

# AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre Hosted Vibrant Black History Month Celebration in BC



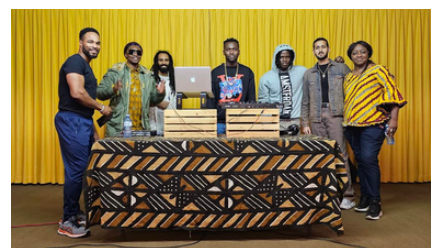
Interview by CHEK News at the office

Victoria, B.C., Canada. March 4, 2024: The African Arts and Culture Community Contributor Society (AACCCS)-ISSAMBA Centre honored Black History Month 2024 with a diverse range of engaging events, showcasing the rich heritage and invaluable contributions of Black individuals in Canada. Under the theme "Black Excellence: A Heritage to Celebrate; a Future to Build", last year's commemoration promised a deeply enriching experience for all participants.



Focus Group Discussion at the VEC

Throughout February, AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre hosted a series of dynamic events aimed at fostering community engagement, empowerment, and education. Festivities commenced on February 3 with a Community Immunity Awareness Design Thinking Workshop at 10 am, followed by a focus group discussion on Policing and Public Safety Modernization from 12 to 2 pm. These gatherings provided vital platforms for dialogue, collaboration, and action on pivotal issues affecting the Black community in British Columbia and beyond.



BHM Launch Reception Pre-show

Continuing the momentum, the centre facilitated discussions on the milestones and progress of the International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD), offering insights into ongoing efforts to promote and safeguard the rights of individuals of African descent. These discussions sought to raise awareness and advocate for substantive changes in policies and practices impacting the Black community.



BHM Launch Reception Pre-show

The pinnacle of the celebration was the annual Black History Month Launch Reception, themed "In the Spirit of Africa", which was scheduled for the evening of February 3 from 7 PM to 10 PM at the Victoria Edelweiss Club (VEC). Attendees had the opportunity to savor African cuisine, immerse themselves in vibrant music and rhythms, and enjoy performances by renowned artists including Mr. Fantastik, Poncho, and DJ Nayo.

In addition to these highlights, AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre hosted an online Forum on Community Immunity Awareness on February 10, focusing on the importance of flu vaccination and its implications for public health.



Issamba Showcase at the Victoria Event Centre

Furthermore, on February 24, Mamadou Diabate's Balafon Workshop and 'SANKOFA Moments for Youth' offered educational opportunities for young individuals to delve into African culture and music. The ISSAMBA Showcase featuring Mamadou Diabate with Percussion Mania visited schools such as the Pacific Christian School for an hour show and The Cridge Family Centre to teach kids learn the balafon, and toured four cities namely, Quebec, Nanaimo, Victoria, and Vancouver, captivating audiences with enthralling performances. *(Continue on the next page)*



Black Author Book Boxes for dispatch



Food take-out during the Mama Put

On February 24, AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre also held Mama Put, an adaptation of African street food vending, at the Philippine Bayanihan Community Centre. This event showcased a variety of African cuisines for the public to enjoy, such as Puff-puff, Piri-piri Chicken, Cameroonian-style Bean Stew, Ginger Juice, and more.

As part of its commitment to education, AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre provided Black Author Book Boxes free of charge to schools, offering a curated selection of works by authors of African descent. Additionally, individuals could contribute to the celebration by volunteering with the centre.

The success of these events was made possible by the generous support of the Canadian Government, Public Health Agency of Canada, Province of British Columbia, City of Victoria, Canadian Heritage, BC Housing, Creative BC, Canadian Race Relations Foundation, and Mayfair Shopping Centre.

## AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre Joined Greater Victoria Police for Dance Party

Victoria, B.C., Canada. March 11, 2024: The AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre recently participated in the dynamic Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee Dance Party. Held on February 19, 2024, at the Saanich Commonwealth Place, the event attracted a diverse crowd, including non-profit organizations, community leaders, and indigenous and racialized individuals, fostering unity and celebration.

Attendees were treated to a captivating multicultural show, featuring a range of dance performances from traditional African to contemporary styles. Members of the police department also joined in, immersing themselves in the performances and connecting with the community on the dance floor.

Complimentary refreshments were provided, catering to various tastes and keeping spirits high throughout the festivities, which lasted from 12 PM to 2:30 PM. This inclusive event highlighted the power of unity and collaboration in building stronger, more cohesive societies.

AACCCS-ISSAMBA Centre's participation reflected its commitment to fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve, promoting cultural exchange, understanding, and mutual respect.



# AACCCS-Issamba Centre Commemorates International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



Respiratory Illnesses and Flu-shot Management Design Thinking Workshop

Victoria, March 23, 2024: The AACCCS-Issamba Centre proudly commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with a diverse and engaging event held at the Philippine Bayanihan Community Center. Taking place on Saturday, March 23rd, from 11 am to 8 pm, the celebration brought together members of the community in a powerful display of unity and solidarity.

Attendees were treated to a culinary journey at the Mama Put Pop-up Afro-Caribbean Eatery, which offered authentic African dishes for sale. The menu showcased the rich and diverse flavors of Afro-Caribbean cuisine, delighting the senses of all who attended.

In addition to the culinary offerings, the event featured a Respiratory Illnesses and Flu-shot Management Design Thinking Workshop. This workshop aimed to address the specific healthcare needs of communities of African descent in Canada, with a focus on improving flu vaccination uptake and preventing respiratory illnesses. Through collaborative brainstorming and innovative design thinking, participants worked together to develop an actionable plan to promote better health outcomes within these communities.

For the younger attendees, "Sankofa Moments for the Kids and the Youth" provided an opportunity to connect with African culture through music and community. Children and youth had the chance to play traditional African music instruments such as the balafon and djembe, fostering cultural pride and a sense of belonging within the black community.

In the evening, the two-hour ensemble drew participants from across the community, providing a space for people to come together, share their heritage, and celebrate diversity. The rhythmic sounds reverberated through the venue, creating an atmosphere of joy and solidarity.

The event not only celebrated diversity but also served as a reminder of the ongoing fight against racial discrimination. By coming together to share food, knowledge, and culture, the AACCCS-Issamba Centre reaffirmed its commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable society.



Mama Put features the Taste of the Caribbean dish



Sankofa Moments for the Kids and the Youth



Djembe ensemble

## UPCOMING EVENTS

AfriCa Fest in Quebec  
May 17 - 20, 2024

AfriCa Fest in Surrey  
May 24 - 26, 2024

AfriCa Fest in Victoria  
June 20 - 23, 2024

**AACCCS** **ISSAMBA CENTRE**  
African Arts & Cultural Centre / Institut d'Art et de Culture Africain

# Festival

# AFRICA

# Fest

Musique | Gastronomie | Ateliers  
Découvertes Culturelles | Marché | Animation

**MARKET**

**GASTRONOMY**

**ARTS & CULTURE**

AACCCS-Issamba Website | Québec, QC Mai 17 - 20 | Surrey, BC May 24 - 26 | Victoria, BC June 20 - 23

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