

MEDIA RELEASE

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Announcing:
Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores
National Battle of the Bands

Eight elite collegiate bands to compete Labor Day weekend at NRG Stadium

HOUSTON – It's not halftime. It's not the fifth quarter.

It's the show.

Bands are the essence of the Historic Black College and University experience and the HBCU's ultimate celebration is coming to Houston on Labor Day weekend for the Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores National Battle of the Bands September 1 at NRG Stadium.

Think Drumline at NRG. Think showmanship, precision, dancing and the best marching band showcase in the country.

Eight of the nation's top HBCU bands will celebrate the culture of their universities at what will be the largest African American event in Texas. Each band has its own unique style and music and was created to celebrate, support and recognize the excellence of Black college marching bands.

WHO: Eight of the nation's premier HBCU bands

WHAT: Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores National Battle of the Bands

WHERE: NRG Stadium

WHEN: September 1, 2019 – Labor Day Weekend

This year's band line-up includes Texas Southern University's Ocean of Soul Marching Band, Prairie View A&M University's Marching Storm Band, North Carolina Central University's The Sound Machine Marching Band, Talladega College's Marching Tornado Band, Southern University's Human Juke Box, Miles College's Purple Marching Machine and Tennessee State University's Aristocrat of Bands.

The day of celebration kicks off with the HBCU STEM college recruitment fair which is free and open to area students interested in higher education opportunities from 20 of the top HBCUs in the country. Education and scholarship partner H-E-B is sponsoring the H-E-B Tailgate Cook Off Experience later that afternoon.

Texas is home to nine HBCU schools and more than 20 HBCU alumni associations have chapters in the Greater Houston area.

"It's fitting that this impressive showdown will be in Harris County -- one of the largest and most diverse counties in the country," Hidalgo said. "The competition will be fierce and I'm excited to see these extremely talented bands strut their stuff, but make no mistake, I'll be rooting for our very own Texas Southern University's Ocean of Soul Marching Band!"

HBCUs are the heartbeat of African American higher education opportunities and this event exposes Houston's diverse population to both educational and arts opportunities.

"Houston has a successful track record for hosting successful events that draw thousands of people to our welcoming city. We are excited about partnering with Harris County, The Houston Sports Authority and Webber Marketing and Consulting for the 2019 Cracker Barrel National Battle of the Bands," said Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. "The invitation-only competition featuring student musicians from Historically Black Colleges and Universities will put Houston on the map for hosting another thrilling event. It's guaranteed great entertainment. I encourage everyone to attend and also stay tuned for exciting activities leading up to the competition."

Added Harris County – Houston Sports Authority CEO Janis Burke, "There's nothing like this event. It's packed with super high-energy performances by some of the country's most elite marching bands. They'll have you on your feet dancing at your seats from start to finish."

The event will feature more than 2,000 members from the eight bands and the recruitment fair gives local students the opportunity to look at what approximately two dozen HBCU schools offer.

"It is an honor to introduce Houston and the surrounding communities-at-large to the extraordinary talents of the students who represent the HBCU marching bands participating in this year's National Battle of the Bands," said Derek Webber, CEO, Webber Marketing & Consulting, LLC.

"Our goal is to enhance the exposure of HBCU marching bands and the roles they play in educating aspiring musicians and developing future leaders; while also introducing patrons to the spirit and community of the HBCU experience, which they will encounter throughout the weekend."

The NBOTB partnership with the HCHSA helps to support the advancement of the event's mission to enhance the exposure of HBCUs and their marching bands, and the role they play in educating aspiring musicians and developing future leaders. The partnership is also significant because it supports the growth of scholarships, and expands the awareness of higher learning with music, arts and entertainment."

For ticket information please go to www.nationalbattleofthebands.com or email Tickets@houstonports.org

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About the Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores National Battle of the Bands

The event's mission is to enhance the exposure of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and their marching bands, the roles they play in educating aspiring musicians and developing our future leaders. Event organizers have generated more than \$350,000 in scholarships for the participating colleges and universities. www.nationalbattleofthebands.com

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