

MEDIA CONTACTS

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KARAMU HOUSE PRESENTS NEW SERIES OF FREE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY VIRTUAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

“Our Roots Run Deep: Celebrating Black History Month with Karamu House,” a month-long series of family-friendly virtual workshops, presented by ERIEBANK, kicks off on Friday, February 5.

(*Cleveland, Ohio*)—Karamu House, America’s oldest African American producing theatre, is celebrating Black History Month with a new series, “Our Roots Run Deep.” The series, presented by ERIEBANK, features interactive, family-friendly programming each Friday in February. The first free program, a poetry workshop, will be held on Friday, February 5 at 6:30 p.m. ET and features local, award-winning poet, Siaara Freeman, who will explore the works of Karamu House’s own, Langston Hughes.

Through the generous support of ERIEBANK, all programming is free to attend. “ERIEBANK is elated to sponsor the Black History Month community programming at Karamu House, a staple cultural and historical organization in the African American community in Cleveland,” said Wesley Gillespie, regional president of ERIEBANK. Participants can register for each program via the Karamu House website at karamuhouse.org.

The “Our Roots Run Deep” series also features interactive workshops in African, hip hop and line dance with Djapo Cultural Arts Institute, 10K Movement, and Robert “the Line Dance King” Johnson, respectively. An interactive story time for youth ages 5-9 will explore the story of “Anansi the Spider,” an African folklore story about perseverance and courage.

- Family African Dance Workshop with Djapo Arts Institute on Fri., Feb. 12, 2021 at 6:30P ET
- The Story of “Anansi the Spider” for pre-K to grade 3 students on Fri., Feb. 19, 2021 at 4:30P ET
- Line Dancing with Robert “the Line Dance King” Johnson on Fri., Feb. 19, 2021 at 6:30P ET
- Hip Hop Dance Workshop with 10K Movement on Fri., Feb. 26, 2021 at 6:30P ET

More details and information about all of these free, virtual programs can be found on the Karamu House website. Karamu’s theatres remain closed for health and safety restrictions.

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About Karamu House

Recognized as the oldest African American performing arts institute in the nation, Karamu House is listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places and featured in the Smithsonian’s African-American Museum. Legendary artists including Langston Hughes, Ruby Dee, Robert Guillaume, Ron O’Neal, Bill Cobbs, James Pickens, Jr., Vanessa Bell Calloway and Imani Hakim have been associated with the 104-year old “place of joyful gathering” (the meaning of “Karamu” in Swahili.)

In 1915, Oberlin College graduates Russell and Rowena Jelliffe opened the Playhouse Settlement in an area called Cleveland's "Roaring Third." The Jelliffes wanted to build an environment where people of different races, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds could come together to share common ventures through the arts. Karamu was established as a gathering place for racially diverse members of the surrounding community at that time. Today, Karamu is a beating heart for the entire community, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification, or age. Core programs include socially relevant and professional quality theatre; arts education programming for all ages; and community programming, such as comedy, live jazz, and spoken word performances, that invites participation and engagement, reflection, and a re-commitment to cultural values.

For more information, visit www.karamuhouse.org.

About ERIEBANK

ERIEBANK, a division of CNB Bank, is a \$4.7 billion bank that has been and will continue to be developed by local business and community leaders. The local decision-making provided by ERIEBANK offers a high level of dedication and service to the communities within Northwest Pennsylvania and Northeast Ohio.

More about ERIEBANK can be found online at www.ERIEBANK.bank.