

PS5 Salutes Donnie McClurkin Jr. With Music Studio

By Keith L. Forest

Earlier this month, the students, parents, faculty, and staff of Dr. Ronald E. McNair Public School 5 (PSS) joined local civic and community leaders, parents, and neighbors for an official dedication of the Donnie McClurkin Jr. Music Studio.

The Grammy award-winning gospel recording artist McClurkin, who was in attendance, was also feted during a school tour and full school assembly that included student art and music presentations, including a solo performance by Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School student Joshua Joseph.

"I'm truly honored," shared the NAACP Image Award-winning vocalist, who was emotionally touched seeing his name on a physical space in his honor. He expressed his gratitude by serenading the audience in song, performing the timely gospel hit, "May the Work I've Done Speak for Me."

Housed at Public School 5, the Donnie McClurkin, Jr. Music Room is a state-of-the-art music facility where students will receive performance-driven instructional lessons on a variety of musical instruments, including the violin, clarinet, flute, trumpets, trombone, saxophone, and African drums. It is also the



Donnie McClurkin Jr. receives an artistic rendering from student artist Asani Enriquez

future home of a full-service podcast and music engineering studio, where students will be able to learn the art of producing their own podcast shows and musical productions.

"This is truly a full circle moment," commented Principal Lena Gates, who personally invited McClurkin to the school several years ago. At that time, the Bedford-Stuyvesant Elementary School was one of the lowest-performing schools in the district, plagued with poor attendance, a decreasing number of teachers, and low test scores.



Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School Student Joshua Joseph provides an encore performance in honor of Pastor Donnie McClurkin

"He simply provided timely words of encouragement and helped us cast a vision for building and creating a school where children are valued and the community benefits. Since then, we've been on an upward spiral."

A few years after McClurkin's visit, PS5 test scores began to rise, and enrollment has increased. Under Principal Gates' leadership, the school recently launched The Dr. Ronald E. McNair Aviation Center, sponsored by American Airlines. It provides young aviators topflight

instructions on flight simulators and field trips to local airports where they receive real-life experiences flying actual planes. Other programs include a Science Technology Engineer and Math (STEM) Program that provides training in Artificial Intelligence (AI), and 3D technology, a financial literacy program that operates out of the school's student-run bookstore; and an urban garden program that supplies fresh produce to local eateries and teaches children how to prepare nutritionally balanced meals.



Left to Right: Donnie McClurkin Jr.; Kenya Smith, Deputy School Superintendent; Darlene Mealy, NYC City Councilwoman; Cache Grandison; Detective Conrad Narcisse; Caitlyn Smith; School District 16 Executive Director; Principal Lena Gates; Joshua Joseph; Pastor Dr. Robert Waterman



Pictured Left to Right: Caitlyn Smith; Joshua Joseph; Arturo Lopez; Principal Lena Gates; Donnie McClurkin; City Councilwoman Darlene Mealy; Pastor Dr. Robert Waterman; Carter Bryant; Cache Grandison; Deputy School Superintendent Kenya Smith; Adani Enriquez; School District 16 Executive Director Lanika Vane; PS5 Vice Principal Cindi VanPetten

BROOKLYN UPCOMING EVENTS



Nov 9 Salsa Party at Brooklyn Museum

**Brooklyn Events
Nov 9 6-9:30pm
Salsa Party
at Brooklyn Museum**

Celebrate the art of salsa and join us in our monthly dance-filled evenings hosted by Balmir Dance Society! Start the night with a class led by professional dancers at 6 pm, followed by live music, social dancing, and performances by Brooklyn's best Latin dance teams. This program is free; registration is required.

**Nov 17 to Jan 1
Lightscape
at Botanical Gardens**

Experience the magic of Lightscape! The after-dark, illuminated trail returns to Brooklyn with brand new works of art and promises an

even more immersive and magical experience for visitors of all ages. Explore the beauty of the Garden under moonlight while enjoying seasonal treats and festive music. There is no better way to celebrate winter and the holiday season with friends and family!

**November 19, 12
Noon to 2PM,
Black Mental Health
in America: Crises,
Challenges and Solutions**

The New York Chapter of the National Association of Kawaida Organizations (NAKO) in conjunction with the International African Arts Festival (IAAFestival) will host its Community Education Forum, entitled: Black Mental Health in America: Crises,

Challenges and Solutions. This program will have a special focus on and from individuals, organizations and institutions that are offering services and solutions. The November 19th NOON event (occurring earlier than the usual 3pm time) will take place in the IAAFestival's office at 1360 Fulton Street, Suite 401 in Restoration Plaza, Brooklyn, New York. Because of limited space participants wishing to attend the program are urged to reserve their seat by contacting the host at: 718-789-3264 / 646-410-5723 / 638-6700 or nakoinfogroup@yahoo.com. A minimum fee of \$10 is requested.

**Dec 2 11 am-5:30 pm
Winter Pop Up Market
at Brooklyn Museum
Martha A. and Robert S.
Rubin Pavilion, 1st Floor**

Stop by our holiday market, copresented with Brooklyn Pop-Up, to shop for one-of-a-kind, handmade items from local artisans and vendors. Selections include artwork, jewelry, fashion, and home and apothecary goods.

This event is free and open to the public.

**Dec 4 11:00am-1:00pm
Make Your Own Wreath
at Ol Stone House
in Washington Park**



Nov 17 to Jan 1 Lightscape at Botanical Gardens



Dec 26-30 Kwanzaa at Brooklyn Children's Museum

Craft a winter wreath to adorn your home with professional guidance from our garden team, Sam Lewis & Angela Lombardo. All materials will be provided, but feel free to bring in ribbon or other special things to add to your creation. This event will be held outdoors on the OSH Patio, please dress accordingly. In the event of severe weather the workshop will be moved indoors on the ground floor of the museum. Location - 336 3rd St, Brooklyn, NY 11215

**Dec 26-30
Kwanzaa at the Brooklyn
Children's Museum**

Celebrate Kwanzaa returns to Brooklyn Children's Museum this December! Celebrate the traditions of Kwanzaa at New York City's largest family Kwanzaa

event, presented in partnership with Brooklyn-based Asase Yaa Cultural Arts Foundation.

Explore the seven principles of Kwanzaa through interactive workshops, dynamic live performances, and engaging art projects that honor heritage, community, and culture. This year, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Hip Hop with special activities and tributes that showcase its enduring impact. Now in its 16th year, Celebrate Kwanzaa takes place over 5 days, from Tuesday, December 26 through Saturday, December 30. Each day features a mix of repeating and unique programs designed for all ages. Save the dates and join us at this spirited cultural celebration!



**Dec 2 Pop Up Market
Brooklyn Museum**