



For Immediate Release: June 15, 2022

**WAWA WELCOME AMERICA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> CONCERT TALENT, BRAND-NEW PROGRAMMING, AND MORE EXCITING UPDATES AHEAD OF THE KICKOFF TO THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL**

*The festival begins June 19 and features new events this year, like the Avenue of the Arts Block Party; exciting performances like Gospel on Independence featuring Yolanda Adams; and just announced – joining Jason Derulo and Ava Max as part of the star-studded lineup for the Prime-Time July 4th Concert on the Parkway – Tori Kelly!*

**Philadelphia (June 15, 2022)** – [Welcome America, Inc.](#) just announced additional exciting updates and brand-new programming ahead of the kickoff to the 2022 Wawa Welcome America Festival. Welcome America is thrilled to announce that **Grammy-award winning singer-songwriter Tori Kelly** will be joining the already star-studded lineup of **Jason Derulo** and **Ava Max** for the July 4<sup>th</sup> Concert on the Parkway. And in addition to the free July 4<sup>th</sup> concert, fireworks, and Party on the Parkway all making their full return to their home on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway this year, there is brand-new programming as well, including the PNC Presents: **Avenue of the Arts Block Party** at the Kimmel Cultural Campus and Motivation Monday presented by Independence Blue Cross.

This year's Wawa Welcome America Festival will feature an expanded lineup of free multicultural, multigenerational events throughout Philadelphia, and it all begins this upcoming weekend with special programming and celebrations commemorating **Juneteenth**. In partnership with Wawa Welcome America, [VISIT PHILADELPHIA®](#), and Wawa, the [African American Museum in Philadelphia](#) (AAMP) will host a FREE, family-friendly festival that will celebrate the history, culture, and legacy of Juneteenth. Internationally acclaimed artists **Talib Kweli** and **Lady Alma** will headline the Museum's Juneteenth Block Party, which will take place on **Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.** and will also feature music and entertainment from Power 99's DJ RL. **Free admission to AAMP courtesy of Wawa** will be offered between **10 a.m. and 5 p.m.** with timed-ticketed entry. Advance registration for museum admission is strongly encouraged and can be completed online.

In addition to the Juneteenth Block Party, AAMP will also host a **Summer Solstice White Party on June 30<sup>th</sup>**. The event will welcome guests to explore the entire Museum with live stages and activities in each gallery space. International recording artist and Philadelphia icon, Barbara Sheree, will host.

A new addition this year to the extensive lineup of exciting and diverse programming is the **PNC Presents: Avenue of the Arts Block Party at the Kimmel Cultural Campus on Saturday, June 25.**



Enjoy live performances on PNC Arts Alive Stage from local and world-renowned artists, including three-time Emmy Award-winning Bill Jolly, Rated Art, and Zo, featuring lead singer Gina Castanzo from NBC's *The Voice*. Kids and kids-at-heart can slide down the 120-foot slide or zip across Broad Street on the 100-foot zip-line - both FREE of charge! Sip a cocktail at the Garces Beer Garden and grab a bite to eat from one of the many local food trucks or nearby restaurants. Get crafty with Mural Arts Philadelphia and participate in creating unique chalk art, then shop local vendors and snag free giveaways from festival sponsors. Head inside the Kimmel Cultural Campus for high-powered entertainment and exclusive experiences, such as performances by cast members from *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* and other popular titles on the Broadway Series and an interactive dance workshop led by Teaching Artists from Disney Theatrical Group. Audience members will learn warm-ups and choreography set to music from *The Lion King* on Tour and Broadway!

And a fan-favorite Welcome America event every year is back and better than ever, with **gospel legend and Grammy Award-winning singer Yolanda Adams performing at Gospel on Independence** on Sunday, June 26 at Independence National Historic Park. Adams will be joined by the Welcome America Mass Choir under the direction of Austin Woodland and Zak Williams, showcasing talented singers from across the city with a special performance by The Tenors. This year's performance, hosted by WDAS Patty Jackson, is an Ode to Freedom, celebrating the 200th Anniversary of Harriet Tubman.

The Fourth of July commemorations and celebrations will conclude on the evening of July 4 with the **Wawa Welcome America July 4<sup>th</sup> Concert** starring Jason Derulo, Ava Max, and now – **Tori Kelly!** Tori Kelly has lit up the music landscape with her breathtaking vocals and full-hearted songwriting since making her debut in 2015. Tori received a 2022 GRAMMY nomination for Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album, was nominated for Best New Artist at the 58th annual Grammy Awards and took home two prizes at the 2019 Grammy Awards: Best Gospel Album and Best Gospel Performance/Song (for her hit single "Never Alone") off her 2018 passion project *Hiding Place*. Tori recently reprised her role as Meena in the critically acclaimed *SING 2* and will be releasing new music in 2022.

The **PA Turnpike** wants you to have the ultimate up-front experience at the July 4th Concert & Fireworks. Don't miss your chance to win access to the front section by checking in with PA Turnpike at the following events:

- Juneteenth Block Party (6/19), Rebuild Philadelphia Fishtown Pool Ribbon Cutting & Block Party (6/21), Philly @ the Movies: *Rocky* (6/23), U.S. Army Field Band & Soldiers' Chorus (6/24), Avenue of the Arts Block Party (6/25), Gospel on Independence (6/26), Motivation Monday (6/27), Go 4<sup>th</sup>



& Learn (6/28), “Summer Solstice” White Party (6/30), Our America Now (7/1), Pershing’s Own Concert & Waterfront Fireworks (7/2), POPS on Independence (7/3), Party on the Parkway (7/4)

The full festival schedule, events, and the original press release including all event info can be found on [welcomeamerica.com](https://welcomeamerica.com). **Media** – to apply for credentials and for information on which festival events require credentials, please visit: <https://welcomeamerica.com/media/#media-credentials>

More new information and programming updates are provided below:

#### **WAWA WELCOME AMERICA 2022 FESTIVAL UPDATES AND NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**PNC Presents: Avenue of the Arts Block Party @ the Kimmel Cultural Campus (6/25)**— PNC Arts Alive Stage was curated by Influence Entertainment & will be hosted by Radio One on-air personality Daysha Ali and feature: DJ Touchtone, Gina Zo, Bill Jolly, Rated Art, Suzanne Christine, Philly Girls Jump, Universal African Dance & Drum Ensemble, Project Song Bird, Edgardo Cintron & Inca Band, and DJ Geez

**Motivation Monday presented by Independence Blue Cross**—Independence Blue Cross, the Official Health and Wellness Partner, joins Wawa Welcome America in presenting a new, signature wellness event. The evening offers community fun and engaging ways to come together and practice positive mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Guests can participate in free fitness classes, explore local wellness offerings, and have the chance to enter-to-win exciting prizes.

Monday, June 27, 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., Eakins Oval | 24th Street & Benjamin Franklin Parkway

Free classes include **Zumbini** with Alyssa Gentes, **HIIT Training** with Osayi Osunde from Fit Academy, **Yoga** with Mariel Freeman and DJ Abby Klein from Three Queens and a **Meditation Session** with Jade Javon.

The Wellness Village will feature pop-up activations from Independence Blue Cross, The Food Trust, Indigo, Philadelphia Runner, Athleta, Black Girls with Green Thumbs, Philadelphia Union, Come Alive 215, Cultivare and WURD.

**Our America Now**—Set along Philadelphia’s iconic waterfront, this immersive experience brings to life pivotal moments of diverse American history and tells the stories of influential individuals.



MC'd by NBC10's Aunyea Lachelle and Karen Hau as artists from Olive Dance Theatre, Voices In Power, We The People Stage, and more will use spoken word, dance, and song to portray personal and historical stories rooted in passionate expressions of freedom.

Guests will be invited to be part of the performance by joining the storytelling stage. This event features DJs, food trucks, live artistic performances, and interactive activities, with a grand fireworks finale!

Friday, July 1, 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., Cherry Street Pier & Race Street Pier

**Celebration of Community & Culture @ Esperanza Arts Center** – Immerse yourself in the rich and vibrant Latin cultures found across our city. Enjoy a festive block party style atmosphere complete with Latin food, music, including Rumba 106.1's legendary DJ Johnny V, vendors and more before heading inside the Esperanza Arts Center for performances by Argentinian pianist Emiliano Messiez and his quartet. There will also be performances and dance lessons with members of the Philadelphia Argentine Tango School. This event is proudly supported by Temple University's School of Sport, Tourism & Hospitality Management and Fox School of Business.

Saturday, July 2, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Esperanza, Bristol Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>

**Free Museum Days**—Philadelphia's most notable museums, cultural institutions, and attractions will open their doors free of charge, or, for a pay-what-you-wish donation, throughout the entire festival.

The updated full Free Museum Day Series includes:

*Times per museum may vary.*

- **Sunday, June 19**, 10 AM - 5 PM | African American Museum in Philadelphia *courtesy of Wawa*
- **Monday, June 20**, 10 AM - 2 PM | Historic Rittenhouse Town
- **Tuesday, June 21**, 9 AM - 5 PM | Museum of Illusions Philadelphia *\*pre-registration required*; 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM | Wagner Free Institute of Science; 10 AM – 1 PM | Betsy Ross House and Elfreth's Alley Museum; 10 AM – 4 PM Fireman's Hall Museum
- **Wednesday, June 22**, 11 AM - 5 PM | Shofuso Japanese Cultural Center (Pay What You Wish) *\*pre-registration required*; 6 PM - 10 PM | Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site *\*pre-registration required*
- **Thursday, June 23**, 10 AM - 6 PM | Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum; 10 AM - 4 PM | Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts *\*pre-registration required*
- **Friday, June 24**, 10 AM – 3:30 PM | Masonic Temple, Library and Museum *\*tours only, first-come, first-serve at 10 AM, 11 AM, 1 PM, 2 PM, and 3 PM*; 10 AM - 8:30 PM | Rodin Museum (Pay What You Wish); 11 AM – 5 PM | "POOL: A Social History of Segregation" - Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center



- **Saturday, June 25**, 10 AM - 4 PM | Arch Street Meeting House; 1 PM – 5PM | Paul Robeson House & Museum (Pay What You Wish) *\*pre-registration required*
- **Sunday, June 26**, 12 PM - 5 PM | Neon Museum of Philadelphia (Pay What You Wish)
- **Monday, June 27**, 10 AM - 5 PM | Philadelphia Insectarium & Butterfly Pavilion (Pay What You Wish)
- **Tuesday, June 28**, 9 AM – 5 PM | Free Library of Philadelphia Rare Book Department; 10 AM - 5 PM | The Mütter Museum of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia (Pay What You Wish)
- **Wednesday, June 29**, 10 AM - 5 PM | National Constitution Center *courtesy of Wawa*
- **Thursday, June 30**, 9 AM - 4 PM | John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum; 10 AM - 4 PM | American Swedish Historical Museum; 12 PM - 4 PM | Wyck Historic House, Garden, and Farm
- **Friday, July 1**, 10 AM – 3:30 PM | Masonic Temple, Library and Museum *\*tours only, first-come, first-serve at 10 AM, 11 AM, 1 PM, 2 PM, and 3 PM*; 10 AM - 5 PM | Penn Museum *\*pre-registration required* and Faith and Liberty Discovery Center, and Science History Institute; 10 AM - 8:30 PM | Rodin Museum (Pay What You Wish); 11 AM - 4 PM | Powel House
- **Saturday, July 2**, 10 AM - 5 PM | National Liberty Museum; 1 PM – 4 PM | Stenton
- **Sunday, July 3**, 10 AM - 5 PM | Philadelphia Museum of Art (Pay What You Wish) and The Barnes Foundation *\*pre-registration required*
- **Monday, July 4**, 10 AM - 5 PM | Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History | 11 AM - 4 PM Christ Church and Burial Ground

**Chill Moody Experience**— Returning for their 5th year, the Chill Moody Experience features Girls.Like.nicethings, presented by nicethingsMUSIC. The mission of the Chill Moody Experience is to "welcome America" to the sounds of some of Philly's brightest breakthrough talent and brands. Curated by Philadelphia Music Ambassador, Chill Moody. Girls.Like.nicethings will feature performances by DJ Laced Up, Carla Gamble, Essence Natay, Queen Jo and Killsing. Produced in partnership with Nicethings and East Market.

Thursday, June 23, 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., courtyard of East Market, 1100 Market Street

### **SPONSORS MAKE IT ALL FREE!**

The annual Wawa Welcome America festival is produced in partnership with the City of Philadelphia, and made possible by generous sponsors, including title partner Wawa, Comcast NBCUniversal and their local broadcast stations NBC10 & Telemundo62, Independence Blue Cross, Visit Philadelphia, and Live Nation.



Festival events and programming also made possible by The African American Museum in Philadelphia, PNC Bank, Freedom Mortgage, Pennsylvania Turnpike, PECO, Einstein Healthcare Network now a part of Jefferson Health, Pennsylvania Lottery, Philadelphia International Airport, the United States Army, PNC Arts Alive, Kimmel Cultural Campus, Temple University, iHeartMedia Philadelphia, East Market, The Bourse Food Hall, BMW of the Main Line, Sundance Vacations, Radio One, Nicethings Music LLC, Books In Homes USA, Avenue of the Arts, Independence National Historical Park, Global Philadelphia, Independence Visitor Center Corporation, The Philly POPS, the U.S. Army Field Band & Soldiers' Chorus, Mural Arts Philadelphia, Rebuild Philadelphia, Esperanza Academy Charter School, Pyrotechnico, Delaware River Waterfront Corporation, Historic Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Penn Athletics, the Notary Hotel, Cashman & Associates, and Chatterblast Media.

## QUOTES

"We are so excited to kick off this year's festival and are thrilled with all these new additions and updates to our already robust programming, making Wawa Welcome America the greatest free festival in the nation," said **Michael DelBene, President & CEO, Welcome America, Inc.** "As always, we are grateful to the City of Philadelphia and all our incredible sponsors for their support as we partner together to deliver our best festival yet. We can't wait to invite residents and visitors alike to join in the celebration."

"After a brief rest, we are coming together on the Parkway - stronger than ever - to celebrate our nation's birthday and reconnect through the incredible power of music," said **Geoff Gordon, Regional President, Live Nation Northeast.** "This year's amazing lineup of Tori Kelly, Ava Max, and Jason Derulo will have Philadelphia singing, dancing and celebrating. We would like to thank our partners at Wawa, Welcome America, and the City of Philadelphia for making it possible to be back on Parkway for an unforgettable celebration for Philadelphia by Philadelphia."

"The energy and excitement throughout Philadelphia during Wawa Welcome America is incomparable," said **Rachel Ferguson, Chief Innovation and Global Diversity Officer at Visit Philadelphia.** "From Juneteenth to July Fourth the city is wrapped in top-notch programming that shines a light on our nation's complex history while showcasing all that Philadelphia has to offer. This year, Visit Philadelphia is honored to again play a role in our city's festival as we proudly present Gospel on Independence starring gospel legend Yolanda Yvette Adams. It will be an event you won't want to miss!"

"PNC is a National Main Street bank, and we can think of few things more meaningful than celebrating our nation's journey from freedom to liberty, as a presenting sponsor of the Welcome America festival," said **Joe Meterchick, PNC Bank regional president for Philadelphia, Delaware, and Southern New Jersey.** "The PNC team looks forward to welcoming our friends and neighbors across the city to events the entire community can enjoy."

###

**[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 30th festival in 2022. Visit [www.welcomeamerica.com](http://www.welcomeamerica.com) to learn more, and join the conversation at:

- Instagram – [www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly](https://www.instagram.com/July4thPhilly)
- Facebook – [www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica](https://www.facebook.com/WawaWelcomeAmerica)
- Twitter – [www.twitter.com/July4thPhilly](https://www.twitter.com/July4thPhilly)

**Media Contacts:**

**Kellianne DeBlase**

Welcome America, Inc.

[press@welcomeamerica.com](mailto:press@welcomeamerica.com)

**Emily Uliano**

Cashman & Associates

[emily@cashmanandassociates.com](mailto:emily@cashmanandassociates.com)