the abolitionist, nurse, soldier, spy and conductor of the Underground Railroad.
- 8:30 p.m. Screening of the feature film "Mudbound," a hard-hitting saga of the often abused life of black tenant farmers during the turbulent 40's wanting a fair opportunity to live and raise a family.

Other musical performances will include the band Rags playing the Blues and R&B and Ronnie and Family from the famed Ohio Players with gospel and soul and beginning at 6:45 pm. Bring lawn chairs for the musical performances on the lawn.

"The end of slavery not only meant freedom for a people, it meant freedom for a nation, however, nothing is guaranteed; as we saw social justice and equality threatened and snatched away in the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia as acts of hate was broadcast across the world," said Office of Human Rights Director James Stowe. "This is a must attend program for every freedom-loving member of our community....don't just come alone; bring your entire family."

For more information, or to register for the event call James Stowe at the Office of Human Rights at 240-888-5502 or 240-777-8490.

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