



**NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office**

***Lee Harris, Mayor***

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**SHELBY COUNTY MAYOR LEE HARRIS, COMMISSIONER MICKELL M. LOWERY AND REGINALD MILTON CELEBRATE THE 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SOULSVILLE USA HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING WITH SOUTH MEMPHIS COMMUNITY**

*The annual holiday event, presented by local artists and community groups, will feature musical performances, treats and Christmas traditions.*

- WHO:** Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris, Commissioner Mickell M. Lowery, Soulsville USA Neighborhoods Development District, Youth Performances from Craigmont High School Band, and MBAA Youth Ensemble
- WHAT:** 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Soulsville USA Holiday Tree Lighting
- WHEN:** 4:30 p.m., Saturday, November 18, 2023
- WHERE:** 1048 S. Bellevue Blvd., Memphis, TN 38106 (across from the SMA Laundromat)

**Shelby County, TN** –November 18, 2023, Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris will be joined by Commissioner Mickell M. Lowery, South Memphis Alliance Founder Reginald Milton, and community members to host the seventh annual Soulsville USA Holiday Tree Lighting. The

event is presented by Shelby County Government partnering with the Soulsville USA Neighborhoods Development District, South Memphis Alliance, Memphis Black Arts Alliance, LeMoyne-Owen College, LeMoyne-Owen College Community Development Corporation, Knowledge Quest, Soulsville Foundation, SCORE CDC, and Memphis Music Magnet.

The annual event has become a neighborhood favorite, bringing the community together for the holidays. During its first year in 2017, then Shelby County Commissioner Reginald Milton worked with then State Senator Lee Harris on the event.

The event will feature several musical guests like “Queen of Memphis Soul,” Carla Thomas. A reading of *Twas the Night Before Christmas*, lighting the 42-foot Christmas tree, and an appearance from Santa Claus with Memphis Fire Department. Four notable attendees doing work in areas such as the arts and community service will be honored as Shelby County Shining Stars by Mayor Harris.

**Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris:** “I am delighted to see how this year’s Soulsville USA Holiday Tree Lighting has become a long-standing holiday tradition for families. I can’t wait to see all the kiddos from the community attend and celebrate the joy of the holiday season. This would not be possible without the partnerships in South Memphis. I hope to see you out to enjoy the festive fun.”

**Commissioner Mickell M. Lowery, Shelby County Board of Commissioners:** “It is honor to represent South Memphis and all of District Eight and be part of this year’s holiday festive. I enjoy participating and connecting with those who attend. The tree has been part of a family holiday tradition in South Memphis. I am please to host this year and hope to see you there.”

**Reginald Milton, Founder, South Memphis Alliance, Inc.:** “Participating in the annual Soulsville USA Holiday Tree Lighting is always a pleasure. This has been a long-standing tradition for South Memphis during the holiday season. I want to thank all of our partners this year, including Mayor Lee Harris, and the Soulsville USA Neighborhoods Development District, for helping to bring a little holiday joy to the community.”

**Cedric Hunt, Shelby County Constituent Services Coordinator:** “I am elated to host this year’s Soulsville USA Holiday Tree Lighting. I cannot wait for families to enjoy the festivities and receive a few surprises during the event. This will continue to be a fun tradition for families to gather for.”

**Rebecca Hutchinson, Executive Director, SCORE CDC:** “The Soulsville USA Holiday Tree Lighting is a wonderful gift for our community. This amazing partnership of the neighborhood, our Shelby County Mayor, Lee Harris, and Commissioner Mickell Lowery, along with South Memphis Alliance Executive Director, Reginald Milton, have made this phenomenal event possible since 2017. We are always thrilled to showcase our community talent, well known artists, and give special recognition to neighborhood leaders.”

**Lar’Juanette Williams, Executive Director, Memphis Black Arts Alliance:** “As always, Memphis Black Arts Alliances is honored to serve with Mayor Lee Harris to present an unforgettable annual festive event to the Soulsville USA community and this year, we promise not to disappoint! This year’s lineup of talent, production crew, SNDD Board members and mayoral staff support have worked overtime to present an outstanding event that is entertaining, heartfelt, and celebratory! Happy Holidays everyone. We are excited!”

(End of Release)