

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

Prepared by Adrienne Nirdé, Director, NC African American Heritage Commission

COMMISSIONER RE-APPOINTMENT

- Reverend Dr. Pierre Crawford (Gaston County) for a term expiring September 30, 2026

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

- Newly filled NCAAHC staff positions:
 - o Adrienne Nirdé, Director
 - o Jasmine Downes, Black History Month/Juneteenth Coordinator
 - o Jillian Schuler, Lac/QAR Research Fellow
 - o Tyanna West, Trail Coordinator (contract)
 - o Miranda Clinton, Trail Coordinator (contract)
- Currently vacant staff positions:
 - o Associate Director
 - o Freedom Park Manager (currently within the hiring process)

MAJOR PROJECT UPDATE

"Africa to Carolina: Next Steps in the Journey"

"Africa to Carolina" was selected as a semifinalist for the **Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation's Inclusive Public Art Initiative**. A call for artists, launched in summer 2022, led to the selection of artist team Stephen Hayes and David Wilson to design the project public art piece. Through the fall and winter of 2022, the NCAAHC collaborated with Facilitate Movement, LLC., to design and implement community engagement sessions in Wilmington, Navassa, New Bern, and Plymouth to share project updates, and to gather public art design concepts from statewide stakeholders. These concepts will shape the semi-final renderings the artist team will submit for grant consideration.

The NCAAHC submitted a final application package to the ZSR IPA Initiative in late January 2023. If selected as a finalist in 2023, funding would enable the project to expand to place public art markers in coastal disembarkation communities. At the end of May, we received notification that our grant application had been approved in the amount of \$219,750 for 24 months. Planning for the execution of the grant is currently underway.

North Carolina Civil Rights Trail

In the spring of 2020, the AAHC received funding from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation to develop and launch the NC Civil Rights Trail in partnership with Visit NC and the NC Office of Archives & History. The project will identify and mark (digitally and physically) North Carolina sites key to the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, or critical to advancing civil rights in

the state. This project has created one interactive, evergreen digital map of North Carolina civil rights sites, and will ultimately yield fifty physical, community-based markers by the end of.

To date, 27 markers have been awarded:

1. New Ahoskie Baptist Church (Ahoskie)
2. 1951 Adkin High School Walkouts (Kinston)
3. Shelby Sit-Ins
4. Cameron Village Sit-Ins (Raleigh)
5. Joseph Holt, Sr. and Elwyna Holt—Holt Family (Raleigh)
6. Ocean City Beach (Topsail Island)
7. Elizabeth City Sit-Ins
8. Kinston Sit-Ins
9. Blair Park Municipal Golf Course (High Point)
10. Monroe, NC Wade-Ins
11. 1963 Brevard High School Football Team
12. Greensboro 6—Gillespie Golf Course (Greensboro)
13. Johnson v. Branch (Enfield)
14. Halifax County Voters Movement (Enfield)
15. Griggs v. Duke (Reidsville)
16. James H. Jones (Jackson)
17. MLK Jr. (Montreat)
18. Hargaves Community Center (Chapel Hill)
19. Huber Arthur Eaton (Wilmington)
20. Watts Grill (Chapel Hill)
21. Slade's Chapel (Morganton)
22. Warren Co. Community Center (Warrenton)
23. East Tarboro (Tarboro)
24. Fayetteville Protests (Fayetteville)
25. Magnolia House (Greensboro)
26. Willis "Bill" Graves Jr. (Raleigh) – *Awarded in Round IV*
27. R.N. Harris Elementary School (Durham) – *Awarded in Round IV*

A fifth and final round of applications are being accepted until September 2023. Trail Coordinators are working to execute in-person and virtual statewide outreach to connect with applicants where there is low representation on the trail.

Additionally, AAHC in collaboration with Visit NC have been working on the production of a podcast in conjunction with the US Civil Rights Trail. The first episode of the series is due to launch by the end of summer.

Green Book “Oasis Spaces” Project (African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Grant, Awarded July 2021)

In March 2023, AAHC completed the planning project to conceptualize development of a national marker and digital mapping program for existing Green Book sites. Working in conjunction with colleagues from the SC African American Heritage Commission, we worked to identify, develop, and build out infrastructure for the project. After piloting the project in North Carolina and South Carolina, the resulting framework for identification, research, online tool development, mapping, and marking sites could be scaled up for national implementation beyond the life of this planning project. Stakeholder work sessions for this project commenced in June of 2022 and concluded in August of 2022. A series of toolkits, plans, and blueprints are currently live on the AAHC website on a new [“Community Resources” page](#), in addition to a new [“Green Book of the Carolinas” website](#).

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Select Traditional Press Coverage

- Brown, Joel. “63 Years Later, an Overdue Historic Marker for a Major Moment in Raleigh Civil Rights History.” ABC 11, 22 Feb. 2023, <https://abc11.com/black-history-month-raleigh-cameron-village-civil-rights/12861883/>.
- John, Monique. “Fayetteville Celebrates Civil Rights History with New Historical Marker Downtown.” ABC 11, 16 June 2023, <https://abc11.com/fayetteville-historical-marker-north-carolina-african-american-heritage-commission-civil-rights/13391206/>.
- Muccigrosso, Catherine. “Revisiting the Safe Havens for Black Travelers around Charlotte in the Green Book.” Charlotte Observer, 27 Feb. 2023, <https://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/business/article272593336.html>.
- Piggott, Sharryse. “State Commission Accepting Applications to Add More Markers to NC Civil Rights Trail.” WUNC, 20 Jan. 2023, <https://www.wunc.org/news/2023-01-20/state-commission-is-accepting-applications-to-add-more-markers-to-nc-civil-rights-trail>.
- Rupinta, Amber. “Heritage Commission Looking to Add Markers of People, Places of NC’s Civil Rights Movement.” ABC 11, 21 Feb. 2023, <https://abc11.com/history-nc-civil-rights-trail-markers-people-places-african-american-heritage-commission/12854329/>.
- Staton, John. “Wilmington Dedicates Historical Marker to Civil Rights Leader Dr. Hubert Eaton Sr.” StarNews, 1 May 2023, <https://www.starnewsonline.com/picture-gallery/news/local/2023/05/01/wilmington-civil-rights-icon-dr-hubert-eaton-sr-honored-marker/11747243002/>.
- Taylor, Holly. “Jones to Be Honored with Trail Marker.” Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald, 12 May 2023, <https://www.roanoke-chowannewsheald.com/2023/05/12/jones-to-be-honored-with-trail-marker/>.

Digital Communications Platforms

Email via Mail Chimp

Newsletter	Subscribers	Open Rate	Click Rate	Unsubscribe Rate
General	1726	18.8%	3.4%	0.00%
Artist	38	40.9%	6.9%	0.00%

Social media

The North Carolina

African American

Heritage

Commission

	Facebook		Instagram		YouTube		
Month	Followers	Impressions ("Reach")	Followers	Impressions ("Reach")	Subscribers	Views	Video Impressions
January	1051	7396	1069	2264	153	318	6,200
February	1082	5751	1122	2093	157	853	8000
March	1105	8791	1142	979	165	242	4400
April	1115	2963	1162	775	165	249	3500
May	1127	3510	1176	778	167	223	2600
June	1150	2118	1150	1648	166	1100	13,900