FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 31, 2026

THE AFRIKAN RESTORATION PROJECT ANNOUNCES 2026 KWANZAA 60TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON OF EVENTS

"Celebrating the First Sixty Years of Kwanzaa... and the Next!"

Community celebrations in San Diego, Detroit, and online will honor Kwanzaa's origins, introduce a new book and educational initiative, and advance a vision for the next sixty years of the Nguzo Saba.

LOS ANGELES, CA — The Afrikan Restoration Project (TARP) invites families, educators, community organizations, cultural institutions, and people of African descent everywhere to join in a special season of events commemorating the **60th Anniversary of Kwanzaa**, December 26, 2026 – January 1, 2027.

Under the theme **"Celebrating the First Sixty Years of Kwanzaa... and the Next!"**, this anniversary season will do more than commemorate a historic cultural achievement. It will invite our community to reflect on Kwanzaa's original inspiration, recognize the contributions of those who helped bring it into existence, and consider what we must collectively accomplish during the next sixty years.

First celebrated in Los Angeles on December 26, 1966, Kwanzaa has grown into an internationally recognized African American and Pan-African cultural celebration. Its Seven Principles, the Nguzo Saba—Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith)—continue to provide a foundation for strengthening families, communities, institutions, and our collective future.

The Afrikan Restoration Project believes that this historic milestone presents an extraordinary opportunity to move beyond the annual observance of the principles toward their intentional, organized, and sustained practice throughout the year.

A Season of Community Celebrations

Saturday, December 26, 2026 — San Diego, California

WorldBeat Cultural Center — Balboa Park

Kwanzaa – FOR KIDS: A Celebration for the Next Generation

The anniversary season begins with a special celebration dedicated to children and families, featuring a Kwanzaa Essentials lesson, African art, music, drumming, dance, and activities that introduce young people to the history, meaning, and cultural significance of Kwanzaa.

This gathering will also highlight the important and often underrecognized role of children and families in the origins of the first Kwanzaa celebration in 1966.

Umoja / Unity Night — Celebrating the First Sixty Years of Kwanzaa... and the Next!

The evening's Umoja celebration will bring the community together for a special anniversary presentation reflecting on Kwanzaa's first sixty years, the people and ideas that shaped its beginnings, and the responsibilities and possibilities that lie ahead.

Together, these two events will connect the history of Kwanzaa with its future, emphasizing the essential role of intergenerational unity in preserving, practicing, and advancing our cultural legacy.

Sunday, December 27, 2026 — Detroit, Michigan

Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History

Kujichagulia / Self-Determination — Elevating Blackness

The celebration continues in Detroit with a special Kujichagulia program exploring the relationship between Kwanzaa, cultural self-determination, and a broader initiative known as **Elevating Blackness**.

The presentation will introduce the new book *Kwanzaa – FOR KIDS (and everybody else!)* and explore how a fuller understanding of Kwanzaa's origins can inspire a renewed commitment to defining ourselves, developing our own institutions, and shaping our collective future.

The program will challenge participants to consider how the principle of self-determination can become an active, year-round commitment rather than an aspiration expressed only during the holiday season.

Tuesday, December 29, 2026 — Online Community Program

The Afrikan Restoration Project's 60th Anniversary Kwanzaa Program

5:00–7:00 PM Pacific Time

“Kwanzaa and Ujamaa / Cooperative Economics: Preparing for the Next Sixty Years”

The Afrikan Restoration Project will host a special online program examining the increasingly urgent need for new approaches to cooperative economics as artificial intelligence, robotics, and other technological developments transform employment, production, and economic life.

The program will also announce the return of TARP's ongoing study group, beginning **Thursday, January 14, 2027**, and continuing on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month.

The initial study will focus on *Fundamentals of Economics* by **Dr. Tdka Maat Kilimanjaro**, drawing upon the scholarship of the University of Kmt to examine economic systems, historical African models of social organization, and the potential for developing cooperative economic institutions suited to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The discussion will explore how the principle of Ujamaa can inform a vision of economic development that extends beyond individual entrepreneurship and conventional Black capitalism toward systems of collective ownership, shared responsibility, and community well-being.

Community members interested in participating in the renewed study group are especially encouraged to attend. Additional event and registration information will be available through The Afrikan Restoration Project and Elevating Blackness.

Introducing a New Book: *Kwanzaa – FOR KIDS (and everybody else!)*

A centerpiece of the anniversary season is the introduction of *Kwanzaa – FOR KIDS (and everybody else!)*, written by **Shujaa Baker**, illustrated by **Thad Lavalais**, and featuring a true story about the children involved with the first Kwanzaa, as told by **Kinamo and Karama Damu**.

Inspired by the story of a ten-year-old girl, the book offers a fresh perspective on Kwanzaa's origins by bringing forward the experiences and contributions of children and families who were part of its earliest celebration.

Through accessible storytelling and engaging illustrations, the book encourages readers of all ages to discover how Kwanzaa emerged from the aspirations, relationships, and collective efforts of people working to create meaningful cultural practices for their families and communities.

Rather than treating Kwanzaa simply as a tradition inherited from the past, the book invites a new generation to recognize that cultural institutions are created by people—and that they, too, have a responsibility and an opportunity to shape what comes next.

The book is available through Kwanzaa.org and KwanzaaForKids.org.

Introducing the Elevating Blackness Online Academy

The new book is also part of an expanding educational initiative, the **Elevating Blackness Online Academy**, which is developing a comprehensive curriculum to accompany the book and provide families, educators, and community organizations with instructional resources, activities, and opportunities for continued learning.

The Academy is organized around three complementary areas of development:

- **African Culture** — Deepening our knowledge of African history, heritage, identity, and cultural practice.
- **S.T.E.M. & Manufacturing** — Developing scientific, technological, engineering, mathematical, and practical production capabilities.
- **Principled Practice** — Applying the Nguzo Saba and related cultural values to everyday life, community development, and institution building.

In addition to the developing *Kwanzaa – FOR KIDS* curriculum, the Academy features a comprehensive online curriculum supporting the **STEM 'n 'Nem** children's book series, which uses engaging family-centered stories to connect science, technology, engineering, mathematics, African history, and the Seven Principles.

The Academy is also developing educational content and collaborative programs with a growing range of partner organizations, creating opportunities to connect cultural education with practical skills, economic development, and community empowerment.

The initial Academy release is scheduled for **December 5, 2026**.

Learn more at ElevatingBlackness.com.

Beyond Celebration: What Do We Need from the Next Sixty Years?

As part of this anniversary season, The Afrikan Restoration Project invites the community to read, discuss, and respond to three position statements addressing the history, meaning, and future of Kwanzaa and the Nguzo Saba.

1. "What We Need from the Next Sixty Years of Kwanzaa and the Nguzo Saba and Who Will Provide It?"

A call to examine the responsibilities, institutions, and organized efforts required to transform the Seven Principles into a sustained force for community development and collective progress.

Read the statement

2. “Women, Children, and the Zep-Tepi of Kwanzaa: Reconnecting with the Original Inspiration of the First Occasion”

An invitation to reconsider Kwanzaa's beginnings through the contributions of women, children, and families, and to recognize the significance of their participation in establishing a new cultural tradition.

Read the statement

3. “Black People and the Nguzo Saba at 60 (1965–2025): How Treating the Seven Principles Like a ‘Black Job’ Could Save the World”

A provocative examination of the responsibility to practice the Seven Principles as an ongoing commitment to cultural, social, and economic transformation—and the broader implications of that commitment for humanity.

Read the statement

Together, these statements provide a framework for a larger conversation: **What should Kwanzaa and the Nguzo Saba accomplish during the next sixty years, and who will take responsibility for making it happen?**

The Afrikan Restoration Project encourages educators, scholars, community organizers, cultural institutions, families, and especially young people to engage with these questions and participate in developing meaningful answers.

An Invitation to Participate

The Afrikan Restoration Project extends an open invitation to the community to participate in the anniversary events, introduce young people to the history and principles of Kwanzaa, explore the new educational resources, and join the continuing work of Elevating Blackness.

The 60th Anniversary is an opportunity not only to honor those who created and sustained Kwanzaa, but also to renew our responsibility to build upon their work.

The first sixty years established a remarkable cultural foundation. What we build upon that foundation during the next sixty years will depend upon what we are prepared to learn, organize, create, and accomplish together.

Additional Information and Resources

Visit our expanding family of websites for anniversary events, educational resources, publications, and opportunities for participation:

- **The Afrikan Restoration Project:** https://tarpie.org
- **Kwanzaa History, Principles, and Events:** https://kwanzaa.org
- **Elevating Blackness:** https://elevatingblackness.org
- **Elevating Blackness Online Academy:** https://elevatingblackness.com
- **STEM 'n 'Nem Children's Book Series:** https://stem-n-nem.org
- **Nguzo Saba 365 — Seven Principles Everyday:** https://nguzosaba365.org
- **Kwanzaa – FOR KIDS:** https://kwanzaaforkids.org

About The Afrikan Restoration Project

The Afrikan Restoration Project is an educational and cultural development initiative committed to advancing African-centered knowledge, practical capabilities, and principled community development. Through educational publications, cultural programming, S.T.E.M. initiatives, collaborative partnerships, and the Elevating Blackness Online Academy, the Project seeks to connect the wisdom and achievements of African ancestors and elders with the knowledge, technologies, and responsibilities required to shape a better future.

Media inquiries, participation, and partnership information:

The Afrikan Restoration Project
Website: https://tarpie.org
Additional event details and registration information will be posted through the organization's websites.

###