



Meeting of the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission
January 31, 2025
Associate Director’s Report

Prepared by Natalie Rodriguez, Associate Director, NC African American Heritage Commission

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

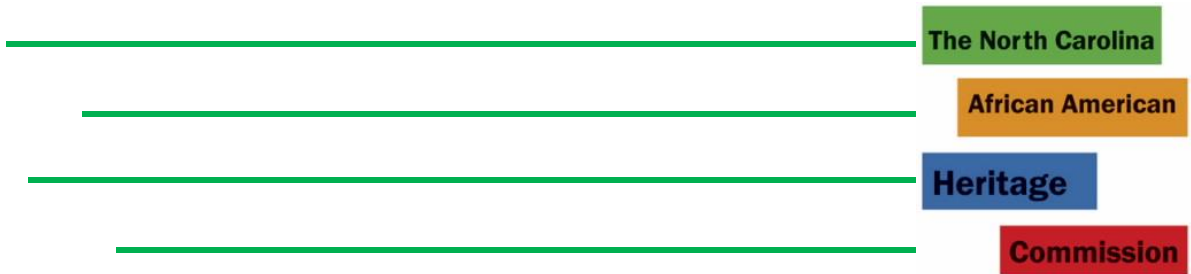
Select Traditional Press Coverage

- Emerson, Brian. “NC Green Book Project Exhibit to be featured at Malloy/Jordan East Winston Heritage Center.” *Forsyth County News*, 22 May 2024, <https://forsyth.cc/library/article.aspx?NewsID=28208>.
- Monaghan, Jordan. “Governor Cooper Announces North Carolina Music Office | NC Governor.” *Gov Press*, June 21, 2024, <https://governor.nc.gov/news/press-releases/2024/06/21/governor-cooper-announces-north-carolina-music-office>.
- Martin Shayla. “Relive History at ‘Green Book’ Legacy Sites in North Carolina Learn about African American heritage at North Carolina’s remaining “Green Book” sites and other history-rich venues.” *VisitNc*, June 28, 2024, <https://www.visitnc.com/story/z3Nu/relive-history-at-green-book-legacy-sites-in-north-carolina>.
- Taylor, Holly. “Civil Rights Trail marker honors Hobson R. Reynolds.” *The Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald: Civil Rights Trail marker honors Hobson R. Reynolds*.” *The Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald*, 23 Oct 2024, <https://www.roanoke-chowannewsheald.com/2024/10/22/civil-rights-trail-marker-honors-hobson-r-reynolds/>.
- Chapman, Ben. “Smithfield Four integrated Smithfield library.” *Johnstonian News*. 28 Nov 2024, <https://restorationnewsmedia.com/articles/local-news-johnstonian/smithfield-four-integrated-smithfield-library/>.

Digital Communications Platforms

Website

| | FY 24-25 |
|----------------------|--|
| Pageviews | 99,551 |
| Unique Pageviews | 58,709 |
| Average Time on Page | 00:02:41 |
| New Users | 90.5% |
| Desktop/Mobile | 64.9% desktop, 33.9% mobile, 1.2% tablet |



| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Popular Pages | Historically Black College and Universities NC AAHC Home NC AAHC Green Book Listings NCAAHC North Carolina Freedom |
|----------------------|--|

Email via Mail Chimp

| Newsletter | Subscribers | Open Rate | Click Rate | Unsubscribe Rate |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|------------|------------------|
| General | 2,317 | 30.1% | 2.8% | 0.17% |

Social media

| | Facebook | | Instagram | | YouTube | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Month | Followers | Impressions ("Reach") | Followers | Impressions ("Reach") | Subscribers | Views | Video Impressions |
| July | 1610 | 9480 | 1460 | 5464 | 200 | 134 | 1144 |
| August | 1620 | 9,551 | 1500 | 8412 | 200 | 116 | 1234 |
| September | 1650 | 9119 | 1537 | 6719 | 203 | 136 | 1044 |
| October | 1657 | 5361 | 1569 | 5388 | 205 | 86 | 726 |
| November | 1664 | 5735 | 1603 | 7817 | 206 | 93 | 785 |
| December | 1678 | 7026 | 1653 | 953 | 206 | 89 | 1038 |

PROJECT UPDATES

Civil Rights Trail Marker Program

During the 8th round of applications, NCAAHC received 6 applications. The NCCRTM Committee moved forward with awarding 3 applications.

- *STUDENTS MARCH* Marker at the PERQUIMANS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
- *STUDENTS SIT IN* Marker at the STATESVILLE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
- *CHAPEL HILL 9* Marker at a CHAPEL HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Dedication Ceremonies

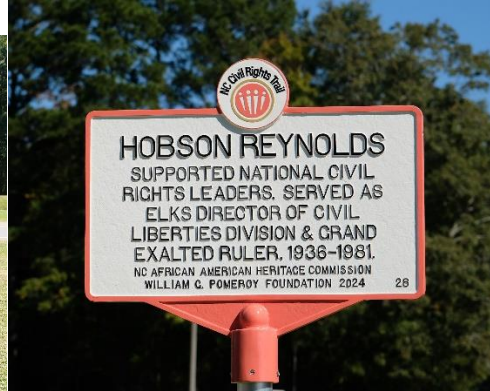
- NCAAHC Associate Director, Natalie Rodriguez, was invited to provide remarks and tour the Winton community by Marvin Tupper. The dedication ceremony for the Hobson R. Reynolds North Carolina Civil Rights Trails Marker was noon on October 19, 2024, at the Hobson R. Reynolds National Elks Shrine in Winton, NC.

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- NCAAHC Director, Adrienne Nirde, will provide remarks at the Willis Graves Jr North Carolina Civil Rights Trails Marker dedication February 1, 2025, at Preservation NC 814 Oberlin Road, Raleigh, NC. Preservation North Carolina (PNC) is pleased to announce the unveiling of a new North Carolina Civil Rights Trail Marker in honor of Willis “Bill” Graves, Jr., (1890-1966) a prominent civil rights attorney who worked to end racial housing discrimination in several landmark court cases. The ceremony will take place at 11:00 a.m. on February 1, 2025, at Graves’ birth site and childhood home at 814 Oberlin Road in Raleigh, which now serves as PNC’s statewide headquarters

CIVIL RIGHTS MARKER DEDICATION & OPEN HOUSE

WILLIS GRAVES, JR. WAS A PIONEERING CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER WHO GREW UP IN OBERLIN VILLAGE. JOIN PNC AT ITS HEADQUARTERS AT THE HALL & GRAVES-FIELDS HOUSES AS WE DEDICATE A NEW N.C. CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL MARKER!

PRESERVATION NC **FEB 1 2025**
814 OBERLIN ROAD, RALEIGH 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM



2025 NCCRTM

- The CRTM interactive web portal continues to be updated with new markers from awarded applications. The site continues to highlight these places and others to guide people to history and experiences from the past. For the next 2 rounds of NCCRT, the deadlines are May 30, 2025, and November 1, 2025. This program is made possible by funding from the

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William G. Pomeroy Foundation and with the support of Visit North Carolina and the North Carolina Office of Archives and History.

African to Carolina Public Art Project

A to C Listening Sessions September 2024:

AAHC hosted a series of public meetings in 3 key communities in North Carolina (Navassa, Wilmington, and Winnabow). AAHC invited community members to join as the Commission shared more information about the initiative. Janeen Byant of Facilitate Movement gathered feedback, suggestions and general expectations about the upcoming public art piece from local communities. She compiled this information in a report to provide a summary of the communities' feedback from all three sessions.

A to C Community Workshops 2024 - 2025:

AAHC is hosting Jaki Shelton Green to facilitate workshops with community members in 4 key communities (Wilmington, Raleigh, Winnabow, and Southport) to write prose in response to the "Africa to Carolina" Inclusive Public Art project with the artist team David Wilson and Stephen Hayes. This workshop continues her practice of calling to remembrance of ancestry. That prose will be featured on the public art piece once the workshops are completed.

Black History Month & Juneteenth

Fiscal year '23-'24 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 '24-'25. NCAAHC will continue to serve as a consistent resource for those interested in celebrating. For Black History Month 2025, this will include the launch of resources open to the public and our colleagues in NCDNCR. Specific items will include two public programs, a community events calendar, themed artist list, a reading list, and more in addition to our continued collaboration with the DNCR agencies.

- January 09 – Our annual Black History Month landing page was launched. This resource page for folks to learn about BHM resources from AAHC aimed to share events across the state.
- January 17 – Launch of our Black History Month Toolkit and release it on the 2025 Black History Month landing page on our website. These will feature:
 - o A reading list curated Dr. Tiwana Nevels currently serves as the Assistant State Librarian at the State Library of North Carolina, bringing her over a decade of extensive administrative and managerial experience in library services. Before her current role, she excelled as the Director of Library Services at Saint Augustine's University. In her leisure moments, Tiwana indulges in the pleasure of reading, a passion she joyfully extends to the younger members of her community.
 - o Black Artist Features list is curated by Roymieco A. Carter, the Director of the Visual Arts Program at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University. Roymieco Carter's artistic journey was influenced by his rural upbringing. After earning his BFA

in Art and Advertising from Virginia Commonwealth University, Carter pursued an MFA in Graphic Design at Penn State.

- A community calendar sharing events from NCDNCR and other institutions across the state. This calendar, along with the entire NCAAHNC website, is being promoted in collaboration with the DNCR marketing team.
- January 25th – NCAAHNC is continued its sponsorship of the NC Museum of History’s African American Cultural Celebration, the statewide kickoff to the celebration of Black History Month. AAHC will be staffing a table with resources. This year the AACC will be at the North Carolina Museum of Science while the Museum of History is under construction.
- Given the transition of a Governor administration, NCAAHNC is pausing on the annual collaboration with Governor Office of Public Engagement (OPE).
- NCAAHNC will also be making a series of remarks across the state for various marker unveilings.

Following the close of Black History Month, planning for Juneteenth 2025 will begin in earnest. Like Juneteenth 2024, NCAAHNC hopes releasing a Juneteenth Toolkit, have the speaker’s bureau, sponsor local events, and have website landing page featuring a community calendar, a brief history of North Carolina’s “Juneteenth Story”, and resources on how to celebrate.

NCAAHNC Support

Contractor

- During the 2024 year, Brandie Ragghianti was contracted by NCAAHNC to support in work centered around the *Negro Motorist Green Book*. She is contracted to perform academic, historical research to write historical essays on forty five (45) North Carolina Green Book Sites. Her essays were based off 2024 Green Book Listings Status Report and Recommendations beginning with those located in Wayne, Cumberland, Guilford, and Wake counties. Brandie uploaded forty-five (45) Green Book site essays to the NC Green Book Web Portal. She also provide updates to the Green Book web portal. Her updates included the "Resources page : <https://aahc.nc.gov/green-book-project/resources-students-and-scholars> , "Community Resources:" <https://aahc.nc.gov/green-book-project/community-resources> and adding the Advocacy Toolkit: <https://aahc.nc.gov/green-book-project/community-resources/advocacy-tool-kit>.

Staffing

- Natalie Rodriguez
 - On October 25th NCAAHNC Associate Director was invited to the NCCU Department of History 85th Anniversary Symposium, *Our Women Make History*. She spoke on the session “Eagle Women Historians and African American Women’s History” with fellow other alumni regarding the impact of HBCUs for women historians.
 - The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) requested NCAAHNC to provide remarks on February 15, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. The Orange County Community Remembrance

Coalition will place a Historical Marker in recognition of five black men who were lynched in Orange County just after the Civil War. The Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama will install the marker. The marker will be placed in front of the Old Courthouse in Hillsborough, NC. NCAAHC Associate Director will provide remarks at the ceremony. NCAAHC will be on a program with eight to ten other people, including Dr. Sonny E. Kelly who is the keynote presenter.

- Shafantae Desinord

- A full-time permanent Education and Interpretation Specialist began August 2024. Shafantae Desinord, members of the DNCR education team, and America 250 visit 3 school this past Fall 2024 on 10/22, 11/13, and 11/19. Shafantae represented the NCAAHC by speaking to teachers and students about the book *Bountiful Red Acres* and the importance of family legacy in the African American community and agriculture. All discussions in her section were centered around the book to encourage teachers to use it throughout the year as a resource in their curriculum. Ms. Desinord also spoke about the NCAAHC and all the educational resources that are offered. Her total outreach for this was 244 students, 9 Teachers and 3 School Administrators.
- She is currently working to build a teacher workshop and curriculum for the 'Africa to Carolina' Initiative in partnership with CarolinaK- 12 slated for summer 2025.
- She will be presenting at the 2025 DNCR Education Conference on the panel titled "Cross-Divisional Collaboration- Engaging Teens Where They Are". Shafantae and other Members of the collaborative Education Outreach team—Alana Gomez (America 250 NC), Hugo Govea (DNCR), and Clarisa Arguello (the State Library of NC)—will present on cross-divisional collaboration and engaging teens in their communities. This presentation will highlight their joint efforts to reach new populations and will include a hands-on demonstration of the activities they conducted with students. Their outreach initiatives have actively engaged high school students and teachers through activities focused on identity and culture. This presentation aims to inspire ongoing cross-collaboration within DNCR to connect with diverse K-12 educational audiences throughout North Carolina.
- She will be present at the 2025 Social Studies Conference

- Vincentt Sutton

- On September 28th, 2024, the NCAAHC Vincentt Sutton collaborated with the *School of Bars* to put on the event 'Rap Camp' at the North Carolina Museum of Art. NCAAHC Program Coordinator, Vincentt Sutton, and Cameron Trip aka Comikbook Cam, the founder and professor at the School of Bars, collaborated to create and execute the program. Cameron is a multi-talented artist, both a rapper and a trumpeter. Rap Camp was designed to highlight the African American Music Trail, the talent that has come out of the state, and the counties that the trail spotlights. Through Vincentt's produced marketing materials and promotional plans, created and managed registration, secured the venue, and provided promotional materials for attendees. Associate Director Natalie Rodriguez gave opening remarks on the

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event day, and Vincentt introduced Cameron to the attendees. Participants were given a well-crafted curriculum that later led to attendees being able to perform the rap that they wrote throughout the workshop.

- On October 12th, 2024, Vincentt Sutton, NCAAHC Program Coordinator partnered with the HBCU Radio Preservation Project (RPP) to host an Oral History Workshop at the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources building. Vincentt Sutton and Phyllis Jeffers-Coly of the HBCU RPP discussed the symposium's initial idea in March 2024. Later in the year, the idea for the Oral History Workshop came as a secondary piece to the Symposium to educate attendees on collecting oral histories. NCAAHC Associate Director, Natalie Rodriguez, provide Welcoming remarks. Will Tchakirides, the Oral historian for the HBCU RPP, and Breighlynn Polk, the HBCU RPP Inaugural Fellow, led the workshop at the DNCR building. The Vincentt Sutton worked with the HBCU RPP to provide a venue, promotion, registration, and logistic assistance for the workshop. Vincentt provided promotion for the symposium. The NCAAHC was also listed as a partner for the Symposium held at Shaw University. At the Workshop and Symposium, Associate Director Natalie Rodriguez, gave remarks on behalf of the NCAAHC. In working with the HBCU RPP, the Vincentt Sutton created a relationship with the head of archives, Marie Stark, at Shaw University and contact with Andre Vann, the archivist at NCCU.
- The Black History Month / Juneteenth Coordinator position is currently vacant, and the Commission is searching for a candidate to fill this position.