



June 24, 2022

'GMA3: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW' HEADS TO NEW ORLEANS

Co-Anchors T.J. Holmes, Amy Robach Head to the Big Easy with Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Jen Ashton to Celebrate ESSENCE Fest

To kick off this year's ESSENCE Festival of Culture™ presented by Coca-Cola®, ABC News' "GMA3: What You Need to Know" co-anchors Amy Robach and T.J. Holmes and ABC News Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Jen Ashton will host a special broadcast originating from the heart of New Orleans at Brennan's in the French Quarter.

On Thursday, June 30, the "GMA3" team will be live from "The Big Easy" to kick off the festival, which ends on Sunday, July 3. Drawing more than 500,000 attendees annually over the holiday weekend, ESSENCE Fest is one of the largest festivals in the country.

As DJ D-Nice spins throughout the show, Robach, Holmes and Dr. Ashton will interview actress Marsai Martin and New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell, and look at the hottest fashion trends to expect at this year's festival with ESSENCE beauty and fashion editor Blake Newby. The show will also give viewers a look back at the history and beginnings of ESSENCE Fest and detail how it became the massive celebration of Black culture it is today with ESSENCE CEO Caroline Wanga.

"GMA3" executive producer Catherine McKenzie said, "After these last few years, as cities are opening their doors to embrace tourists, we are excited to take the show on the road and capture the joy throughout ESSENCE Fest and New Orleans. We hope this coverage will shine a light on this important celebration and help grow appreciation for the amazing contributions of Black culture to American society."

"As the nation's largest festival by per day attendance, the ESSENCE Festival of Culture is the crown jewel of celebrating Blackness, which fuels commerce, capital, and capacity that garners true economic impact for our global community," said Wanga. "We are excited to return to New Orleans live and thrilled that there are options for virtual participation, that our full diasporic family, through our unapologetic "It's The Black Joy for Me" manifesto, is happy to share with GMA3."

In addition, this year, The Walt Disney Company is the exclusive entertainment sponsor for ESSENCE Fest, bringing talent, exclusive screenings and experiences from across the Company's iconic brands and touchpoints, including ABC, ABC News, Disney Branded Television, Disney Cruise Line, Disney+, Disney Studios Content, Disney Television Studios, Disneyland Resort, ESPN, Freeform, FX, Hulu, Marvel Studios, National Geographic, Onyx Collective, Pixar and Walt Disney World Resort. Specific programming, experiences and talent appearances will be announced next week. For more information about Essence Fest, click [here](#).

Follow "GMA3" and the journey to ESSENCE Fest on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). For more information, attendees can download the ESSENCE app or join virtually on [Essencefestival.com](#).

ABOUT ESSENCE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Essence Communications is the number one—and only 100% Black-owned—media, technology and commerce company at scale dedicated to Black women and communities. With a community of more than 31 million Black women, ESSENCE inspires a global audience through diverse storytelling and immersive original content rooted in Culture, Equity and Celebration. The brand's multi-platform presence in/ publishing, experiential and online encompasses its namesake magazine; digital, video and social platforms; television specials; books; and signature live events, including Black Women in Music, Black Women in Hollywood, ESSENCE Black Women in Sports, Fashion House, Street Style and the ESSENCE Festival of Culture.

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