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Kwanzaa festival draws hundreds to support black-owned businesses in Brooklyn

By ADAM SCHRADER and LEONARD GREENE

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS | DEC 26, 2016 | 7:37 PM



Restoration Plaza hosted more than 1,600 people for this year's Kwanzaa Crawl, designed to bring business to black-owned bars and restaurants in Brooklyn on Monday. (Todd Maisel/New York Daily News)

It's a pub crawl with a purpose.

Hundreds of holiday revelers went bar-hopping through Brooklyn as part of a post-Christmas, Kwanzaa celebration to promote black businesses.



Crown Heights, Prospect Heights, Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, and Park Slope.

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Restoration Plaza hosted more than 1600 people for this year's Kwanzaa Crawl, designed to bring business to black owned bars and restaurants in Brooklyn on December 26, 2016. (Todd Maisel, New York Daily News) (Todd Maisel/New York Daily News)

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"So this is just another one of our initiatives. We think it's important that we support the small black-owned businesses that support us, that hire us."

Coddett said she hopes the event spreads to other cities across the country "to give people a sense of pride in where they come from."

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"We're tired of being shot," she said. "We're tired of police brutality. We're tired of complaining, and we're tired of protesting. This event is one of those things that encourages people to be mobile and do something and learn who their congressmen and city council members are. They're all out here supporting this."



N'Maat Ankhmeni prepares the candles for Kwanzaa.(Todd Maisel/New York Daily News)

Kwanzaa was born in 1966 as a [seven-day holiday honoring African heritage](#) and takes its name from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza," which in Swahili means "first fruits."

The festival is rooted in several bedrock principles including Umoja, or unity, and Ujamaa, or community.

"I wanted to meet new people, experience culture and have a great time with people that look like me," said said Ashley Pottinger, 25, of Queens, who was celebrating at 333 Lounge, a black-owned club on Flatbush Avenue in Prospect Heights.

"It will get so much bigger and there will be other events to celebrate black culture and history. It's sold out, so it's obvious we want and need things like this."

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