

# High schoolers organize market for Black-owned businesses, artists

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Some Winnipeg high schoolers have spent months on a plan they believe will build up Black-owned local businesses and artists while giving them a platform to grow their brands.



MIKE DEAL / FREE PRESS From left, students Kathryn Sacher, Kataali Stoller and Edom Getachew, with a poster promoting the Black History Month Night Market which will take place at Collège Jeanne-Sauvé on February 27.

Students from Collège Jeanne-Sauvé and Collège Béliveau are hosting the Black History Month Night Market at CJS Thursday.

Kataali Stoller, Edom Getachew and Kathryn Sacher are the students who took charge of organizing the night, along with a dozen more classmates.

The Grade 11 and 12 students said Black-owned businesses and artists are often under-represented, and the market could give them an opportunity to be highlighted.

The group members reached out to Black-owned businesses in the city, and the result is that they will host 17 vendors who make and sell items ranging from clothing to coffee to art.

The businesses and artists were offered free tables and can sell whatever they want.

The three students have been planning the event since November as part of their school's United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization club, which aims to solve various human rights problems in the community.

The free-admission event is open to all.

"Even though our school is predominantly white, we can then have these groups of people and these businesses be able to be accessible to more community members and have it an 'everyone' event," said Sacher. "Maybe you don't go to these events because you feel like it might not be your space, but this is a spot for everyone."

Winnipeg Juno-nominated singer-songwriter Kelly Bado will deliver a 20-minute performance at the start of the night.

Getachew said having Bado perform will be a highlight.

"Music really does bring people together," said Getachew. "I think having her be there, she'll attract a new audience to this... and it will just bring it all together."

Educational Assistant Rhonda Timmerman, who oversees the students' club agreed that Bado will likely attract people.

"We also want to make it an evening out," she said.

Vendors at the event include Negash Coffee, infinity.clo, Vicious Cakes and Clothes By Gift.

The market runs from 7-9 p.m. at CJS, located at 1128 Dakota St.

The students said they hope the market becomes an annual student-run event. Getachew said she wants to motivate other schools to take on similar programs.

"I feel like it can only go up from here," she said.