



[VIRTUAL PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT VIDEO LINK](#)

THE REIMAGINED 2020 WAWA WELCOME AMERICA FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 50+ FREE VIRTUAL EVENTS & TELEVISED CONCERT HEADLINERS

Seven Days of 100% Free, 100% Virtual Programming & Prime Time July 4th Live Concert Broadcast from The Met Philadelphia Starring Award-Winning Hitmakers Cynthia Erivo & Jason Derulo Televised Live on NBC10

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Philadelphia, Pa. (June 16, 2020)— Welcome America, Inc. and the City of Philadelphia today announced 50+ free events that will create the reimagined **2020 Wawa Welcome America** seven-day virtual festival taking place Sunday, June 28 through Saturday, July 4.

The 2020 festival will be entirely free and virtual, encompassing multicultural and multigenerational programming, highlighting Philadelphia's diverse voices. With a lineup of concerts, online educational activities, behind-the-scenes experiences, cooking demonstrations, at-home crafts, virtual museum tours and more, the festival's family-friendly programming will focus on arts, culture, education, wellness, history and performance.

Viewers will have a front-row seat from the comfort of home as Wawa Welcome America hosts star-studded performances and exclusive virtual experiences.

The festival schedule and events can be found at www.WelcomeAmerica.com and on Facebook [@WawaWelcomeAmerica](https://www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica), Instagram [@July4thPhilly](https://www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly), and Twitter [@July4thPhilly](https://twitter.com/July4thPhilly). Guests are encouraged to use the official 2020 festival hashtags to follow along: #July4thPhilly and #CelebratePhilly.

WAWA WELCOME AMERICA 2020 VIRTUAL FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Wawa Hoagie Day® — In its 28th year and for the first time ever in history, all 900 Wawa stores will participate in Wawa Hoagie Day®, building more than 45,000 hoagies to donate to local community heroes and organizations, including Philabundance, first responders, healthcare heroes, the USO and more! Join us for fun coverage of the hoagie builds and community give back across 6 states and Washington D.C. Wednesday, July 1, 12:00 p.m.

Independence Blue Cross #mindPHL Wellness Corner - As the Official Health and Wellness Partner of Welcome America, Independence Blue Cross has created a six-part #mindPHL series. Visit the Independence Blue Cross #mindPHL Wellness Corner of the festival's website daily at 8:30 a.m. for programming focused on stress reduction, connection, and mental health.

- Sunday, June 28: Exercise; No matter how you like to stay active, find out how exercise can have a profound effect on emotional wellness.
- Monday, June 29: Art & Music; Learn more about the mood-boosting benefits of art and music.
- Tuesday, June 30: Nutrition; Find out how food influences your mood and get tips for making meals that help you feel good.
- Wednesday, July 1: Relaxation & Stress Reduction; Discover how to use techniques such as breathing, meditation, and yoga to relax and feel better.
- Thursday, July 2: Connecting with Friends & Family; Learn how to better support one another and stay connected.
- Friday, July 3: Enjoying the Outdoors; Learn how getting outside can help create a positive outlook.

PECO Go 4th & Learn — Every day, PECO presents an interactive series promoting local partners and education through dynamic videos, exclusive experiences and engaging activities. The series is hosted by Power 99's Cappuchino, along with her daughter Ava, as part of her Capp's Kidz program.

- Monday, June 29 @ 2 p.m.: Discover the Philadelphia Zoo from the comfort of your own home. Tune in for a special edition of PhillyZoo@2 Facebook Live, where educators and zookeepers will introduce the Zoo's amazing animals.
- Tuesday, June 30 @ 10 a.m.: In partnership with Penn Athletics and Penn Sports Medicine, coaches and staff from Penn Athletics will host interactive fitness and sports activities for both kids and adults.
- Wednesday, July 1 @ 10 a.m.: Go on a literacy journey with Sergeant Major Erica Russo of The United States Army Field Band and Telemundo62 Chief Meteorologist, Violeta Yas.
- Thursday, July 2 @ 10 a.m.: Take a virtual tour of the Wawa Dairy in Wawa, PA and learn all about milk! Get an insider's peek at the Wawa Test Kitchen, where you can experience a virtual cooking demonstration of your favorite foods, with nutrition, sensory, and food safety tips!
- Friday, July 3 @ 10 a.m.: Travel back in time with stories of history and adventure with some of Philadelphia's most historical figures from Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Franklin to Betsy Ross.
- Saturday, July 4 @ 10 a.m.: Join a special exclusive tour of Independence National Historical Park with National Park Service experts sharing the stories of the founding of our nation and some of Philadelphia's most historic landmarks.

Enjoy story time with special guest readers on Welcome America social media channels each day of the festival at 12 p.m. Guest readers include City Representative Sheila Hess, NBC10 & Telemundo62 on air talent, representatives from PECO, a Sergeant Major of the United States Army, and more!

As part of the annual PECO Go 4th & Learn series, 5,000 books will be donated to Philadelphia Parks & Recreation for children to enjoy while participating in summer camps and the Playstreets meal program. Donation is courtesy of Books In Homes USA, a Philadelphia based nonprofit dedicated to supporting children in under-resourced communities.

Museums of the Day – Nineteen of Philadelphia's museums, cultural institutions, and attractions will feature daily digital programming at 9 a.m. and throughout the day, including virtual tours, access to exhibits, educational discussions, and activities during the festival.

- Sunday, June 28: American Swedish Historical Museum, Christ Church Burial Ground, Fort Mifflin on the Delaware, One Liberty Observation Deck
- Monday, June 29: Museum of the American Revolution, The Mütter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Shofuso Japanese Cultural Center
- Tuesday, June 30: Association of Public Art, Eastern State Penitentiary, Fireman's Hall Museum, Free Library of Philadelphia Rare Book Department, The Rosenbach
- Wednesday, July 1: National Constitution Center
- Thursday, July 2: Penn Museum
- Friday, July 3: African American Museum in Philadelphia, the Barnes Foundation, National Liberty Museum
- Saturday, July 4: National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia Museum of Art

Music Play Patrol — Experience interactive, educational, musical fun using items from around the home. Rock out to the sounds of pots and pans, buckets, drinking straws, and more. Tune in throughout the week at 11 a.m.

- Monday, June 29: Bucket Drumming
- Tuesday, June 30: Making Shakers
- Wednesday, July 1: Playing Pots & Pans
- Thursday, July 2: Musical Storytelling
- Friday, July 3: Making Wind Instruments

NRG Deck Out Your Door Contest

Get creative and show us how you celebrate by decorating your door during the festival. Share your photos on social media with #NRGDoorContest for a chance to win exciting prizes. Photos must be shared by July 3, 2020 11:59 PM EST to be considered a submission for the contest.

City of Philadelphia Food Distribution Sites

A staple of the Wawa Welcome America Festival is enjoying free food samples from our partners. This year in partnership with the City of Philadelphia Food Distribution Sites and favorite hometown bakery, Tastykake®, residents will be able to continue the tradition with 16,000 Butterscotch Krimpets being donated and distributed on Monday, June 29th at the free meal pick-up sites.

Founding Fathers' Sunday Supper —Join Chef Walter Staib, Author, Emmy award winning TV host, James Beard-nominated Chef, and culinary historian as he takes viewers back in time to showcase recipes from the first celebration of independence. Sunday, June 28 at 5:00 p.m.

U.S. Army Esports Tournament powered by Nerd Street Gamers — In Partnership with the United States Army and Nerd Street Gamers new this year, gamers will be able to put their skills to the test during our first-ever esports tournament series. Free pre-registration is required on welcomeamerica.com. All competitors must be 13 years or older to compete in the tournament.

- Wednesday, July 1 @ 6 p.m.: Fortnite Trios - Put your skills to the test during the widely popular Fortnite online competition kicking off the U.S. Army esports competition.
- Thursday, July 2 @ 6 p.m.: Super Smash Online - Smash the competition with free entry to Super Smash Online.

- Friday, July 3 @ 4 p.m.: Rocket League 3v3 - Sign up and score the winning goal during the final day of our esports tournament.

CONCERT & PERFORMANCES

Tune in every evening of the festival at 7 p.m. for streaming concert performances:

Hymns & Harmony in partnership with VISIT PHILADELPHIA® — Kicking off the festival and hosted by WDAS' Patty Jackson, enjoy an uplifting gospel celebration featuring performances by Zak Williams & 1/Akord. Sunday, June 28 at 7 p.m.

The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" Concert — Celebrate Independence Week with a spirited, patriotic 10th Anniversary virtual performance by The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own". The Band will present United We Stand | Music to Connect Us featuring popular music, vocal arrangements, and the finale, The 1812 Overture. Monday, June 29 at 7 p.m.

Girls Like nicethings - A women-centered music and art event showcasing the talent of women and women-identifying creators in Philadelphia, this event will include a multi-genre lineup of hip-hop, R&B, and soul performances alongside interviews with visual artists discussing their creative process and social impact. Featuring art from Lovesick Art Gallery and performances by Queen Jo, Suzann Christine, DJ Tati Mia and more. Tuesday, June 30th at 7 p.m.

The United States Army Field Band — Let freedom ring out across Philadelphia and the nation, as The United States Army Field Band celebrates America's Independence. You're in for an inspiring show of patriotic favorites and spectacular performances, as "The Musical Ambassadors of the Army" throw a virtual birthday party for America. Wednesday, July 1 at 7 p.m. The entertainment kicks off early with a pre-show party celebrating the 80th birthday of Philadelphia's own, Jerry Blavat, in partnership with 106.1 The Breeze. Wednesday, July 1 at 6 p.m.

Philadelphia Orchestra Performance – The Philadelphia Orchestra will perform "Let Freedom Ring," a musical celebration featuring patriotic pieces, including a special rendition of Elton John's "Philadelphia Freedom," Sousa's "The Liberty Bell March" and a special video tribute to the City of Philadelphia. Let freedom ring and sing along with The Philadelphia Orchestra. Thursday July 2, at 7 p.m.

POPS on Independence — For this uniquely American celebration, the POPS takes a musical look at tradition and patriotism. In his debut performance as Music Director & Principal Conductor, David Charles Abell has created an original show with Philadelphia native & Broadway star Allison Blackwell, renowned trumpeter and POPS Artistic Director for Jazz Terell Stafford, and POPS fan favorite Michael Cavanaugh. This virtual concert stream will also include a newly commissioned piece, "Fanfare for the Essential Workers," dedicated to healthcare workers who were first responders to the COVID-19 crisis. Friday July 3rd at 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 4TH TO CONCLUDE THE FESTIVAL

All-Day Streaming Entertainment & Events:

- **Red, White & Q102** - Philly's #1 Hit Music Station will keep the party going all-day with a mix show featuring some of the hottest DJs. Saturday, July 4 Starting at 12 p.m.

- **Pennsylvania Lottery Groove Stage** - Grill and groove to the tunes of regional multicultural artists in this curated two-hour block of non-stop entertainment. Philadelphia's eclectic and multigenerational music community unites to illustrate the diversity of our region through R&B, pop, soul, rock, jazz, swing, and Latin fusion. Tune in for performances from Zeek Burse, Swing That Cat, De Tierra Caliente, Christine Havrilla, Jada Fête, Laura Lizcano, and Max Swan, with a special performance by QuentinThePoet, all hosted by Radio One's, Mina SayWhat of 100.3 RnB. Saturday, July 4 Starting at 3 p.m.
- **Chill Moody Music Stage** - Handpicked by Philadelphia's Music Ambassador, Chill Moody, this entertaining lineup features Lester London, LiMM, DioMara, Great Time and a special performance from Chill Moody & Hank McCoy and many more. Saturday, July 4 Starting at 5 p.m.

Celebration of Freedom Ceremony Presented by Freedom Mortgage – A celebration of those who are making a difference in our communities, the evening of July 4th will begin with an inspiring televised ceremony that highlights local heroes. Mayor Kenney will present **The Magis Award** in collaboration with Mural Arts. The Wawa Foundation will present **The Wawa Foundation Hero Award**, totaling \$80,000 to four non-profit organizations committed to serving the Greater Philadelphia area. Presenting sponsor, Freedom Mortgage will present the inaugural **Celebrate Freedom Award** and \$15,000 to an active or retired military service member. This nationwide contest drew submissions from over 1,200 service members who spoke about their patriotism and heroism to the country's military. Additionally, Freedom Mortgage donated \$3,000 to Homes For Our Troops on behalf of the first 100 contest entries. James van Riemsdyk of the Philadelphia Flyers, Rhys Hoskins of the Philadelphia Phillies, and 76ers alumni legend, Julius Erving will do an inspiring reading of the Declaration of Independence. Be moved throughout the ceremony by powerful musical performances by Philly POPS, the Arato Brothers, and the soulful Sisterly Love choir. Saturday, July 4 at 7 p.m.

LIVE NATION PHILADELPHIA PRODUCES THE JULY 4TH CONCERT BROADCAST

The festival celebrations culminate with a star-studded performance, featuring world-renowned Tony, Emmy & Grammy award-winning singer and actress Cynthia Erivo alongside the Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia plus a high-energy set from American hitmaker, multi-platinum-selling singer-songwriter, producer, actor and dancer, Jason Derulo. Produced in partnership with Live Nation Philadelphia, the performance will be broadcast live on NBC10 from the historic The Met Philadelphia on the Independence Blue Cross Stage without an in-person audience. Viewers will have a front-row seat from the comfort of home. Saturday, July 4 at 8 p.m.

Whether delivering a virtual or live festival, producing the July 4th concert is no small feat and takes the support of our union workers. Martin Law returns for a third year supporting the safety of our crew.

NBC10 AND TELEMUNDO62

As the exclusive broadcast partner, this year NBC10, Telemundo62, CoziTV, TeleXitos and all our digital platforms will bring Wawa Welcome America directly to people in their living rooms, backyards, or wherever they choose to celebrate. NBC10's local, daily lifestyle show, "Philly Live," will produce an entire week of Wawa Welcome America content from June 28 through July 3rd. Viewers will be able to enjoy these events on air and on their favorite digital device. NBC10 will broadcast the Celebration of Freedom

Ceremony on Saturday, July 4, during primetime at 7 p.m., followed by the Wawa Welcome America July 4th Concert live from The Met Philadelphia during primetime in its entirety from 8 to 10 p.m.

NBC10's coverage of the Celebration of Freedom Ceremony and concert will be simulcast on Cozi TV and NBC Sports Philadelphia+, as well as on TeleXitos from 7 to 10 p.m. The free concert will also be live streamed on www.nbcphiladelphia.com and www.telemundo62.com and can be viewed on any screen – TV, iPad or tablet, smartphone, etc. Comcast NBCUniversal is the presenting media partner of the festival providing exclusive service ranging from broadcast to communications.

SPONSORS MAKE IT ALL FREE!

2020 top-tier sponsors of the festival include The City of Philadelphia, title partner Wawa, Inc., Comcast NBCUniversal with NBC10 and Telemundo62 as the local broadcast partners, Independence Blue Cross, Visit Philadelphia, and Live Nation.

Festival events and programming also made possible by, Freedom Mortgage, PECO, the United States Army, Pennsylvania Lottery, Tastykake, Philadelphia International Airport, Martin Law, Books In Homes USA, NRG, Nerd Street Gamers, iHeartMedia Philadelphia, Penn Athletics, Penn Sports Medicine, Radio One, The Philly POPS, Nicethings Music LLC, Historic Philadelphia, National Park Service, Independence National Historical Park, Independence Visitor Center Corporation, Global Philadelphia, Christ Church, Mural Arts, Philadelphia Zoo, Taste of History, City Tavern, Cashman & Associates, Chatterblast, [2 one 5] Creative and Alkemy X.

MEDIA MEMO

For news and updates about the 2020 Wawa Welcome America festival, members of the media are encouraged to sign up for the Welcome America media distribution list via welcomeamerica.com/media.

About Welcome America, Inc.

Welcome America, Inc. is a 501c3, non-profit organization engaged in a public-private partnership with the City of Philadelphia. Welcome America, Inc.'s goal is to promote American history, education, and the City of Philadelphia as global tourist destination. Each year, Welcome America, Inc. produces Wawa Welcome America, a multi-day festival featuring art, culture, community engagement and entertainment - it is the nation's premier Independence Day celebration! Welcome America was founded in 1993, and celebrates its 28th festival in 2020. Visit www.welcomeamerica.com to learn more, and join the conversation at:

- Facebook – <http://www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica>
- Instagram – <http://www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly>
- Twitter – www.twitter.com/July4thPhilly

Media Contacts:

Kellianne DeBlase

Welcome America, Inc.

press@welcomeamerica.com

Stephanie Fanelli

Cashman & Associates

Stephanie@cashmanandassociates.com