



For Macy's External Communications

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For The 369th Experience

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**The 369th Experience to perform in
2024 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®**

*Macy's Invites Harlem Hellfighters Reenactment Band to
New York City in November 2024 to Perform and Honor the Legendary Regiment*

WASHINGTON, D.C. & NEW YORK, NY – September 14, 2023 – Today, The 369th Experience was selected to perform in the 2024 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®. This will mark the first Macy's Parade appearance by the band. In November 2024, The 369th Experience will join the Parade to the call of "Let's Have a Parade," the iconic phrase that has signaled the start of every Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade since 1924.

Founded by Stephany B. Neal, The 369th Experience is a marching band dedicated to acknowledging, educating and preserving the legacy of The 369th Infantry Regiment, also known as The Harlem Hellfighters, a regiment made up of African American and Puerto Rican soldiers, which was one of the longest-serving and most decorated units of the American Expeditionary Force in World War I. To ensure this history is never forgotten, the band is comprised of 65 talented young musicians from HBCUs and other schools from across the country.

Each year, the Macy's Parade Band Committee looks for bands that have the stage presence, musical and marching abilities to captivate millions of live spectators and viewers nationwide. The 369th Experience was selected from more than 100 applicants as one of ten selected bands to march in the 98th edition of the annual holiday spectacle. The band will join the revelry along with other iconic Macy's staples: floats, giant character balloons, clowns and superstar performers galore on Thanksgiving Day 2024, helping to create an unforgettable experience for millions.

"The 369th Experience offers our audience the rare opportunity to witness the legacy of The Harlem Hellfighters, a brave and often overlooked story in American history," said Wesley Whatley, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade creative producer. "We look forward to welcoming these talented musicians to New York City next fall to entertain and inspire viewers nationwide."

“More than 100 years ago, the original 369th Infantry Regimental Band marched in the historic Welcome Home parade after World War I. It is an honor for The 369th Experience Band to follow in the footsteps of those brave soldiers and talented musicians, this time in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade,” said Stephany B. Neal, Executive Producer of The 369th Experience. “Our band is comprised of some of the most skilled college musicians from HBCUs from across the United States, and we are thrilled to march in next year’s Parade.”

As part of the announcement, the Macy’s team presented The 369th Experience with a \$10,000 fundraising kick off. Over the next 14 months, The 369th Experience will be recruiting students to play in the 2024 Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. If you are interested in joining the band, please visit 369experience.com for more details.

For nearly 100 years, Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade has given thanks to what Macy’s values most — its loyal fans. Thousands of Macy’s colleagues and dedicated volunteers work tirelessly to create a spectacular event that entertains the cheerful crowds and provides joy to millions at home watching on Thanksgiving Day. Stretching down a more than two-mile-long route in New York City, the spectacle is alive with gleaming color, music and smiles.

About the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade

The Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade is a national icon that has grown into a world-famous holiday event. For nearly 100 years, the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade has marked the official start of the holiday season. Growing in size and scale, the Parade features Macy’s signature giant character balloons, fabulous floats, incredible marching bands, celebrities, clowns, dance and performance groups, and the one and only Santa Claus, spreading holiday cheer. For more information on the Macy’s Parade, please visit www.macys.com/parade.

About The 369th Experience

The 369th Experience is part of a series of events endorsed by the World War I Centennial Commission and sponsored in part by The Doughboy Foundation, the National Endowment of the Arts, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Ford Foundation, the NBA, the National Basketball Players Association Foundation, Google Arts & Culture, Roberts Ryan, and founding sponsor The Coca Cola Foundation, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of World War I. Celebrity supporters include Jason Moran, Christian McBride, Bobby Sanabria, Sean Jones, Jon Batiste, and Mercedes Ellington. Led by Bandmaster James Reese Europe and Drum Major and Lead Vocalist Noble Sissle, the famous Harlem Hellfighters regimental band’s spirited arrangements of ragtime, jazz and blues first introduced European audiences to the novel sounds of this American music. This new 369th Experience Student Band will be taught the history and repertoire of the original Harlem Hellfighters Band and will retrace their steps, performing the band’s repertoire at centennial celebrations in New York City; Brest and Paris, France; and a host of other historical locales.

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