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Mesa holds first Juneteenth celebration event



The city of Mesa celebrated Juneteenth with a special festival on Wednesday at Mesa Community College.

By [Michael Raimondi](#)

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MESA, AZ (AZFamily) — Mesa held its first-ever Juneteenth celebration Wednesday night at Mesa Community College. There were hundreds of people that cycled through different areas showcasing local businesses and Black artists.

There were vendors selling food, jewelry and artwork. There was also a stage with a DJ to get the crowd hyped and dancing.

“It is so exciting to have and host the first Juneteenth Celebration here in Mesa,” President of the East Valley MLK Committee Keisha McKinnor said. “Ten years ago there was maybe one Juneteenth festival being held and now just about every city, some multiple events going on in cities. I love to see this. I love to see people coming together.”

McKinnor said they had a great turnout Wednesday night. She was thrilled to see the crowds of people coming through to learn about [the history of Juneteenth](#) and to celebrate what it meant for African-Americans.

“Yes, we celebrate Independence Day in America, but for Black Americans that was not independence,” she said. “We were still slaves during that time and even with the Emancipation Proclamation, it took more than two years for over 250,000 slaves to realize they were free. That was on June 19, and that’s why we celebrate this day, when we were all free.”

McKinnor hopes this becomes an annual tradition in Mesa for Juneteenth.