Barbers Unite For a Cause in NYC

July 11, 2014 By Kate Ferguson

Several hours ago, Cutting for a Cure returned to host this year's 48-Hour Health Fair and Haircutting Marathon. The event kicked off at Denny Moe's Superstar Barbershop in New York City's historic neighborhood of Harlem. The marathon showcases 12 celebrity barbers cutting hair for 48 hours straight to raise funds to provide educational resources, guidance and information about the prevention of deadly diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure, prostate cancer, HIV/AIDS, and many more, that disproportionately affect the minority community.

Denny Moe, a.k.a. Dennis Mitchell, is the barbershop's owner and founder of Cutting for a Cure. In 2010, Mitchell was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. He was unaware that he had the disease. "I've probably had it a long time, but I didn't realize it until I became familiar with the symptoms," Mitchell says.

That's when he decided to become a health care activist. Mitchell wanted to provide access to health education in a relaxed setting, so he encouraged folks to come on down to his barbershop.

Today, the marathon gives community residents the opportunity to take advantage of free medical screenings, education panels on health, live entertainment, celebrity guests and special events. This year, the event's theme is "Renew You--Mind, Body and Spirit."

For the entertainment component of the event, the Celebrity Summer Stage is hosted by Toni Belafonte and offers a lineup of diverse artists that include Plly A, Jessica Betts, Brianna Collette, Ohene Cornelius, Felix Ramos, Raye 6, Anthony Wayne, among other entertainers.

The event features Marsha R. Bonner, a motivational speaker, social activist and founder of the H.U.G.S (Helping Us Grow Spiritually) Movement and one of Cutting for a Cure's partners. The organization's health partners include the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Inc., Harlem Hospital, Metropolitan Hospital, BOOM!Health NYC and the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, among others.

The event runs through the weekend and ends on Sunday, July 13th.

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