

Meeting of the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission January 6, 2023 Associate Director's Report

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COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Select Traditional Press Coverage

- Elizabeth City State University. "ECSU and NC Civil Rights Trail to Unveil Historic Marker Honoring Civil Rights Student Activists." *Elizabeth City State University Newsroom*, 3 Oct. 2022, <https://newsroom.ecsu.edu/ecsu-and-north-carolina-civil-rights-trail-to-unveil-historic-marker-honoring-civil-rights-student-activists/>.
- Hui, T. Keung. "Historical Marker Will Honor Black Family's Efforts to Integrate Raleigh Schools." *The News & Observer*, 18 Sept. 2022, <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/education/article265769051.html>.
- Jaeger, Emily. "The Rise and Rebirth of North Carolina's African American Music Trail." *Cardinal & Pine*, 1 Dec. 2022, <https://cardinalpine.com/story/the-rise-and-rebirth-of-north-carolinas-african-american-music-trail/>.
- Limehouse, Jonathan. "Former Monroe Swimming Pool Receives Historic Marker after Fight for Racial Integration." *The Charlotte Observer*, 30 July 2022, www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/article263915556.html.
- Weldon, Luci. "Library Hosts Oasis Spaces: North Carolina Green Book Project." *The Warren Record*, 28 Dec. 2022, https://www.warrenrecord.com/news/article_90798730-86b4-11ed-83a7-ab2dc7c9fcfe.html.

Digital Communications Platforms

Website

	FY 22-23
Pageviews	38,280
Unique Pageviews	30,050
Average Time on Page	00:01:29
New Users	90.5%
Desktop/Mobile	63.8% desktop, 34.8% mobile, 1.37% tablet
Popular Pages	homepage, Africa to Carolina Call for Artists, Civil Rights Trail, Green Book Project, Events

Email via Mail Chimp

Newsletter	Subscribers	Open Rate	Click Rate	Unsubscribe Rate
General	1765	27%	3.7%	0.03%

Social media

Month	Facebook		Instagram		YouTube		
	Followers	Impressions ("Reach")	Followers	Impressions ("Reach")	Subscribers	Views	Video Impressions
July	885	5440	669	676	135	216	12300
August	946	16850	734	734	137	227	20400
September	946	19879	848	13441	139	318	17600
October	976	19451	951	7040	141	235	6900
November	1000	6713	991	1277	142	234	3200
December	1024	6467	1010	953	148	155	2700

Contractor

To assist in facilitating our communication goals and awareness building strategies, the Commission was fortunate to be able to bring on a contract Social Media Coordinator beginning in April 2022. Angelena Castro is serving this role. Her responsibilities include executing a social media strategy for the AAHC Instagram account, creating the editorial calendar for AAHC social media platforms, and creating numerous social media campaigns. Ms. Castro worked previously as a DNCR Marketing Team contractor where she collaborated with the Commission on the initial Green Book Project social media campaigns. She is a graduate of NC Agricultural and Technical State University, and in 2018 she served as an intern in the NCDNCR HBCU/MIHE Internship Program.

PROJECT UPDATES

African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina

The NC Legislature declared 2023 as the North Carolina Year of the Trail as an opportunity to showcase, promote and celebrate our state’s extensive trail systems, including its cultural trails. In recognition of this, the NCAAHC has prioritized cultural trail work for fiscal year ’22-’23. Additionally, the African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina (AAMT), which were developed in partnership with the NCAAHC and the N.C. Arts Council, have come under the stewardship of the NCAAHC. Currently, the NCAAHC is planning for trail reactivation. This will include the launch of in person programming, booking and installing trail-related traveling exhibits, developing digital content, and engaging the community around the future of the trail. We have been strategizing this revitalization of the program in terms of a “hard launch” and “soft launch” and are in the midst of finalizing our proposal and confirming budgeting items to move forward with this work.

AAMT Soft Launch: December 2022 – May 2023

- Continuing social media campaign reintroducing our audiences to the trail and the uniqueness of what is featured on it.

- Collaborating with DNCR Marketing & Communications team to execute Year of the Trail efforts, including a promotional video to be featured at North Carolina Welcome Centers.
- Creation of new physical collateral including rack cards, post cards, t-shirts, stickers, and more.
- Two pop-up events to be hosted in late summer in Kinston and Wilson. Smaller in scope than our planned “hard launch” event, these will be meant to advertise and let our audiences know what is coming up with the trail.
- Strategizing for stakeholder engagement sessions to begin in Fall 2023.

AAMT Hard Launch:

- September 2023 - Kick-off concert event to be hosted in Rocky Mount. We are in the midst of revisiting and making new community connections to determine the best concert and means to execute this event. The concert will feature live artists and covers that contribute to the trail as well as poetry and dance components.

Staffing

To assist in the revisioning of the trail, NCAAHC has been fortunate to contract with Crystal Taylor and her agency, the Underground Collective. A native of eastern North Carolina, Crystal is a cultural heritage professional with over a decade of experience working in support of cultural institutions and within diverse communities to preserve history and culture, and to build awareness of African American musical traditions in North Carolina. She is a graduate of North Carolina Central University, where she earned a degree in Business Administration. She also holds a certificate in Business Foundations from Meredith College. She has served as the Co-Founder and Director of numerous cultural engagement opportunities including The Black Farmers Market (Durham and Raleigh), Black August in the Park (Durham), and Beats n Bars Festival (Durham – the largest hip-hop festival in North Carolina).

Black History Month & Juneteenth

Fiscal year '21-'22 saw the continued formalization of NCAAHC's celebration of Black History Month and Juneteenth on a department and state-wide level. Our hope is to continue this work in fiscal year '22-'23. NCAAHC will continue to serve as a consistent resource to those interested in celebrating. For Black History Month 2023, this will include the launch of resources open to the public and our colleagues in NCDNCR. Specific items will include a two public programs in collaboration with our DNCR colleagues (detailed in NCAAHC Education & Interpretation Specialist's report), a community events calendar, themed playlists, a reading list and more in addition to our continued collaboration with the Governor's Office of Public Engagement.

- January 12 – Our first Black History Month newsletter launched. This will be part of a trio of Black History Month specific newsletters aimed to share events across the state.
- January 26 – Launch of our Black History Month Toolkit and 2023 Black History Month landing page on our website. These will feature:
 - o A reading list curated by Harvey Long, Librarian and Assistant Professor at NC A&T State University's F.D. Bluford Library.
 - o Several playlists featuring North Carolina artists curated by Kyesha Jennings, formerly of the NC Arts Council and the current Creative Content Producer for the City of Durham.
 - o A community calendar sharing events from NCDNCR and other institutions across the state. This calendar, along with the entire NCAAHC website are being promoted in collaboration with the DNCR

marketing team. This will include spots on National Public Radio affiliate stations and other department marketing connections.

- January 28 – NCAAHC is continuing its sponsorship of the NC Museum of History’s African American Cultural Celebration, the statewide kickoff to the celebration of Black History Month. NCAAHC will be presenting a session about our Africa to Carolina initiative, displaying our Africa to Carolina exhibit, in addition to staffing a table with resources.
- NCAAHC is continuing the annual collaboration with Governor Roy Cooper’s Office of Public Engagement (OPE). This will include the honoring of a group of North Carolina individuals, a ceremony at the governor’s mansion, and the creation of an honoree booklet and video. This year’s theme for honorees is in the midst of being determined, it will likely be announced in February. In 2022, NCAAHC and OPE honored STEM leaders.
- NCAAHC will also be making a series of presentations across the state for various organizations including the NC Department of Environmental Quality, Neuse Regional Libraries, the Men’s Ministry of United Shiloh Missionary Baptist Association, and several other entities that are in the midst of being confirmed.

Following the close of Black History Month, planning for Juneteenth 2023 will begin in earnest. Like Juneteenth 2022, NCAAHC will be releasing a Juneteenth Toolkit and website landing page featuring a community calendar, speaker’s bureau, a brief history of North Carolina’s “Juneteenth Story”, and resources on how to celebrate. This year’s celebration will focus on more cross collaboration within DNCR and feature a NCAAHC hosted webinar with recommendations on how to prepare for programming.

Staffing

To facilitate the dispersant and assemblage of resources, the Commission was fortunate to be able to bring on a full-time temporary Program Coordinator via TempSolutions beginning in January 2022. Okirah Harris served in this role through September of 2022. This position is currently vacant, and the Commission is in the midst of the hiring process.

Professional Development

The NC African American Heritage Commission is proud to share that Associate Director, Adrienne Nirdé was accepted into the 2023 cohort of the Jekyll Island Management Institute (JIMI), a program of the Southeastern Museums Conference. An immersive program, JIMI is designed as an immersive experience for museum professionals who seek to broaden their understanding of museum operations in order to advance management or leadership roles in the museum field. Participants will learn from current experts from across the field and work collaboratively with peers to discuss challenges and solutions to issues in the field. Adrienne will be attending from January 17-24, 2023.