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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cool Spring Downtown District Announces 5th Annual Juneteenth Jubilee

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Fayetteville, N.C. – On behalf of the City of Fayetteville, Cool Spring Downtown District (CSDD) is delighted to announce the return of the 5th annual Juneteenth Jubilee. This community celebration of history, unity, and Black American contributions and culture will kick off in the heart of the downtown district in Festival Park on Friday, June 19, 2026 from 5PM-11PM. As always, the Juneteenth Jubilee is designed to offer a thoughtfully curated, inclusive, educational, and joyfully entertaining event for all. This year, we will be connecting the threads of the Black American experience from the past and the present, and turning towards the idea of an equitable, just, joyful, and limitless future. The Jubilee will feature nationally touring headliners, local performance acts, food trucks, small-business and corporate vendors, artists/artisans, history, games and other entertainment for the whole family.

Organizers are excited to announce the headlining musical talent for this year's Jubilee stage. The Jubilee stage opener is **Misha Fair**. Misha is an Atlanta-born singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist carving her own lane in Traditional Country, Americana, and Alt-Country. A third-generation musician, she blends soul, and roots-driven rock into a sound she describes as "deep-fried" in folk, gospel, and bluegrass, honoring Southern tradition while pushing it forward with bold vocals and emotionally grounded storytelling. Raised in a musical family with major label success through RCA and Atlantic Records, Misha spent her early years in legendary studios surrounded by artists such as Isaac Hayes and members of The S.O.S. Band. Her professional career accelerated in 2008 when she began working with Janelle Monáe and the Wondaland Arts Society, helping shape her artistic foundation and stage presence. A seasoned live performer, Misha has appeared on stages across the United States and internationally in Europe, delivering sets that feel intimate yet expansive. Her dynamic musicianship and commanding vocal delivery create performances rooted in authenticity, emotional depth, and connection.

The marquee headliner this year is **Kirby**. Kirby, born as Kirby Lauryen Dockery, is a singer and songwriter born in Memphis, Tennessee but spent most of her upbringing with her tight-knit, loving family in Southaven, Mississippi. After leaving her studies at Berklee College of Music, Kirby challenged herself to post an original song every day for 275 days on YouTube. On day 302 of the challenge, she was signed with Roc Nation. Soon after being signed, Kirby found her way working with artists like Christina Aguilera, Jennifer Lopez, Brandy, and Timbaland, with notable songwriting credits such as "Only One" by Kayne West, "Break Your Heart Right Back" by Ariana Grande, and "Die With You" by Beyoncé. Since that time, Kirby has been able to write two albums of her own, multiple singles and even a soundtrack album for the dark-comedy, thriller TV series, "Swarm". Her latest release, *Miss Black America*, short for *Mississippi Black America*, which features Big K.R.I.T., Akeem Ali, her father, and more, is emotionally charged and profound. The record is a love letter to the Deep South. The intentionality of the album is heard on tracks like "Thick n' Country", where the artist paying homage to curvy women like herself—it's a spirited track that offers a chance for Black women to be proud of their curves.

In addition to the main stage talent, CSDD is pleased to welcome back the Miss Juneteenth Fayetteville Scholarship Pageant, with a crowning ceremony to take place during the Jubilee. For more information regarding the pageant, please contact J19 Unity Pageant Director, Linyi Ridgell, via Facebook (@juneteenth.queens.fayetteville.nc). Community groups and local talent will also grace the Jubilee stage. Partners such as Black Artist Forward, Black Canvas, and the Fayetteville State University Fine Arts department will fill the Jubilee with vibrant visual art, boldly capturing stories of black expression through the arts. Fun for the whole family, there will be a children's entertainment area, and a ticketed VIP experience available. To round out the celebration, there will be a diverse selection of artisan, marketplace, small business, non-profit and food vendors offering unique products and experience for attendees.

Confirmed keynote speakers for the event include Sheila Cuffee, who just recently won her primary in the Cumberland County Commissioners race. Mrs. Cuffee previously served as the chair of the Fayetteville Cumberland County Human Relations Commission, is serving her second term as an appointee to the NC Human Relations Commission and currently serves as chair of the Cumberland County CommuniCare Board of Directors. She is also on the executive committee for the Fayetteville Arts Council and part of the Community Engagement Council for the Methodist University and Cape Fear Valley School of Medicine. April Mata, Creative Manager for the Arts Council of Fayetteville|Cumberland County will also deliver remarks. April is passionate about building community through culture, storytelling, and innovative programming. Over the past 10+ years, she has directed exhibitions, led large-scale public events, managed dynamic teams, and grown meaningful community partnerships, including the co-founding of Black Artist Forward, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating equity in the arts for black artists in our community.

The City of Fayetteville are the title sponsors of the Juneteenth Jubilee. "It's an opportunity for us to reflect on our past, celebrate progress and unite in our ongoing journey towards a more inclusive and equitable future", says City of Fayetteville Mayor, Mitch Colvin. CSDD's President/CEO, Ashanti Bennett, shares: "Curating this significant cultural celebration is both a great responsibility, and a tremendous honor. The opportunity to gather our community in unity and love and amplify the positive contributions and indefatigable joy of the Black community in our history and today is deeply meaningful and resonant." CSDD is proud to be a recipient of a \$5k Levitt Family Foundation grant in support of the 2026 Jubilee,

The current list of confirmed Juneteenth Jubilee event sponsors includes ABC-11, Healy Wholesale Company, Inc., Public Works Commission (PWC), Duke Energy, Methodist University, Fayetteville State University, and Brightspeed Internet, with additional sponsorships pending. To learn more about becoming a Juneteenth Jubilee sponsor, please email Ashanti Bennett, CSDD President/CEO at ashanti@coolspringfay.org.

For more information or vendor application links, please visit CSDD's website at visitdowntownfayetteville.com. Vendor applications are open on Eventeny.com; the deadline to [apply](#) is April 19, 2026. Visitors and residents of Cumberland County may follow CSDD's efforts and announcements on their website at visitdowntownfayetteville.com, as well as on social media on Facebook at [@CoolSpringFAY.org](https://www.facebook.com/CoolSpringFAY.org) or [@downtownfayetteville](https://www.facebook.com/downtownfayetteville), or on Instagram at [@coolspringdowntowndistrict](https://www.instagram.com/coolspringdowntowndistrict) or [@downtownfay](https://www.instagram.com/downtownfay).

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About the City of Fayetteville:

The City of Fayetteville is a dynamic, culturally rich community committed to high performance, transparency and

innovation. Directly adjacent to Fort Bragg, Fayetteville is home to more than 208,000 residents. The mission of the City is to provide sustainable, high-quality public services for our communities to thrive and businesses to grow. With creative energy, vibrant history and compassionate people, Fayetteville always finds a way. That's why we are America's Can Do City. To learn more about the City of Fayetteville and City departments or services, please visit fayettevilleenc.gov or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn.

About Cool Spring Downtown District:

The Cool Spring Downtown District, Inc. is a charitable, nonprofit corporation formed in 2017 to create and sustain an arts and entertainment district located in downtown Fayetteville, North Carolina, as a vibrant center of artistic, cultural, civic and commercial activity. Visit: visitdowntownfayetteville.com for more about CSDD. For all media inquiries and more information, contact President/CEO Ashanti Bennett at ashanti@coolspringfay.org or (910) 223-1089.

