

Pinellas Diaspora Arts wraps month-long Urban Futures Festival celebration with Comicon

By Isis Climes December 2, 2025



Photo by Isis Climes: Cosplayers standing on stage. #cosplay #comics #blerd #fyp

It's a wrap! Pinellas Diaspora Arts Project (PDAP) officially wrapped up its annual month-long celebration of art, tech, and community for the Tampa Bay Urban Futures Festival on November 30th, 2025.

PDAP bridges the gap between art and technology through community-focused events that bring resources to residents of the Tampa Bay area. The entire month of November, PDAP invited the Tampa Bay community into a world of art, technology, and imagination with a scheduled line-up of free events (<https://tbuffest.com/>).

The series opened with "The Unseen Thread: Women's Art as Movement" on November 1st, showcasing a group exhibition honoring the complexity of women across generations and cultures. The second week of the festival featured "We Are the Medicine: Culture, Health,

and Civic Healing,” hosted by Afroflorida Media Collective, and showed documented shorts by AFMC filmmakers and students. PDAP held two events in week three: “From Code to Capital”, hosted by Black Innovation Leaders of Florida & “A Journey of Healing through Sound and Art,” sponsored by Warehouse Arts District (WADA). Week four wrapped up the festival’s annual celebration with two events, starting with the “3rd Annual Community Tech Day”, sponsored by Community Tech Experiences Project (CTEP), and ending with “Tampa Bay Urban Futures Comicon” with youth performances, zine workshops, and an author panel.

PDAP’s last event went out with a bang, with the Tampa Bay Urban Futures Comicon on Saturday, November 22nd, 2025, at the Enoch Davis Center, following PDAP’s 3rd Annual Community Tech Day, presented earlier that day.

Comicon offered free comic books, a cosplay runway, a black author expo/panel with writers from across the region, and tech-focused booths. From school-aged children to costumed adults, the event was filled with eager attendees milling around the community center, engaging with others who shared their interests.

Upon entry, there were gift bags with free comics, candy, and flyers for those who filled out a free survey, a snack station, and three rooms where attendees could split their time. The first room was like an art gallery, featuring a 3D printing area, a DJ mix station, and a direct-to-film printing station. The second room was the event’s tech room, which housed VR headsets from Eckerd College, a mini drone and coding station from FEF Codemasters, and a flight simulator from Infinity Aero Club Tampa. The final room was an artist alley set-up that hosted author tables, anime booths, a zine workshop, and a stage for the afternoon’s youth performances.

Greggo Buckshon from Rare Hues Collection hosted an entrepreneurial tech booth where individuals could make their own clothing by ironing on printed materials to their shirts. Buckshon’s most significant takeaway for those who attended Tampa Bay Urban Future Comicon was the need for more collaborative community events to promote financial growth.

“The more we collaborate and bring resources together, the better and more impactful the events can be for the communities we are engaging with. Lend knowledge and resources that help individuals use their skills and creativity in a way that leads to economic development and financial growth,” said Buckshon.

PDAP’s board member **Jake-ann Jones** hosted the close-out event.

“We all want joyful, new, mind-expanding experiences that connect us in safe, easy-to-access community spaces. We especially want to see our youth smiling, laughing, excited, and at ease while learning and sharing what they can do,” said Jones.

Jones wanted attendees to take away a new experience from the event.

“Hopefully, this kind of experience offers people a reminder that there’s always something new to experience. We should be actively looking to expose our kids to new learning experiences and activities that expand our youths’– and our own — minds, curiosity, and sense of future possibilities,” said Jones.

If you missed this year’s festivities, no worries! PDAP is eager to provide more opportunities for the community to engage with in the upcoming year!

PDAP’s annual Tampa Bay Chalk Festival will be hosted on the Deuces (St. Petersburg’s historic neighborhood on 22nd Street South) in May 2026, along with several civic education panels, online workshops, and school-age programming through the Reaching Our Youth Artists League (ROYAL) Project. Additionally, Afroflorida Media Collective, a media arm of PDAP, will be exhibiting mini-documentaries by local filmmakers at DreamMakerz Productions’ Sunshine City Film Festival in January and Black Film Festival in February 2026. PDAP also plans to return with the second year of the 2026 Urban Futures Festival, followed by another Community Tech Day/Urban Futures Comicon.

To stay up to date with PDAP’s events, follow the organization’s social media accounts or sign up via the website for info.



Photo by April Cason: Red Power Ranger (left), Wolverine (middle), Black Power Ranger (right), and Blade (middle). #comics #WeAreStPete #blerd #fyp

More Comicon Photos

Photo by Isis Climes



