



Central Texas African American Family Support Conference 2026

Greater Mt. Zion Church | Austin TX

The Survivors Ball Showcase: A Cultural Celebration of Healing, Identity & Empowerment

Thursday Apr 16, 2026



Survivors Ball Showcase – Official Event Overview

The Survivors Ball Showcase is a multidisciplinary storytelling and fashion production presented as part of the 2026 Central Texas African American Family Support Conference (CTAAFSC). This year's conference theme:

"Whole People. Whole Communities. Every Voice Matters. Every Story Heals."

The showcase creates a structured space where survivor testimony, artistic expression, and fashion storytelling come together to support community awareness, dignity-centered reflection, and healing.

Rather than presenting trauma for spectacle, the experience is grounded in respect, consent, and intentional storytelling. The goal is to create a shared learning environment where participants and attendees can witness how creative expression contributes to healing, resilience, and community connection.

Purpose & Educational Intent

The Survivors Ball Showcase uses testimony, spoken reflection, and fashion as a framework for exploring identity, resilience, recovery, and transformation. It offers a learning-centered experience where survivors, allies, designers, artists, and community members can participate in a shared environment shaped by respect and emotional care.

The experience invites attendees to listen with intention, reflect without judgment, and consider how creative expression can support healing and connection. Speakers and participants are encouraged to focus on insight, growth, and what is being reclaimed or carried forward, rather than detailed retelling of harm.

Production Structure

The Survivors Ball Showcase unfolds over a continuous 90-minute segment and is structured to support emotional continuity, operational clarity, and participant care.

Two-Act Experience

Act I – Voices That Heal

Act I centers on live testimony and spoken reflection from self-identified survivor speakers and spoken word artists. Each participant shares a brief reflection rooted in personal experience, perspective, and healing. These pieces are designed to offer truth, clarity, and presence while helping create a respectful atmosphere for community listening.

Speakers are introduced by name only, allowing each voice to stand on its own. The emphasis is not on performance for spectacle, but on honest expression that contributes to understanding, compassion, and collective reflection.

Act II – The Runway Testament

Act II concludes the showcase through a structured fashion presentation in which the runway becomes a platform for visual testimony. Designers present collections connected to specific survivor causes, and models walk while short, recorded reflections play over instrumental music.

This layering of voice, garment, and movement allows personal stories to be experienced through both sound and visual expression. Each collection is shaped by themes such as resilience, identity, healing, transformation, and reclamation, with survivor cause colors integrated throughout the design language.

Symbolic Survivor Cause Colors

These colors function as a shared visual language across the showcase, helping connect testimony, design, and representation within the full program.

Silver = Physical disabilities /
dismemberment

Black = Grief, identity-based trauma,
or personal loss

Rainbow = LGBTQIA+ identity,
transitions, or rejection

White = Suicide loss

Green = Mental health conditions

Red = HIV/AIDS / substance recovery

Teal = Invisible disabilities / chronic illness

Pink = Medical recovery journeys

Gold = Autism & neurodivergence

Purple = Domestic violence / child abuse

Community & Representation

The showcase centers inclusive representation across race, age, body type, gender identity, ability, and lived experience. Participants may identify as survivors of physical or invisible disabilities, chronic illness, mental health conditions, medical recovery, grief or identity-based trauma, autism and neurodivergence, LGBTQIA+ identity-related harm or rejection, domestic violence, child abuse, suicide loss, HIV/AIDS, or substance recovery.

Closing Context

Through testimony, fashion, and creative collaboration, the Survivors Ball Showcase offers a model for how artistic expression can support learning, presence, and community healing. It is designed to honor each participant's voice while creating a shared experience rooted in dignity, care, and transformation.

Call to action:

- To learn more about or Register for the full CTAAFSC conference experience and programming, visit www.CTAAFSC.com