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KWANZAA FEATURED ON THIS YEAR'S HOLIDAY U.S. POSTAGE STAMP

CHICAGO — The festive mood of Kwanzaa was captured on Sat. Oct. 16 when the new 37-cent First-Class Kwanzaa stamp was issued by the U.S. Postal Service at the DuSable Museum of African American History, Chicago. The Kwanzaa stamps are available nationwide today.

The new self-adhesive stamp is available in a pane of 20 and is a new and different design from the first Kwanzaa stamp that was issued in 1997. Art director Derry Noyes and stamp artist Daniel Minter strove to create a design that appropriately balances formality with a celebratory, festive mood. The seven days of Kwanzaa, and the seven principles they signify, are represented by seven figures in colorful robes.



“As a way of communicating with the special people in our lives during the holiday season, we rely on the tradition of sending holiday cards. The cards may carry seasonal messages inside, but the season’s greetings really begin on the outside of the envelope,” said Akinyinka Akinyele, Chicago District Manager, U.S. Postal Service. “These stamps will serve as reminders of the spirit of goodwill we all share during the most joyous of seasons.”

Joining Akinyele at the ceremony were Antoinette Wright, President and CEO, DuSable Museum of African American History; Melody Spann-Cooper, President and CEO, WVON Radio, who served as master of ceremonies; Daniel Minter, Stamp Designer; D. Kucha Brown Lee, Storyteller; Chicago Performance Cluster Choir; and Kelvin Mack, Chicago Postmaster, U.S. Postal Service..

Kwanzaa is a non-religious African American holiday that takes place over seven days, from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1. It draws on African traditions and takes its name from the Swahili phrase

for “first fruits.” Its origins are in harvest celebrations that occurred in ancient and modern times in various places across the African continent.

These traditions were synthesized and reinvented in 1966 by Maulana Karenga as the contemporary cultural festival known as Kwanzaa.

The holiday is intended to be a celebration of seven principles—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith—based on values prevalent in African culture.

To see the Kwanzaa stamp, visit the Postal Service Web site and open this news release at www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free telephone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. A selection of stamps and other philatelic items are available at the online Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. In addition, custom-framed prints of original stamp art are available at www.postalartgallery.com.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to more than 141 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.

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