



Von Braun Center is Certified Sensory Inclusive
VBC is first facility to bring KultureCity to Huntsville

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Huntsville, Ala. – KultureCity has partnered with the Von Braun Center (VBC) to make the facility and all programs and events hosted within to be sensory inclusive. This new initiative will promote an accommodating and positive experience for all guests and fans with a sensory issue who visit the Von Braun Center. The VBC is the first facility in Huntsville to partner with nationally-recognized KultureCity.

The certification process for becoming a sensory inclusive facility entailed the VBC staff to be trained through materials provided by KultureCity on how to recognize those guests and fans with sensory needs and how to handle a sensory overload situation. Sensory bags, equipped with noise canceling headphones (provided by Puro Sound Labs), fidget tools, verbal cue cards (produced in conjunction with Boardmaker), sunglasses and weighted lap pads will now be available at the VBC during all events for those who may feel overwhelmed by the environment. Upon arrival, guests may look for the KultureCity signage for bag pickup, or they may ask any VBC personnel for the location. Currently, there are two locations for bag pickup – one inside Propst Arena and one at the Mark C. Smith Concert Hall. Guests who are interested in checking out a bag should ask any Guest Services member.

“We always strive to provide the best experience to everyone who visits our facilities, no matter what event they are attending,” said VBC Executive Director Steve Maples. “We want every individual entering our doors to feel comfortable and to have a great time. This new partnership with KultureCity has given us the knowledge and tools to help better serve our guests who may have sensory challenges.”

Sensory sensitivities or challenges with sensory regulation are often experienced by individuals with autism, dementia, PTSD and other similar conditions. One of the major barriers for these individuals is sensitivity to over stimulation and noise, which is an enormous part of the environment in a venue like the Von Braun Center. With this new certification, the VBC is now better prepared to assist guests with sensory sensitivities by providing the most comfortable and accommodating experience possible when attending any event.

Prior to attending an event, families can download the free KultureCity App where one can view what sensory features are available and where they can access them. Also on the App is the Social Story, which will provide a preview of what to expect while enjoying an event at the Von Braun Center.

“To know that you soon will be able to see families attend a basketball game, a true community binding experience, with their loved ones who have a sensory challenge and who were not able to previously attend, is truly a heartwarming moment. Our communities are what shapes our lives and to know that the VBC is willing

to go the extra mile to ensure that everyone, no matter their ability, is included in their community is amazing.”
Dr. Julian Maha, Co-Founder, KultureCity.

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About the Von Braun Center

The Von Braun Center is a multi-purpose facility located in downtown Huntsville, Alabama. The VBC offers multiple venues for presenting cultural, educational, entertainment, sporting and social events. With over 170,000 square feet of flexible meeting space the VBC is able to accommodate events of all sizes.

About KultureCity

KultureCity is a leading non-profit recognized nationwide for using their resources to revolutionize and effect change in the community for those with sensory needs; not just those with Autism. Since the program's inception, KultureCity has created over 350 sensory inclusive venues in 4 countries; this includes special events such as: NFL Pro-Bowl, NFL Super Bowl, MLB All Star Weekend. KultureCity has won many awards for its efforts: NASCAR Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award in 2017, Cleveland Cavaliers' Quiet Space Sensory Room at Quicken Loans Arena was a finalist for the 2018 Stadium Business Award, and the 2018 Clio Sports Silver for social good in partnership with Cleveland Cavaliers/Quicken Loans Arena. Recently, KultureCity was awarded one of the World's Most Innovative Companies for 2019 by FastCompany.