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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Lewis Museum Opens New Kid Zone Exhibit, Lifting as We Climb, During King Day Weekend with Youth-Led Ribbon Cutting and New Community Mural

Baltimore, MD — Saturday, January 17 at 10:00 a.m. — The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture will celebrate the opening of its **new permanent children's exhibition, Kid Zone: Lifting as We Climb, with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony on Saturday, January 17 at 10:00 a.m.**

The ceremony will feature **Mayor Brandon M. Scott and the First Family of Baltimore, alongside the great-nieces of Reginald F. Lewis, Paige Fugett (11) and Natalie Fugett (8), and Avery Turner (9), the museum's inaugural Kid Zone Kid Curator. Lance Harris Jr. (6), the young star of the family social media series Snacks with LJ, will also help cut the ribbon.** Together, these young trailblazers represent the next generation of youth creators and leaders, reflecting the spirit of Kid Zone and the museum's commitment to centering children's voices, creativity, and potential.

Avery has been involved in shaping Kid Zone since its earliest stages, offering ideas and creative direction to ensure the space reflects how children learn, play, and imagine. "I wanted the Kid Zone to be really colorful and fun," said Avery Turner, Kid Zone Kid Curator. "At the beginning, I drew a picture to show them what kids would like. I can't wait to see my picture in real life!"

"Kid Zone represents our commitment to centering children as learners, creators, and leaders," said Terri Lee Freeman, President of the Lewis Museum. "By inviting young people into Maryland's Black history through joy, creativity, and hands-on discovery, we are planting seeds of pride, confidence, and possibility that will grow for generations."

The Kid Zone and related programming are made possible through the generous support of the Baltimore City Mayor's Office, United Way of Central Maryland, Truist Bank, Freeman and Jackie Hrabowski, M&T Bank, AEGON Transamerica Foundation, and Vernon Reid.

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About Kid Zone: Lifting as We Climb

Guided by the spirit of “Lifting as We Climb,” Kid Zone introduces young visitors to Maryland’s Black history, art, and culture through hands-on discovery and play. Designed for ages 6–13, with select activities for younger children, the exhibit is organized around three core themes: activism, creating, and community.

Interactive elements such as lift-and-drop panels, spin discs, sliders, and creative stations allow children to explore stories of art, dance, music, and objects from the museum’s collection. A large illustrated Maryland map highlights Black people, places, and contributions from across the state, while a cozy reading tent offers a quiet space for reflection.

Public Kid Zone Opening at King Day 2026 Celebration

Monday, January 19, 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Kids Free Admission

The public opening of KidZone will take place during the museum’s annual King Day Celebration, a day dedicated to honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy through the voices, creativity, and leadership of young people. This year’s theme centers on youth activism, from the children who marched and protested during the Civil Rights Movement to the young organizers and changemakers leading today’s social justice movements.

Families will be invited to experience Kid Zone as part of a living tribute to Dr. King’s belief that young people are essential to creating change. Through hands-on activities, performances, film screenings, STEAM and robotics, crafts, and interactive dialogue, children will explore how courage, creativity, and community can shape a more just future, just as they do inside the Kid Zone exhibit.

Guests can register on the museum’s website - <https://www.lewismuseum.org/>

New Community Mural: The Children Shall Lead

In celebration of the Kid Zone opening, the museum will also unveil a new President Street community art mural titled **The Children Shall Lead**, created by **Baltimore-based multidisciplinary artist Jordan Lawson**.

The artwork is inspired by the belief that children are not only the future, but active leaders shaping what comes next. Lawson began the creative process by asking a simple but powerful question: “What do you want to be when you grow up?” He posed this question to his godchildren and nephews, using their answers and likenesses as the foundation for the piece.

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Each child in the mural is illustrated wearing the uniform of the profession they envision—a race car driver, football player, doctor, and firefighter—symbolizing ambition, service, discipline, care, courage, and leadership. The children face forward toward the horizon, representing vision, direction, and possibility. Behind them, a city, hospital, fire station, racetrack, and stadium subtly emerge, reinforcing the idea that the future is still being built and that children are central to shaping it.

The mural is designed to feel hopeful, empowering, and intentional, honoring children's dreams and their power to lead with imagination, purpose, and heart.

About the Artist: Jordan Lawson

Jordan Lawson was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Digital Art and Design from Towson University in 2015. His work explores contemporary themes and popular culture through digital design, illustration, and multimedia. His process emphasizes research, intentional storytelling, and originality, allowing him to capture the uniqueness of people, life, and lived experience.

For more information, visit www.lewismuseum.org, follow the [@lewismuseum](https://www.instagram.com/lewismuseum) on social media: Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and LinkedIn, or contact Crystal Turner | Director of Communications & External Relations at crystal.turner@lewismuseum.org.

About The Lewis Museum

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture documents, interprets, and preserves the complex experiences, contributions, and culture of Black people in Maryland. The museum serves as a catalyst for sustained change by providing programs, exhibitions, and bold conversations that educate and challenge.

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