



New England BIPOC Fest Moves to Strawbery Banke Museum for 2024 Celebration

Portsmouth, NH (March 4, 2024) - The New England BIPOC Fest, a celebration of diversity and the Seacoast's Black and Indigenous people of color, is thrilled to announce its relocation to the historic grounds of Strawbery Banke Museum on August 18, 2024. This annual event, founded by David Vargas, owner of Vida Cantina, Evan Mallett, owner of Black Trumpet, and Joanna Kelley, owner of Cup of Joe Café & Bar, has grown exponentially since its inception and has now found a new home to accommodate its expanding reach.

This year, the festival takes on new significance as it relocates to the picturesque setting of Strawbery Banke Museum, known for its dedication to preserving and sharing the rich history of the Portsmouth area.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support we've received from the community over the years, but it's clear that the event has outgrown its original location," said Evan Mallett, co-founder of the New England BIPOC Fest. "Moving New England BIPOC Fest to Strawbery Banke not only offers us the space we need to expand but also provides a historic backdrop that enhances the cultural significance of the festival."

Joanna Kelley, Portsmouth's assistant mayor, and Strawbery Banke Museum Trustee, emphasizes the importance of this move, stating, "Bringing the New England BIPOC Fest to Strawbery Banke aligns with our mission of creating inclusive spaces that honor the diversity of our community's history. By hosting this event at such a historically significant venue, we are highlighting the contributions of Black and Indigenous people of color to our region's past, present, and future."

Organized by Cultivate, a 501c3 nonprofit organization founded in 2023, and Marie Collins, Cultivate Treasurer and UNH Ph.D. Candidate, the New England BIPOC Fest is dedicated to furthering the mission of cultivating conversations and collective action about the important threads of equity and social justice that hold us all together.

The 2024 New England BIPOC Fest promises to be a day filled with music, art, food, and community connections, showcasing the talents and contributions of BIPOC individuals in the Seacoast area. Attendees can look forward to a diverse lineup of performers, artisans, and food vendors, as well as interactive workshops and discussions promoting dialogue and education.

Additionally, attendees are encouraged to tour Strawberry Banke Museum's nearly 10 acres, historic houses, and heirloom gardens free of charge during the event.

“Hosting the New England BIPOC Fest is a natural extension of our ongoing efforts to further Strawberry Banke’s dedication to inclusivity and equity,” said Linnea Grim, Strawberry Banke President and CEO, Thomas W. Haas Endowed Chair. “We're delighted to announce that museum admission will be free for all attendees on Sunday, August 18, offering individuals the opportunity to tour the historic buildings and see initiatives related to Abenaki and Black history.”

As preparations for the festival are underway, organizers are seeking sponsors to help offset the costs of holding this impactful event. Sponsorship levels and opportunities are available at newenglandbipocfest.com/sponsorships.

For more information about the New England BIPOC Fest and to stay updated on event details, visit newenglandbipocfest.com.

About New England BIPOC Fest:

The New England BIPOC Fest is an annual celebration of diversity and culture, founded by David Vargas, Evan Mallett, and Joanna Kelley. The festival aims to create a space where Black, Indigenous, and people of color in the Seacoast region can come together to showcase their talents, share their stories, and build community connections. For more information, visit newenglandbipocfest.com

About Strawberry Banke Museum:

Strawberry Banke Museum, in the heart of downtown Portsmouth, NH, is a 10-acre history museum interpreting over 300 years of history, from Indigenous history to the present day, through historical houses on their original foundations, heirloom gardens, traditional crafts, and costumed roleplayers who share the stories of the families who lived in the authentic waterfront neighborhood of Puddle Dock. The Museum welcomes visitors, members, schoolchildren, and volunteers for daily programs, exhibits, skating, and signature special events throughout the year. Strawberry Banke Museum is funded in part by grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation; the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts & National Endowment for the Arts; the Institute of Museum and Library Services; the National Endowment for the Humanities: Democracy Demands Wisdom; the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment

Program. For more information and a complete calendar of events, please visit StrawberyBanke.org.