



SILICON VALLEY **BLACK** JOURNAL

OUR STORIES · OUR VOICES · ON OUR TERMS



TABIA AFRICAN AMERICAN
THEATRE ENSEMBLE



BAY AREA JAZZ SOCIETY'S
GUMBO BAND

IT IS BECAUSE
OF FAMILY
THAT WE
PERSEVERE. IT
IS BECAUSE
OF FAMILY
THAT WE
CONTINUE TO
FIGHT. AND IT
IS BECAUSE
OF FAMILY
THAT WE
THRIVE AND
FIND SUCCESS
AND PEACE.

Jahmal Williams

Celebrating Black Family Day: A Vibrant Tapestry of Joy and Culture in Downtown San José

REPORT & PHOTOS BY CHINEDU NWOFFIAH

If you strolled through downtown San Jose on the radiant and sun-kissed Saturday, February 24th, you couldn't have missed the kaleidoscope of rich African colors, the rhythmic beats of drums, the enchanting tunes of Caribbean steel drums, the soul-stirring voices of virtuoso singers, and the infectious laughter of both young and old coming together to celebrate Black Joy.

This jubilant gathering is none other than the annual ritual known as Black Family Day. Now in its sixth year, this event, held on the last Saturday of February, stands as a cornerstone celebration of Black History Month in Santa Clara County, honoring African and African ancestry health, heritage, and wellness.



JAHMAL WILLIAMS
CO-LEAD, BLKC



MATT MAHAN
MAYOR, CITY OF SAN JOSE



SUSAN ELLENBERG
PRESIDENT, SCC BOS

Jahmal Williams, co-lead of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet of Silicon Valley (BLKC), one of the presenting organizations, shared, "Every February, we unite as an African/African Ancestry community to revel in the wealth of experiences, accomplishments, beauty, uniqueness, and rich history of the African Diaspora." He emphasized that the month serves not only as a call to action to address community disparities but also as a tribute to the resilience and perseverance that define the Black experience.

This year's event, hailed as a resounding success, boasted over 60 vendors and exhibitors, a plethora of family activities, 10 captivating stage performances, and a feast for all attendees. Haley, a tech executive and Santa Clara resident, described the experience as liberating and joyful, declaring, "My soul needs a space where I can celebrate my heritage and feel affirmed. This is the place!"

Distinguished public officials, including San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan and Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors President Susan Ellenberg, graced the occasion.

Mayor Mahan commended the organizers for bringing such a beautiful celebration to the city, pledging his support for a more just and equitable community. Supervisor Ellenberg, a longtime ally of the event, expressed gratitude for the vibrant celebration and promised ongoing support for the African and African ancestry community.





The festivities commenced with a land acknowledgment by a Muwekma Ohlone Tribe elder, followed by 16-year-old vocalist Amber Marie Carroll's soul-stirring rendition of the African American Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." The Bay Area Jazz Society's Gumbo Band then led a joyous New Orleans-style Second Line parade, setting the stage for performances throughout the day, featuring talents such as the Tabia African American Theater Ensemble, Caribbean Steeldrum Band, comic and mom Whitney Henry, guitarist and vocalist duo Elie Mabanza and Mak Nova, and the Bible Way Christian Center's Praise Group.

The well-curated "market alley" showcased a diverse array of products and services by local businesses, community nonprofits, and government agencies. Attendees browsed through handmade jewelry, African clothing, home decor, books, and received information on vital topics like voter registration, health and wellness, childcare, and social justice awareness. Free healthy food from local businesses, O'Goodys Catering and Jubba Somali Restaurant, was enjoyed by all, complemented by water generously donated by Boxed Water.



Chike Nwoffiah, founder and executive director of the Silicon Valley African Film Festival and event producer, expressed satisfaction with this year's success and promised an even grander affair next year. His vision is to elevate Black Family Day into a major marquee event in Silicon Valley.

First-time attendee Ms. Philipps succinctly captured the essence of the day, stating, "The joy, the music, the representation, and the pure essence of Black excellence were amazing!"

Black Family Day is produced by Silicon Valley African Film Festival and presented by Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet (BLKC) of Silicon Valley in partnership with the Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

Black Family Day 2025 will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2025. For more information, visit the event website at: www.blackfamilydaysv.com or send an email to office@blackfamilydaysv.com

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