

Melanin in May® Festival Continues Mission to Rebuild Black Communities Through Art, Culture, and Commerce

A Free Festival with a Purpose—Uplifting Black-Owned Businesses, Artists, and Communities Through Culture, Commerce, and Collective Empowerment

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, UNITED STATES, May 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the city of Indianapolis prepares for the 2025 [Melanin in May®](#) Festival, it's clear this isn't just another street fair or cultural gathering—it's a movement rooted in purpose. More than a celebration of African American culture, Melanin in May stands as a powerful declaration of self-determination, collective economics, and community healing. It is a festival driven not by profit, but by progress—designed to help rebuild Black communities and strengthen the financial foundations of Black-owned businesses in Indianapolis and beyond.

Created by community activist and cultural curator [Dominic Dorsey](#), the festival evolved out of a deep desire to reclaim space and economic opportunity for Black creatives, entrepreneurs, and families in the city. The origins trace back to the Spring Black Business Bazaar, where innovative programming such as the Afrocentric ArtWalk and the [Food Truck Battle Royale](#) made their debut. Although the COVID-19 pandemic put the initiative on pause, Dorsey never let go of the vision. Revived and reimagined through events like Blacktoberfest, this vision now manifests more fully than ever in Melanin in May.

"Our mission has always been to create intentionally Black spaces for education, empowerment, and economic engagement," says Dorsey. "We don't just want festivals—we want infrastructure. We want to stimulate the ecosystem for Black businesses and artists to thrive sustainably. Melanin in May is one of the ways we do that."

Since its formal inception, the Melanin in May® Festival has blossomed into a multi-dimensional experience featuring over 150 Black-owned vendors, dozens of performers, and community-



backed partnerships that fuel its continued growth. Thanks to sponsors like Fathers and Families Center and Patient Hands Home Care, LLC, admission remains entirely free to the public—removing financial barriers and welcoming all people to celebrate the excellence and entrepreneurial spirit of the Black community.

This year's festival, taking place Saturday, May 24, 2025 from 11am to 5pm at CAFE (8902 E 38th St, Indianapolis), will include headlining performances from Okara Imani and The Call, Taleb Fazle and The Brothers Footman, T.G.I.Free (Apollo Freeman), Weirido Gang, Kyndl, Kiana Flowers, and many more—all hosted from the Black Onyx Management SoundStage. There will also be a special high-energy set from Power P Bounce & Co., bringing the beats to the heart of the city.

Art takes center stage once again with the Afrocentric ArtWalk, an open-air exhibition of cultural expression and artistic storytelling. Featuring artists like Dana P. Smith, Billy Hoodoo, Jessica LoveJoy, and Kierria Kiki Taylor, the exhibition is a powerful narrative of the African American experience—unapologetic and unfiltered.

One of the festival's hallmark attractions, the 4th Annual Black-Owned Food Truck Battle Royale, will also return. This juried culinary competition pits some of Indianapolis's finest Black-owned food trucks against one another for the crown of best in the city. Past champions such as House of SoulRollz and Good Vegan/Bad Vegan return alongside newcomers like La Familia Food Truck, Huge Impact Restaurant, and GALS Fresh Fish LLC, providing festivalgoers with an unforgettable taste of Black culinary excellence.

But perhaps the most impactful element of Melanin in May[®] lies in its PMPHASE Vendor Marketplace, featuring over 150 Black-owned businesses offering everything from beauty products and custom merchandise to education, home décor, and wellness services. It is here that commerce meets culture—and where every dollar spent directly supports Black entrepreneurship.

Despite its vibrant music, delicious food, and impressive art, Melanin in May[®] is not designed to be just an event—it is part of a long-term strategy to rebuild trust, opportunities, and prosperity within African American communities. And it doesn't stop in May. Dorsey and his team have eyes on scaling up with four major annual events—including Daptoberfest[®], EightDown[™] Festival, and the Black Business Bazaar. With each event, the goal remains the same: to uplift, support, and invest in Black futures.

To support this transformative initiative, individuals, businesses, and organizations are encouraged to donate, sponsor, or volunteer. Every contribution ensures that admission remains free and that the festival can continue offering a platform for education, entrepreneurship, and the celebration of Black excellence.

For more information, to view the full lineup, or to support the mission, visit www.melanininmay.com.

Contact:

Melanin in May Festival

Email: info@melanininmay.com

Jacquie Murrell

E.G.O. Entertainment Network

+1 331-465-4279

info@egoentertainmentnet.com

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