

Sports & Entertainment

Largest gathering of Black creatives globally return to Black Footwear Forum at Detroit HBCU Pensole Lewis College of Business Sept. 21-24

A special black genius conversation with two-time Academy Award-winning costume designer, Ruth Carter, Hip-Hop Pioneer Grandmaster Caz and ribbon cutting for Pepsi x Frito-Lay Refresh and Relax Lounge at PLC

DETROIT, Sept. 11, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- The fourth annual national Black Footwear Forum (BFF) will convene at Detroit's HBCU Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design (PLC) in partnership with the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA) on September 21-24. The theme for this year is Culture is Currency: Know Your Worth.

BFF encourages collaboration to establish industry goals that focus on developing and advancing black talent. The Black Footwear Forum (BFF) exists to celebrate and safeguard the influence, leadership, and creativity provided by Black professionals in the global footwear industry. As a collective of footwear industry professionals and supporters from around the country, BFF encourages collaboration in establishing industry goals that center on developing and advancing black talent at all levels. "This is by far my favorite time of the year. I am humbled to have the support of the industry's top brands who deeply care about our culture and the Black cre-

ative talent that agreed to volunteer their time to share their knowledge," says President of Pensole Lewis College, Dr. D'Wayne Edwards. "This makes it possible to collectively uplift the culture, and remind us of our value and our industry. Every year we try to raise the bar and BFF 2023 will be a magical moment that will continue the movement." Known as "The Industry's Homecoming," the event is made possible thanks to the donations of over 30 major industry brands, including Nike, Microsoft, PepsiCo, Adidas, Target, Foot Locker, MillerKnoll, Rock, AmazonMusic and more. BFF is a community that brings together the most significant cluster of black creatives to share, educate, motivate, network, and address diversity and inclusion challenges in the design industry. "The Black Footwear Forum has evolved into a nationwide movement, shining a spotlight on the diverse and impactful contributions made by Black creatives within the American footwear industry on a daily basis," stated Matt Priest, President and CEO of the FDRA. "I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity to express the collective gratitude of the shoe industry, recognizing the invaluable contributions of everyone involved in the BFF. The vitality of the footwear industry is intricately tied to the involvement of the Black community, and as such, FDRA

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relies on the BFF to provide a vital platform for our industry colleagues to connect, learn, and celebrate together." On Thursday, 9/21, to kick off BFF, we will have the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new Pepsi x Frito-Lay Refresh and Relax Lounge at PLC designed by PLC students. The BFF opening mixer, with music sponsored by AmazonMusic, will feature Global Hip Hop Pioneer DJ and Producer DJ Clark Kent. The art competition and showcase by MARTK'D and BFF VIP dinner, sponsored by Bacardi, will end the night.

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Friday, 9/22, PLC's President and Founder Dr. D'Wayne Edwards and FDRA President & CEO Matt Priest, will kick off BFF on September 22nd with opening remarks, followed by Culture Raises US Co-Founder and Host Astor Chambers starting the empowering conversations to celebrate and analyze diversity in the design industry.

The 1st topic "Culture is Currency: Know Your Worth", addressed by keynote speaker hip-hop legend and pioneer, Grandmaster Caz, (The Sugarhill Gang, Bronx Walk of Fame and Technics DJ Hall of Fame inductee), "50 Deep: Examining the history of hip hop, design, & culture with Hidden Figures" lead by legendary fashion icon April Walker(Walker Wear) rounding out the rest of the day with Black Genius talk by Rupert Campbell (President of Adidas NA), "JEMS by PENSOLE Spotlight: Highlighting the first black-owned shoe factory in the U.S.", and "The Real DEIL" (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Leadership), "The Brand of Culture", and many other enlightening topics.

Saturday, 9/23, BFF will begin with opening remarks from a surprise guest, followed by well-rounded panel discussions. These discussions will include "Black Genius Conversation" with Larry Miller (Chairman of JORDAN/Nike), "This is the Remix", and a second "Black Genius Conversation" with two-time Academy Award-winning costume designer, Ruth Carter. The Breakout Sessions comprise Black Owned Everything and TappedIn. "Music Fuels Culture: Exploring and discussing the intersection between Music, Art, Sneakers, and Design", sponsored by Amazon Music, will follow. "Claim A Seat: Emerging Leaders in Sneakers" and the Blacklight Awards are also on the list. Additionally, creative director and designer June Ambrose will share insights on the panel "Free Game: Generational Purpose - A conversation and reflection on heritage vs. legacy". There will also be a networking mixer with music provided by AmazonMusic featuring Grammy Award-winning DJ Jazzy Jeff.

The last day, September 24th, will feature Adidas-sponsored events for women. "Cultivating the Dreamer Within - a day for Her" includes "Community R&B Yoga", "Sisters in Sole Brunch", and "Community Leadership Workshop". However, the Men's Leadership

& Wellness Workshop includes a session exclusively for men called The Game Behind the Game, which is led by Jason Mayden, Kenneth Anand, and Trevor Edwards.

Other speakers include Brian Thompson: Senior Journeyman Banknote and Product Designer (Designer of the US \$100 and \$50 bills), Michael Ford: Hip Hop Architect and Educator, April Dinwoodie: Head of DEIB, Steve Madden, Jazerai Allen-Lord, Founder of True to size Agency, June Ambrose, Creative Director & Designer, Daniel Cherry: SVP General manager at Adidas, Alexander-John: Designer, Jennifer Ford: Founder of Premium Goods, Michelle Marshall: Head of DEI at Puma, Byron Merrit: VP of Design at Amazon Music, Jarvis Sam: Founder of The Rainbow Disruption, Jessica Smith: CEO of i.e., James Whitner: Owner of A Ma Maniere and many more. Our event sponsors for 2023 comprise many companies, including Adidas, Amazon Music, The Athlete's Foot, Bacardi, Caleres, Carhartt, COACH, Designer Brands, eBay, Foot Locker, General Motors, Logitech, Microsoft, MillerKnoll, Nike, Off Broadway Shoe Warehouse, ON Running, PepsiCo, Puma, RG Barry Brands, Rock, Rubik's, Steve Madden, StockX, Target, Under Armour, VisitDetroit, Wolverine Worldwide, XBOX, Xencelabs, and more. To attend the free event, please register at: www.blackfootwearforum.com or follow on Instagram @pensolelewis for updates and event coverage.

About the Black Footwear Forum (BFF): The Black Footwear Forum (BFF) exists to celebrate and safeguard the influence, leadership, and creativity provided by blacks in the global footwear industry. As a collective of footwear industry professionals and supporters from around the country, BFF encourages collaboration in establishing industry goals that center on developing and advancing black talent at all levels. The BFF works to cultivate com-

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munity for Black footwear professionals through national and regional chapter events and activations. For more information, please visit <https://www.blackfootwearforum.com>

About PLC: Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design is the pipeline for career education and professional development in the creative industry. We bear the torch, leading the way to creative vision and progress. At Pensole Lewis College, we work at the crossroads of making the industry better, developing unconventional educational experiences and creating ingenious products. Offering a new path to break into the world of product creation, we prepare and empower the largest talent pool of creatives to enter the industry to make it better for the next generation. For more information, please visit <https://pensolelewiscollege.com>

About FDRA: Founded in 1944, FDRA is governed and directed by footwear executives and is the only trade organization focused solely on the footwear industry. It serves the full footwear supply chain and boosts the bottom lines of its members through innovative products, training and consulting on footwear design and development, sourcing and compliance, trade and customs, advocacy, and consumer and sales trend analysis for retailers selling shoes around the world. FDRA also runs the footwear industry's weekly podcast Shoe-In Show featuring leading footwear executives and experts discussing key business trends. In all, FDRA supports nearly 500 companies and brands worldwide, representing 95% of total U.S. footwear sales, making it by far the largest and most respected American footwear trade and business association. For more information, visit <https://fdra.org>.

2024 USFL season tickets now on sale; Best seats, best price



MEMPHIS, TN- Memphis Showboats season tickets for the 2024 season are now on sale. Lock in on the best deal and have your seats for the upcoming season. This is a limited-time offer.

Please note that renovations to Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium necessitate fans to be relocated to the East side of the stadium for the 2024 season.

Current season ticket members who place a \$24 per seat deposit by September 12th, lock in 2023 season ticket pricing, which can save up to 50%. Additionally, these same members receive priority seat selection at the Showboats' Select Your Seat event on October 21st.

Current season ticket holders can place their deposit at this link: <https://am.ticketmaster.com/usfl/>

MemphisRenewDeposit.

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For fans wishing to create a new season ticket membership account and receive priority seating, \$24 deposits can be placed at this link: <https://am.ticketmaster.com/usfl/2024MemphisDeposit>.

Additionally, all season ticket members will have the opportunity to participate in a select-your-seat event later this year.

- Season ticket member benefits include:
- o Dedicated Account Executive
 - o Payment Plan
 - o Ticket Exchange Program
 - o Digital Ticket Transfer
 - o Discount of USFL merchandise
 - o Access to additional tickets at season ticket holder price
 - o Access to away game tickets at season ticket holder price

Additional benefits will be announced soon.

Sancho and dos Santos named to AAC Weekly Honor Roll

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – The awards for the Memphis Tiger men's soccer team continue to roll in as Liniker Rodrigues dos Santos and Cesar Sancho have been named to the American Athletic Conference's Weekly Honor Roll.

Rodrigues dos Santos, a junior from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, notched two goals last week, one against Central Arkansas and another against Belmont. Both goals for Rodrigues dos Santos served as the game-winning goal over the Bears and Bison.

On top of leading the conference in total goals (5) and game-winning goals (4) he is also ranked in the top-10 in Division I in goals per game, shots per game and total goals.

This is the second AAC Weekly Award for Rodrigues dos Santos this season and the sixth of his career.

Sancho, a graduate student from Toledo, Spain, led a Memphis defense last week that gave up just two goals in 180 minutes of work while holding Central Arkansas to just six shots the entire match.

This is the second AAC Weekly Award for Sancho this season and the third of his career.

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Soccer, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Email entertainment news and photos to MSTentertainment@prodigy.net



Email sports news to MSTsports@prodigy.net