



Terry Chaka lights a unity candle during a Kwanzaa celebration at the Baobab Cultural Center in 2014.
LAUREN PETRACCA/
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Rochester Kwanzaa Coalition celebrates a week of community, history and culture

Genae Shields Rochester Democrat and Chronicle | USA TODAY NETWORK

This year, the Rochester Kwanzaa Coalition celebrates the holidays with the theme, “Kwanzaa 2023: Harambee Let’s Pull Together.” • Created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Ron Karenga, Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday that celebrates history, family, community and culture. • The Rochester Kwanzaa Coalition was founded by Dr. David Anderson, and as dedicated over 30 years to celebrating Black culture and bringing the community together to recognize the seven principles; unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

In honor of those principles, the coalition has planned six different events that will be held at local libraries, museums and other local spaces. They aim to spread cultural awareness and encourage individuals to attend the events and learn more about the holiday.

Here’s what they have planned for the week:

Umoja (unity)

To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

- **Date:** Dec. 26
- **Location:** City Hall Atrium, 30 Church St.
- **Time:** 4-7 p.m.

Kujichagulia (self-determination)

To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.

- **Date:** Dec. 27
- **Location:** Phillis Wheatley Library, 33 Dr. Samuel McCree Way
- **Time:** 4-7 p.m.

Ujima (collective work and responsibility)

To build and maintain our community together and make our community’s problems our problems and to solve them together.

- **Date:** Dec.28
- **Location:** Memorial Art Gallery, 500 University Ave.
- **Time:** 5-8 p.m.

Ujamaa (cooperative economics)

To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.

- **Date:** Dec. 29
- **Location:** The Identogo, 803 West Ave.
- **Time:** 4-7 p.m.

Nia (purpose)

To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

- **Date:** Dec. 30

- **Location:** Rundel Library, 115 South Ave.
- **Time:** 4-7 p.m.

Kuumba (creativity)

To do always as much as we can to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

- **Date:** Dec. 31
- **Location:** Montgomery Center, 10 Cady St.
- **Time:** 6-9 p.m.

Imani (faith)

To believe with all our hearts in our people and the righteousness and victory of our struggle. Individuals celebrating this day are encouraged to spend it at home with friends and family.

- **Date:** Jan. 1, 2024
- **Location:** Personal celebrations
- **Time:** All day

Visit facebook.com/RochesterKwanzaaCoalition to learn more about the organization and their events. Learn more about the history Kwanzaa at nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/kwanzaa.