2026 Michigan Heritage Rodeo Returns to Lansing with Rodeo Competition, Western Heritage and Cultural Celebration

Three-day event honoring the legacy of cowgirls and cowboys of color will take place November 20–22 at the Farm Bureau Pavilion at Michigan State University.



The Michigan Heritage Rodeo Returning to Lansing MI, November 2026

LANSING, MI, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The Michigan Heritage Rodeo: A Salute to Cowgirls and Cowboys of Color will return to the Farm Bureau Pavilion at Michigan State University, November 20–22, 2026, for a three-day celebration of professional rodeo, American Western heritage, culture and community.

More than 5,500 attendees are expected for the 2026 event, which will welcome professional rodeo contestants from across the country for an action-packed weekend of competition while bringing national attention to the stories and contributions of cowgirls, cowboys and Western trailblazers of color.

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>
> *Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, CEO of StableCommunities Foundation*

The rodeo will feature competition in bull riding, barrel racing, tie-down roping, ranch bronc riding, relay racing and additional rodeo events, alongside historical presentations, live entertainment, youth and adult performers, vendors, entrepreneurs and community organizations.

More Competition. More Community. A Bigger 2026 Experience.

New and expanded elements for 2026 will make this year's Michigan Heritage Rodeo one of its most ambitious presentations to date.

The competition field will expand with more contestants participating across individual rodeo categories, accompanied by the introduction of new Rodeo Trifecta awards. The weekend will also feature greater participation from local residents and performers, including some of Lansing's leading gospel talent, further connecting the national rodeo experience with the community that hosts it.

The rodeo grounds will also feature an expanded marketplace and community experience, including adult vendors, youth entrepreneurs and community-resource organizations, giving families opportunities to shop, connect with local businesses and discover resources serving children, students, families and senior citizens.

At the heart of the Michigan Heritage Rodeo, however, is a story much larger than competition.

Although the contributions of Black cowboys, cowgirls and other people of color have often received limited attention in traditional narratives of the American West, their influence is inseparable from the history of ranching, horsemanship, agriculture and Western expansion.

The Michigan Heritage Rodeo was created to help preserve and share that legacy; honoring the men and women, past and present, whose courage, skill and perseverance helped shape the West while creating a place where a new generation can experience that history firsthand.

The celebration will include a historic reenactment highlighting often-unheralded Western trailblazers, cowgirls and cowboys of color, along with unique historical Western displays designed to make that history accessible to audiences of all ages.

Michigan Heritage Rodeo's broader mission also includes introducing young people, particularly youth who may have had limited exposure to horses, to the equine world and the educational and career opportunities connected to it. Earlier this year, the organization extended that mission through its Family Fun Day, creating hands-on opportunities for urban youth to experience horses and learn more about equine pathways.

StableCommunities Foundation, powered by LAFCU, continues as presenting sponsor of the Michigan Heritage Rodeo for the second year, having supported the event since its inception in 2025. "The Michigan Heritage Rodeo is powerful because it connects history to possibility," said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, CEO of StableCommunities Foundation. "It ensures the contributions of cowgirls and cowboys of color are seen and celebrated, while giving young people exposure to experiences, careers and opportunities they may never have imagined for themselves. That kind of access can change the trajectory of a life, and it is exactly why StableCommunities Foundation has been proud to stand behind this event from the beginning."

State Senator Sarah Anthony Named 2026 Grand Marshal

Michigan State Senator Sarah Anthony of Lansing will serve as the 2026 Michigan Heritage Rodeo Grand Marshal. Anthony previously served on the Ingham County Board of Commissioners and in the Michigan House of Representatives before being sworn into the Michigan Senate in January 2023. The Michigan Heritage Rodeo selected Anthony in recognition of her leadership, public service and commitment to Michigan communities.

The 2026 Honorary Committee is chaired by Desmond Ferguson, founder and CEO of Moneyball Sportswear and a Lansing native recognized for his work in business, philanthropy, youth development and community revitalization.

The Honorary Committee brings together leaders from education, business, government, media, faith communities, athletics and public service. Members include Dr. Eugene Cain, Councilperson Tamera Carter, Kellie Dean, Gregory Eaton, Anne Emmerich, Coach Mike Garland, Commissioner Myles Johnson, Calvin Jones, Attorney Takura Nyamfukudza, Rev. Stan Parker, Councilperson Trini Pehlivanoglu, Commissioner Robert Peña, Charles Thornton and Coach Jim Bibbs.

A Rodeo Built for Generations

The Michigan Heritage Rodeo is designed as more than a sporting event. It is a family-focused gathering where competition, history, entertainment, entrepreneurship and community meet under one roof. Families will be able to experience professional rodeo competition alongside cultural programming, historical exhibits, entertainment, merchandise, vendors and community resources throughout the weekend. The organization welcomes people of every generation and background to participate in an event centered on heritage, culture, positivity and community unity.

2026 MICHIGAN HERITAGE RODEO
PRESENTING SPONSOR: StableCommunities Foundation, powered by LAFCU

WHAT:
Michigan Heritage Rodeo: A Salute to Cowgirls and Cowboys of Color

WHEN:
Friday, November 20, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 21, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 22, 2026 - 3:00 p.m. matinee

WHERE:
Farm Bureau Pavilion at Michigan State University
4301 Farm Lane
Lansing, MI 48910

EXPECTED ATTENDANCE:

More than 5,500

FEATURES INCLUDE:
Professional rodeo competition, bull riding, barrel racing, tie-down roping, ranch bronc riding, relay racing, expanded contestant fields, Rodeo Trifecta awards, historical reenactments, Western heritage exhibits, gospel and community performers, youth and adult talent, vendors, youth entrepreneurs and community-resource organizations.

TICKETS & INFORMATION:
MichiganHeritageRodeo.com

Jessica Washington
ZumaSocial
email us here
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