

3rd EyE Unlimited Launches “Your New Bedford” on Juneteenth; Virtual pop-up events to foster bonds between downtown and neighborhoods

On Friday, June 19th – “Juneteenth” – the youth empowerment organization 3rd EyE Unlimited launches “Your New Bedford”, a monthly pop-up event featuring music, dance, visual arts, education and a community corner for dialogue about local needs and challenges.

The event runs from 6 to 9 p.m. and will be live-streamed on 3rd EyE’s Facebook page and YouTube Channel. “Your New Bedford” is a collaboration between 3rd EyE, which uses the five pillars of hip hop to foster young people’s creative capacities, and community partners attuned to the needs and resources of specific neighborhoods or populations.

Our partner for the first event is Hatch Street Studios, New Bedford’s largest community of visual and performing artists housed in two adjoining historic mill buildings in the city’s North End. The project is designed to deepen connections between neighborhoods and downtown, build partnerships between cultural organizations and community groups, and strengthen the creative economy and arts ecosystem.



“It is both coincidental and highly appropriate that our first ‘Your New Bedford’ event falls on Juneteenth – the day in 1865 that enslaved people in Texas learned about the Emancipation Proclamation”, noted project manager Peter Lonelle Walker, a local businessperson and community activist. “This gives us a rich opportunity to connect the history of racial injustice with the youth-led social protest movement unfolding around us.”

This Friday’s event will intersperse performances by young artists active in local Black Lives Matter initiatives, with live painting, a studio tour and live music by Hatch Street artists, and a special guest appearance by New Bedford’s Poet Laureate Patricia Gomes. Other featured artists include Lynea Gilreath, a spoken word artist and leader of local youth protests, dancer Momo (Monique) Hobson, painter Devin McLaughlin and glass mural designer Tracy Silva Barbosa.

The event’s educational component will be rounded out by the New Bedford Historical Society and Groundworks South Coast. The event will be co-hosted by local break dancing legend C.J. “JunnYahh” Burnett and health and wellness promoter Shianne Costa.

“Your New Bedford” demonstrates that New Bedford’s arts scene is more than its rich whaling and abolitionist histories – it is also a hothouse for inclusive and cutting-edge youth-

oriented culture. "A thriving community is more than just what's seen on the surface, it's also what is not immediately visible," said Walker.

"The New Bedford that visitors see, particularly in our revitalized historic downtown, is fueled by the influence, expression and culture of the communities and neighborhoods that lie outside the tourist map." Shianne Costa, the evening's co-host, adds, "It's harder to connect right now, and our goal is to use the virtual space to create a platform that empowers and showcases our communities and neighborhoods, celebrating the contributions we and our neighbors have made and will continue to make."

Your New Bedford is the pilot project of the Art is Everywhere initiative, established by the Barr Foundation and Mass Development to accelerate arts-based development.