

# Edwardsville Unity Fest Is Free Day Of Activities, Performances And Food

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** - A full day of family-friendly activities is planned for this year's Unity Fest to bring together different communities and identities in the Metro East area.

On Saturday, Sept. 30, community members are invited to Leclaire Park in Edwardsville from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for live music, dance performances, speakers, food and informational booths. This is the second annual Unity Fest sponsored by Edwardsville Unity, an organization that encourages community-building, diversity and acceptance.

“We are inviting fellow well-wishers of humanity to attend this free festival, showcasing inspiring speakers and culturally diverse performers with this year’s theme, ‘Unity Begins With U,’” Edwardsville Unity said in a press release.



All of the food, entertainment and activities are free to attendees. In addition to several performances and art pieces, informational booths will be set up around the park so local organizations can connect with community members.

Edwardsville Mayor Art Risavy will open the ceremony, followed by local poet LaShawnda Williams. Riz Kahn, president of the [Little Angels Foundation](#), will share about the organization’s work with homeless immigrant families in the Metro area. Ben Greene will discuss education related to gender and sexuality and share his own experience as a transgender man. The [Hispanic Leaders Group of Greater St. Louis](#) will be represented by Antonio Maldonado, chairman of the board.

The [Gateway Men’s Chorus](#) will perform a capella songs as the longest-tenured LGBTQ+ arts organization. Soul-folk artist [Samantha Clemons](#) will take the stage next, followed by the dance group [Alma De Mexico](#). The festival will conclude with a performance by the St. Louis Traditional Chinese Music Ensemble.



All food is free and provided by local minority-owned businesses. Favorite food trucks [Gulf Shores](#), [Cedar Mediterranean](#) and [Ray's Soul Touching Tacos](#) will be on the scene alongside [Kazoo Coffee](#), [Green Earth Grocery](#) and [Mac's Family Fun Time](#).

Edwardsville Unity encourages solidarity and inclusion, which are the guiding principles of the Unity Fest. The organization invites people across the Metro East to attend.

“I am super excited to bring back Unity Fest for a second time,” said Jesse Allen, Edwardsville Unity Chair. “We’re going to bring as many different voices and faces into one place as possible in an effort to change the national narrative that we can’t all get along. In order for us to achieve our goal, we need you, your family and friends, to join us for a wonderful day of free food, education and entertainment.”

Check out the [full Unity Fest schedule](#) for additional details. For more information about the event or the Edwardsville Unity organization, visit their [official website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

