

2026

DeKalb Day of the Dead

Hosting

DEKALB DAY OF
THE DEAD

November

Collaboration

DEKALB CINCO
DE MAYO

May

Collaboration

FAMILIA FEST

July



JOIN US FOR A DAY FILLED WITH A UNIQUE
CULTURAL EXPERIENCE



About Us

DeKalb Day of the Dead Festival was founded in 2023 and is now entering its fourth annual celebration. Our festival is dedicated to honoring the rich cultural traditions of Día de los Muertos while fostering community connection and cultural awareness throughout DeKalb County.

Since our inception, the festival has grown steadily, partnering with local businesses, nonprofits, artists, and community leaders to deliver an engaging and meaningful experience for hundreds of attendees each year.

Our experienced organizing team is committed to maintaining a safe, well-managed event that promotes cultural pride and community unity. With continued support, we aim to expand our reach, enhance programming, and strengthen our impact as a cultural cornerstone in DeKalb.

VISION

To build a community where the many voices, traditions, and cultures that make up Hispanic communities are preserved, celebrated, and shared—honoring the traditions of our ancestors while embracing the stories, experiences, and new traditions that continue to shape our future.

MISSION

We bring people together through music, dance, food, art, folklore, and storytelling to celebrate the richness and diversity of Hispanic cultures. By creating an inclusive space where Hispanic Americans can reconnect with their heritage, individuals and families born outside the United States can share the traditions they continue to practice, and people of all backgrounds can learn, participate, and celebrate alongside one another, we foster belonging, cultural preservation, and cross-cultural understanding throughout DeKalb County.

PURPOUSE

We believe culture is meant to be shared. It is carried through generations, strengthened by lived experiences, and enriched through the exchange of stories. Our festival exists to help Hispanic Americans reconnect with traditions that may have been lost over time, to provide a welcoming place where immigrants and international families can celebrate the customs that connect them to home, and to invite the entire community—regardless of culture or background—to experience, appreciate, and learn from one another. By preserving the past and celebrating the present, we create a place where everyone belongs, meaningful connections are formed, and cultural traditions continue to thrive for generations to come.

Events

HOSTED EVENT

The DeKalb Day of the Dead Festival is an annual, community-centered cultural celebration held at the DeKalb Public Library in collaboration with local businesses, nonprofits, artists, and community organizations from Downtown DeKalb and throughout DeKalb County.

Rooted in the rich traditions of Día de los Muertos, the festival serves as an inclusive space for cultural expression, remembrance, and community connection. Our goal is to honor the heritage of Latinx communities while engaging the broader public through arts, education, and family-friendly programming.

Each year, we proudly welcome an expanding list of partners and participants, strengthening connections among residents, businesses, and cultural leaders across the region.

Features of the Festival:

- A welcoming ceremony followed by a community procession through Downtown DeKalb, encouraging public participation and visibility.
- Traditional ofrendas (altars) created by local families and organizations to honor deceased loved ones as well as a community ofrenda for community members to place a photo of their loved ones.
- Cultural performances, including folkloric dance and live music, showcasing Latin American traditions.
- Interactive activities such as face painting, craft stations, and piñata parties for children and families.
- Educational programming, including storytelling, historical exhibits, and workshops that explore the meaning and significance of Día de los Muertos.
- Local food vendors and artisans, supporting small businesses and offering attendees a taste of traditional cuisine and handmade goods.

The festival is free and open to the public, making it accessible to individuals and families from all socioeconomic backgrounds. Our goal is to promote cultural understanding, foster community engagement, and create an enriching experience that reflects the diversity of DeKalb County.

With grant support, we aim to expand outreach efforts, increase artist and performer compensation, enhance accessibility, and provide additional resources for educational and cultural programming. Help us to deepen meaningful partnerships and ensure that this treasured annual celebration continues to grow and thrive for many years to come.

Sponsored Events

DeKalb Cinco de Mayo

In partnership with El Jimador, we launched DeKalb's first-ever Cinco de Mayo street celebration by closing down a portion of historic Lincoln Highway for a day of community, culture, and celebration.

The event featured:

- A horse-led parade to open the festivities
- A live stage with music and cultural performances
- Local vendors, food trucks, and shopping stalls
- Family-friendly fun, including desserts and bouncy houses

This free, public event brought together residents of all ages to celebrate Mexican heritage in the heart of downtown DeKalb. With grant funding, we will be able to continue supporting and expanding impactful cultural events like this, fostering community connection and cultural pride throughout our region.

Familia Fest-Featuring Hola Cup

Familia Fest, featuring the Hola Cup, is an exciting and fast-growing community event that combines the passion of sports with the richness of cultural celebration. In partnership with WNIJ (Northern Public Radio), we have developed and launched DeKalb's first adult community soccer tournament and family-friendly fiesta.

The Hola Cup showcases local adult soccer teams in a spirited competition that promotes teamwork, sportsmanship, and cultural pride. While teams compete on the field, Familia Fest transforms the surrounding area into a vibrant celebration of Mexican-American culture and community life.

Familia Fest is free and open to the public, ensuring accessibility for all members of our diverse community. It provides a unique platform for cultural expression, community engagement, and cross-generational participation.

We Also Support:

Pride Fest hosted by The Egyptian Theatre

Tinsel N' Tutus hosted by Dimension Dance Academy

8 Countries in One Day hosted by DeKalb Public Library



Sponsorship Opportunities

Every sponsorship helps keep the DeKalb Day of the Dead Festival free and accessible to our community while supporting cultural programming, artists, performers, family activities, and community engagement.

Our sponsorship levels are inspired by the traditions and spirit of Día de los Muertos. Each level represents a different way of helping guide, honor, and bring our community together.



WHY SPONSOR THE FESTIVAL?

The DeKalb Day of the Dead Festival is free and open to the public, helping ensure that families and individuals from all backgrounds can participate.

Sponsorship support helps us:

- Provide free cultural and family programming
- Support and compensate local artists, musicians, and performers
- Create opportunities for local businesses and organizations
- Expand community outreach and accessibility
- Provide educational and cultural experiences for children and families
- Preserve and share the traditions and meaning of Día de los Muertos
- Continue growing this annual community celebration

Your sponsorship doesn't simply support an event—it helps create a space where tradition, remembrance, culture, and community come together.



Sponsorship At Frist Glance

Our sponsorship levels are inspired by the traditions and spirit of Día de los Muertos. Each level represents a different way of helping guide, honor, and bring our community together.



FESTIVAL FRIEND

\$50

The Alebrije: The Alebrijes are spirit guides that accompany and protect us on our journey. Festival Friends help guide the festival forward by supporting this community celebration



REMEMBRANCE SPONSOR

\$100

Honoring the Past: Día de los Muertos is rooted in remembering and honoring those who came before us. Remembrance Sponsors help preserve these traditions and keep their stories alive for future generations.



MARIGOLD SPONSOR

\$500

The Path Across the Bridge: Marigolds are believed to help guide the spirits of our loved ones between worlds. Marigold Sponsors help create the path that brings our cultural celebration to life.



SPIRIT OF THE FESTIVAL

\$1,000 (1 Sponsorship Available)

Bringing Us Together: The spirit of Día de los Muertos is found in remembrance, celebration, culture, and community. Spirit of the Festival Sponsors help bring all of these elements together and support the festival as a whole.



Sponsorship Level

FESTIVAL FRIEND

The Alebrije \$50

- Business or organization name included on the Community Supporters sign at the festival
- Recognition in the event program
- Social media thank-you recognition

REMEMBRANCE SPONSOR

Honoring the Past \$100

Includes everything in the Festival Friend level, plus:

- Business name and logo featured on the Community Supporters sign
- Additional social media recognition featuring your business tag

MARIGOLD SPONSOR

The Path Across the Bridge \$500

Includes everything in the Remembrance Sponsor level, plus:

- Prominent logo placement on festival marketing materials
- Banner placement at the festival
- Table placement at the DeKalb Public Library for community engagement and promotion
- Opportunity to distribute promotional materials
- Dedicated social media spotlight highlighting your support

Table placement at the Library is for community engagement and promotion. Sales are not permitted on Library property.

SPIRIT OF THE FESTIVAL

BRING US TOGETHER \$1,000

(1 Sponsorship Available)

Includes everything in the Marigold Sponsor level, plus:

- Premier logo placement on festival marketing materials
- Prime banner placement at the festival
- Recognition as a Spirit of the Festival Sponsor during the festival opening and closing ceremonies
- Priority table placement at the DeKalb Public Library and at the Vendor Market at El Jimador
- Inclusion in applicable press releases and media outreach
- Customized social media recognition before, during, and after the festival
- Procession Banner Recognition: Community members are welcome to join the procession. Spirit of the Festival Sponsors may provide a branded banner to be carried in the procession following the festival flags.

Sales are permitted at the Vendor Market located at El Jimador.

IN-KIND & COMMUNITY ACTIVITY PARTNERS

Your support doesn't have to be financial.

In-kind sponsors provide essential goods, services, entertainment, and resources that help bring the festival to life. From music and traditional dancers to equipment, supplies, printing, entertainment, professional services, and more, every contribution makes a direct impact.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY PARTNER

Businesses and organizations that provide a free, family-friendly activity during the festival are automatically recognized as a Festival Friend.

Activities may include cultural demonstrations, crafts, educational programming, children's activities, storytelling, art experiences, or other offerings connected to the spirit of Día de los Muertos.

Festival Friend recognition includes:

- Business or organization name on the Community Supporters sign
- Recognition in the event program
- Social media thank-you recognition

OTHER IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Businesses and organizations may also support the festival by donating goods, services, equipment, supplies, printing, entertainment, professional services, or other resources.

Recognition for other in-kind contributions will be determined based on the nature and value of the contribution.

EVERY CONTRIBUTION HELPS MAKE THE FESTIVAL POSSIBLE.

Whether you contribute \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1,000, your time, your talents, or your resources, you are helping create a free celebration where our community can come together to remember, celebrate, and connect.

Reach Us Out

We are ready to grow, expand with you and our communitiy



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