

Meeting of the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission January 10, 2022 Associate Director's Report

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NCAAHC Digital Engagement

Communication Goals

- Continue growth of communications platforms
- Increase accessibility and awareness of new and existing resources

Communications Platforms

- Website - The AAHC website remains a popular tool for constituents. In fact, amongst Department of Natural and Cultural Resources sites our website was amongst the top three for growth just behind our colleagues at the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and the NC Transportation Museum.

2020 Traffic	2021 Traffic	% Change
18,595	27,778	49.38% increase

- Social media – Fiscal year 2021-2022
 - *Facebook*

Month	Followers	Impressions ("Reach")
July	436	6755
August	496	3365
September	535	2115
October	576	4061
November	629	1995
December	629	6666

- *Instagram*

Month	Followers	Impressions ("Reach")
July	265	918
August	301	1096
September	381	423
October	411	392

November	442	424
December	442	956

o *YouTube*

Month	Subscribers	Views	Video Impressions
July	81	28	84
August	81	45	155
September	87	86	381
October	89	105	407
November	90	114	521
December	91	97	733

o *Email via Mail Chimp*

Newsletter	Subscribers	Open Rate	Click Rate	Unsubscribe Rate
General	1732	41.36%	7.99%	0%
Arts	40	16.2%	4.6%	0%

- o *Press releases* – traditional news media (including the black press – created a black press list including traditional publications, online, bloggers, influencers, etc.), local, national, museum/industry)

NC Civil Rights Trail

The NC African American Heritage Commission continues to think expansively about the potential for African American heritage trails to shape North Carolina’s tourism infrastructure, and to boost local economies. This work is being completed in collaboration with the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, the NC Office of Archives & History, and Visit NC.

Program Updates

Round II of the marker applications cycles closed on October 31, 2021. Round III is due to open on February 1, 2022. After a highly successful second round, we are excited to continue spreading the word about this program. To assist in spreading the word, the Associate Director completed a number of updates on [the NC Civil Rights Trail website](#). The updates were completed with an eye towards accessibility and assistance to applicants, in addition to embedding [the Virtual Civil Rights Trail](#), and featuring photographs of markers as they are being installed.

Contractor

Since June 2021, Ashley Adams has served as our Trail Coordinator. Her responsibilities included marketing the program, providing technical assistance to constituents, facilitating the application process, and engaging our advisory committee. Her current contract ends in June 2022. Ideally, we will secure additional funding to renew her contract and continue her work through Round III of the Civil rights Trail. Additionally, her role facilitates all trail aspects of the Green

Book Project and Freedom Roads initiatives. Ashley has also worked in collaboration with an additional contractor, our Trial Design Coordinator Maya Brooks to execute marketing campaigns and wayside design.

Round I Awarded Markers

The NC Civil Rights Trail Advisory Committee met and confirmed the first three markers on the trail. Two of the three markers have been installed at their locations.

- *Installed* - New Ahoskie Baptist Church in Ahoskie, NC – a meeting place where church members led civil rights efforts to expand access to public offices, resources, and employment
- *Installed* - Adkin High School Walk Out in Kinston, NC – a student led event in protesting a lack of facilities
 - Dr. Valerie Johnson, Angela Thorpe, Adrienne Nirdé, and Bill Holmes were able to attend the dedication ceremony on behalf of DNCR on November 20, 2021.
- *Scheduled to be installed in February 2022* - Shelby Sit-ins in Shelby, NC – Cleveland High School students organized sit-ins at various uptown businesses

Round II Awarded Markers

The NC Civil Rights Trail Advisory Committee met on December 2, 2021 to confirm an additional set of trail markers. Out of 20 applications, 11 were approved, and 2 were deferred with favor. They are as follows:

Market Subject	Marker Description
James H. Jones	First Black school board member in Northampton County, champion of school integration and equity movements (<i>deferred with favor</i>)
Johnson v. Branch	1966 federal appeals court case to protect teachers involved in civil rights movement
Halifax County Voters Movement	Organization that led county-wide voter registration drives, protests, and other civil rights activities
Greensboro 6	Six black men teed up at Gillespie Golf Course, paved way for 1962 integration
Brevard Football Team	Brevard High School integrated in 1963, integrated team was 1963 AAA co-champion
Monroe Wade-Ins	Youth protested in 1957 and 1961 for right to swim in segregated public pool
Hubert Eaton Sr.	Doctor, civil rights leader, and tennis mentor. Known for advocacy to improve schools and medical care (<i>deferred with favor</i>)
Blair Park, High Point	African American doctors played golf to challenge segregation at city's Blair Park course
Kinston Sit-Ins	Organized sit-ins at Standard Drug #2 in 1960 and 1961
Elizabeth City Sit-Ins	ECSU student-led sits at W.T. Grant lunch counter in 1960
Joseph H. and Elwyna H. Holt, Sr	Holt family led effort to integrate Raleigh school system, 1956-1959
Ocean City	An African American beach resort, established in 1949
Cameron Village Sit-Ins	Protests against segregated lunch counters, acquittals marked civil rights victory

The North Carolina

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Recipients have been officially notified. Orders are due to be placed with the foundry, Sewah Studios this month. Departmental leadership has expressed interest in attending upcoming marker ceremonies and will be updated as they are scheduled.

Africa to Carolina

IMLS Award for MH-245684-OMS-20, "Africa to Carolina: Next Steps in the Journey". The AAHC received \$90,955 to complete work from 7/1/2020 - 12/31/2022 to implement the next phase of the organization's Africa to Carolina initiative.

Project Launch: September 2020

Staffing

The grant award provides \$40,000 for a graduate student fellow to lead the bulk of the project work from December 2020-December 2022. The fellow will develop the exhibit and organize content for the web contractor. In January 2021, Amber Pelham was confirmed for this role. Amber has been working steadily to complete new research on North Carolina disembarkation sites and the slave trade in the colony of North Carolina. She has created a proposed outline and drafts of text for an exhibit that will be installed at Historic Bath, Brunswick Town/Ft. Anderson, Edenton, Somerset Place, Tryon Palace, Roanoke Island Festival Park, and the North Carolina Maritime Museum at Beaufort. Due to some shifts in the editing process, the exhibit is due to be completed and presented to the Africa to Carolina Advisory Board in January 2022 and installed in the first quarter of 2022. At this time Amber will begin her work to create the Africa to Carolina web portal which will serve as an evolving resource for those that are interested in a deeper dive in this history.

The grant award provides \$10,000 for contractor Phil Bicking to develop the web portal. As an experienced web developer, Phil has already begun work to set up web infrastructure in order to execute Amber's vision for the web portal which will launch in 2022.

Juneteenth 2022

Following our successful celebration Juneteenth 2021, the Commission is excited to have already begun planning for 2022. Similar to 2021, the Commission is looking to position itself as a resource and to elevate the events of organizations across the state on social media and in the AAHC Newsletter. However, there will be a greater focus on serving as a resource within DNCR. The Department has committed a number of resources to these efforts, including an 11-month temporary Program Coordinator position that will live underneath NCAAHC. This role will also assist with Black History Month. Interviews for this position have occurred and we are excited to be onboarding a new team member soon.

Black Carolinians Speak

This fiscal year with support from the 1772 Foundation in collaboration with the State Archives of North Carolina and the WeGOJA Foundation (the friends group for the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission, we were excited to launch our latest initiative, Black Carolinians Speak. This initiative recognized the difficult era we currently live in,

particularly for African American residents of our state who have been disproportionately impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of this initiative is to gather first person testimonies, letters, music, images, art, and other documents that capture the experiences of African Americans in North Carolina during the global pandemic. Once gathered, these items will be compiled with South Carolinian stories to create a digital exhibit. The digital campaign for this project is created and executed by contractor Malanah Hobgood.

Memory Quilt: Stitching Together African American Archival Collections Across North Carolina

Project Launch: Spring 2022

At the close of November 2021, we were notified by the National Archives National Historical Publications & Records Commission that our Archives Collaborative Planning Grant application had been fully funded in the amount of \$16,500. The impetus of this project began in 2019, when representatives from the NC African American Heritage Commission (AAHC), the State Archives of North Carolina, and the State Library of North Carolina, gathered colleagues together to build strategies to better steward African American archival materials in North Carolina. After several meetings exploring similar concepts in the field, this group committed to developing a North Carolina African American Materials Collection Survey as a first step in the overall project called “Memory Quilt: Stitching Together African American Archival Collections Across North Carolina.” This survey will be designed to capture an overview of the breadth and depth of African American archival materials in North Carolina. The data that is gathered as a result of this survey will provide a foundation to better support archivists, donors, community groups, and a diversity of institutions as they work to steward and preserve these materials.

As a result of the initial meetings of the AAHC and lead project collaborators -the State Archives of North Carolina, the State Library of North Carolina and the Wilson Special Collections Library with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries- several preliminary objectives were identified. A larger project working group was also established to strategize around these objectives, and to establish goals for this collaboration. This working group would now benefit from the focus that a planning grant and an outside consultant can provide in order to codify next steps, create a survey instrument, and generate a plan of work to accomplish the survey as a first goal of the “Memory Quilt” project. It is the desire of the project team to understand what repositories steward the diverse scope of African American-centered archival materials in North Carolina; to help archivists across the state identify their own Archives Collaboratives: Planning Grant Narrative Memory Quilt: Stitching Together African American Archival Collections Across North Carolina 2 institution’s collecting scope as it relates to these materials; to identify split and overlapping collections; to highlight overrepresented and under-documented topics as a means toward potential collections development; to determine what institutions and groups need technical assistance or additional forms of support and consider how institutions and groups might support one another; and, lastly, to foster donor education and relationship-building between repositories and potential donors.

The planning project will be directed by the lead project partner and applicant, the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission, working in close partnership with the North Carolina State Archives and the North Carolina State Library. The work will be shepherded with additional assistance from the project working group, which is comprised of African American colleague experts from archives and libraries across North Carolina.