



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES 2023



3RD EYE
YOUTH EMPOWERMENT
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY BUILDING
ARTS & CULTURE

Welcome to the 3rd EyE Open, 2023 edition



Our mission:

3rd EyE uses hip hop, a common cultural art form and voice for the people

- To engage and empower youth to positively change themselves and their community.
- To increase awareness, confidence, self-esteem, and hope in youth through providing opportunities for leadership development, mentoring, creative outlets, and resources.

Event overview and background

The 3rd EyE Open is a free creative arts festival in downtown New Bedford that will be held in Wing's Court on Saturday, August 19, 2023. The festival highlights the vibrant energy of hip hop culture – from improvisational MCing to breakdancing to graffiti art – but includes activities appropriate for all ages.

The 3rd EyE Open was first held in 1999 and ran for 14 consecutive years in Buttonwood Park, and at its height drew over 5,000 participants from across the region. In some years, the festival featured special performances by nationally-recognized hip hop performers such as KRS-1. The festival provided hundreds of feet of mural space for graffiti artists to create original work on the spot. It also included competitions in break-dancing, freestyling (improvised rap and spoken word), and a basketball tournament, as well as other activities.

3rd EyE Open went on hiatus in 2013, but with the support of our local community,, we brought it back in 2017 and it exceeded all our expectations, and the 2018 and 2019 editions were even better. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 forced a rapid shift to virtual and hybrid formats for all our events, but we brought the Open back as a live event in 2021 and 2022, and we are excited to welcome you as a sponsor for the 2023 edition.

Organizational background:

3rd EyE Youth Empowerment was founded in 1998 by three young New Bedford residents who were committed to positively transforming their community by empowering and unleashing the creative capacities of local youth. Our constituency is culturally diverse, including many Cape Verdean, Latino, African American and Portuguese young people. Most lack access to adequate employment, educational opportunities, and recreational facilities. Many young people are trapped in cycles of intergenerational poverty, and have suffered the effects of systemic racism, injustice and a culture of low expectations and despair. They were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. They are in dire need of creative, inspiring activities with peer and adult role models. Over the years, 3rd EyE has provided educational and leadership opportunities for underserved youth by utilizing the positive elements of hip hop culture to grab the attention of youth who are often considered "at-risk".

What's different about the 2023 Open? Hip hop turns 50!

Celebrating 50 years of hip hop: 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the emergence of hip hop in Black and Latinx communities in the South Bronx. It's been part of the cultural scene in New Bedford for nearly that long – and we are dedicating this year's Open to commemorate this milestone.

Embracing the diversity of local music and dance talent: While 3rd EyE is firmly rooted in hip hop culture – rap, break-dance, graffiti -- we have always welcomed other music genres, from Cape Verdean drumming to gospel. This year we are making a special effort to reach out to local dance studios to showcase the creativity of young performers. This means that in addition to our ever-popular break-dancing battles, we will have performances by dancers from New Bedford Performing Arts Center as well as other local studios. We will also be highlighting young creatives from Dream Out Loud and the Boys & Girls Club.

Building bridges: The festival will provide a unique opportunity to create cultural bridges between New Bedford’s underserved youth, the evolving downtown arts and business communities, and our extensive non-profit sector. Hip hop culture in general, and the 3rd EyE Open in particular, speak powerfully to New Bedford’s youth, and the Open is an important part of their collective social memory – the parents and older siblings of many of today’s young people participated in the earlier Opens, so it is part of their legacy. Holding the Open downtown can help youth and families from underserved neighborhoods expand their horizons, learn what downtown has to offer them – art, culture and volunteer or employment opportunities – and feel that they belong there. By bringing hip hop and its established audience to downtown New Bedford, the Open can **continue expanding the downtown art scene**, making it more inclusive and culturally diverse.

By presenting hip hop and its related cultural expressions, in a friendly, family-oriented atmosphere, side by side with children’s art-making sessions, we can also help **remove some of the negative stereotypes** surrounding hip hop and youth culture as violent and criminal. Instead, the Open helps demonstrate how young people and their cultural expressions can contribute to building a vibrant future for our city.

What’s going to happen at the Open?

The Open will be held in the heart of New Bedford’s downtown, in Wings Court. It will run from 10 in the morning to 8 in the evening. There is a detailed schedule for each activity but here is an overview:

- Live Music & Spoken Word
- Dance performances
- Children’s creative activities
- Live graffiti/street art presented by NBAM (to be confirmed)
- Live DJs
- Free Wall tagging activity
- Dance & Music Cyphers
- Dance Battles
- Partner & Vendor Tabling

Why should you become a sponsor?

Reaching a broad and diverse audience: 3rd EyE’s virtual programming during the pandemic had thousands of viewers, as we provided a much-needed cultural “breather” as well as opportunities to dialogue about critical issues facing our city and country. Since its revival in 2017, every in-person Open has drawn several hundred participants, from toddlers to seniors. They came from all of New Bedford’s neighborhoods, nearby communities, and the surrounding region.

The 3rd EyE Open offers a **unique opportunity for New Bedford’s youth**. In the current political and economic climate, there is no shortage of reasons to feel angry and frustrated, and it’s easy for young people – especially those from disadvantaged communities – to lose hope. The 3rd EyE Open provides a space for young people to express themselves. By sponsoring the Open, you are helping create new and positive opportunities for New Bedford’s youth.

Your sponsorship lets young people know that you think they are a valued part of our community. Very often, misunderstandings arise from isolation and lack of communication. This sense of isolation has only increased during the pandemic, as schools, businesses, recreational programs and cultural institutions were shuttered. The participation of local businesses and nonprofits in the **Open allows young people to feel that they are a part of the greater New Bedford community**. It creates a greater sense of belonging and community spirit that can benefit all of us.

Sponsorship **can benefit your business or organization** by giving you **an opportunity to introduce your- self to new customers and a new market segment**. If young people and their families feel that downtown is a welcoming place, they are more likely to spend money downtown.

If you are a non-profit organization, your sponsorship can help **break down barriers**. Young people often do not access the many cultural and social service organizations in the city simply because they do not know about them.

We also believe that locating the festival downtown will help **the small business and cultural community**. The 3rd EyE Open is becoming a regular fixture in New Bedford's growing calendar of summer festivals. Hip hop has expanded beyond its roots in urban communities in the U.S. to become a global cultural phenomenon. It has broad appeal that cuts across socio-economic, cultural, racial and national boundaries. The Open can therefore contribute to the place-making strategies promoted by other cultural and business groups.

Who has supported the Open?

- Friends of the New Bedford Free Library
- New Bedford Department of Parks, Recreation and Beaches
- YMCA SOUTHCOAST
- Visionary Communications
- New Bedford Historical Society
- New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- UGLY Gallery
- EforAll SouthCoast
- New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center
- SouthCoast Serves
- Boys & Girls Club of Greater New Bedford
- Cleary's Pub
- Domino's Pizza
- Destination New Bedford
- Mass Cultural Council
- New Bedford Performing Art Center
- South Coast LGBTQ Network
- Wind Works
- Orphanage Movement
- Doodles Creative Sessions
- Dream Out Loud
- New Bedford Art Museum
- City of New Bedford
- Co-Creative Center, New Bedford
- Rose Alley
- Still Ill Productions
- Swift Charakterz Kruh
- Diversified Game
- SuperFlat
- No Problemo
- Destination Soups

How will we measure success?

There are several ways we can measure the success of this event:

- **Number and diversity of participants:** Volunteers with iPads will conduct a simple survey with participants (although they may not reach every single attendee as people come in and out throughout the day). This will include demographic data (age, gender, ethnicity) as well as how attendees learned about the Open. This will help us learn what kinds of outreach are successful for attracting which audiences. Volunteers will estimate the number of participants in each activity throughout the day. Photographic documentation will help with this task. We will tabulate this for each major activity, as well as for the festival overall. The activity-specific totals will help us evaluate which activities were the most popular.
- **Geographic range of participants:** The survey includes attendees ZIP codes. This will help us evaluate how successful our outreach has been to specific communities, and where we can improve.
- **Satisfaction of artists and other presenters:** Numbers alone only tell part of the story. We will ask each organization or individual who presented or organized one of the activities how they assess the success of their event. If an event had a relatively low turnout but provided a meaningful and positive experience to those who participated, we can consider that a success.

