



# PRESS RELEASE

## MAYOR'S OFFICE

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### **City announces Everybody VS COVID-19 digital Unity Festival May 29-30 to bring united front to fight against virus and promote Census response**

- Multi-week awareness campaign culminating in a 2-day online Festival.
- There will be livestreamed performances, messages from local heroes and appearances from some of Detroit's biggest stars and personalities from around the world.
- Broadcasts will take place on the City of Detroit's Facebook and Instagram pages.

The City of Detroit is partnering with fashion label Detroit VS Everybody by Tommey Walker to present the Everybody Vs COVID-19 Unity Festival on May 29th and May 30th. In efforts to continue the fight against the spread of COVID-19 and raise awareness about the importance of the 2020 Census, this two-day festival will include more than 20 musical acts and appearances including Big Sean, Mayer Hawthorne, Sada Baby, DJ D Nice, La Britney, Gmac Cash and many more Detroit grown and affiliated artists.

The Unity Festival will offer hours of in-home entertainment while also promoting safety measures of COVID-19 and encouraging Detroiters to take 10 minutes to fill out the Census, which will impact citywide services for all Detroiters. Musical Acts will be streamed live on the City's Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram starting at 7 pm each day and concluding around 10 pm.

Detroit has been a leader in implementing relief efforts and programs for residents as people across the globe are staying home and social distancing to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. The Unity Festival is a means to encourage residents to stay safe during the pandemic and urge them to complete the 2020 Census.

#### **Stay Safe, Stay Healthy and Help Detroit**

The Everybody VS COVID-19 Unity Festival will include live-streamed performances from national recording artists and local musicians and icons. Viewers can enjoy the festival from the safety of their homes without worrying about spreading or contracting the virus. Leading up to the

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launch of the festival, there will be PSA announcements from hometown influencers, social media messaging, print and sponsored advertisements, as well as continued announcements of local and national entertainers who will be joining the two-day campaign to, “Stay Safe, Stay Healthy, and Help Detroit.”

The festival will also remind Detroiters to fill out the 2020 Census. The City of Detroit loses an estimated \$5,500 per year in federal funding for every person not counted in the Census. An undercount like the one in 2010 will cost the city hundreds of millions of dollars annually. The City is aiming to boost the current 44% response rate to count all Detroiters. Links to the 2020 Census form will be shared between musical acts, and viewers will learn how an accurate count can improve their communities.

“Detroiters citywide have been doing their part to stay safe and practice social distancing,” said Eric Thomas, Chief Storyteller for the City of Detroit. “In the spirit of Detroit, we are encouraging continued collaboration by celebrating our city and culture for two important and pressing causes. Advocating for safety and awareness about COVID-19 and getting Detroiters to participate in the Census to ensure that we have all the resources we need going forward and in case we ever experience anything like this again.”

Many confirmed festival artists have ties to Detroit and represent different genres from hip hop and R&B to Motown to techno. While there is a central message of unity in support of Detroit by Detroiters, festival producers hope viewers from all over the country will tune in for the message of hope and to keep fighting for the safety of neighbors and loved ones.

A number of music institutions are chipping in to help bring the festival to fruition, from the largest to our neighborhood gems.

The Everybody VS COVID-19 Awareness Campaign and Unity Festival are made possible by generous support from our philanthropic partners including The Skillman Foundation, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, The Ford Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation, and The Knight Foundation.

“This is a time for Detroiters to stand in unity and stand tall, to show our neighbors near and far what Detroit love looks like—from the contributing artists who exemplify our city’s soul, to the difference-makers who will listen in and do their part to keep our city strong,” said Tonya Allen, president & CEO of The Skillman Foundation. “We’re proud to be part of Everybody VS COVID-19 and believe our fellow Detroiters will be too.”

“It is vital that we help each other stay safe each day, but don’t forget that completing the 2020 Census helps all Detroiters have the financial resources we need for years to come,” said Mariam Noland, president of the

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Community Foundation. “Everyone can participate. It is your right.”

“While we must embrace social distancing for our health and that of our community, we look to music and the arts to bring us together and lift our spirits, to remind us that we Detroiters can still find strength in one another,” said Wendy Lewis Jackson, managing director of Kresge’s Detroit Program. “We may be battered, we may be bruised, but we at Kresge are excited by this opportunity to remind ourselves and the world that we are far from broken.”

The festival will be free to stream online with portions of the broadcast playing on city cable channels.

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