

NEWS
FROM THE
SOUTH
CAROLINA
AFRICAN
AMERICAN
HERITAGE
COMMISSION



Call & Response

<https://scdah.sc.gov/historic-preservation/resources/african-american-heritage/south-carolina-african-american-heritage>

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Fall 2020

South Carolina Celebrates Icons in the Humanities

Dr. Barbara Jenkins receives the 2020 Governor's Award



Mission Statement

The mission of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission is to identify and promote the preservation of African American historic sites, structures, buildings, and culture of the African American experience in South Carolina, and to assist and enhance the efforts of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Established in 1991, the Governor's Awards in the Humanities recognize outstanding achievement in humanities research, teaching, scholarship; institutional support for communities in South Carolina better understand our cultural heritage or ideas and issues related to the humanities; excellence defining South Carolina's cultural life to the nation or world; and exemplary support for public humanities programs.

Dr. Barbara Jenkins, a charter member of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission, was among the four recipients of this prestigious award during a virtual ceremony on October 22nd. Dr. Jenkins was honored for her lengthy career as a librarian and former Dean at South Carolina State University and her role as a champion of African American historic preservation in Orangeburg and statewide, efforts which ranged from identifying key sites, hosting preservation workshops, and collaborating with local stakeholders to erect state historical markers and establish historic districts.

Her fellow recipients included Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling, Historic Columbia executive director Robin Waites and Francis Marion University professor Jon Tuttle.

Honoring a Civil Rights Legend



SCAAHC chairperson Jannie Harriot and Bishop Frederick Calhoun James, recipient of the 2020 Leon A. Love Lifetime Achievement Award. Photo courtesy of Columbia S.C. 63.

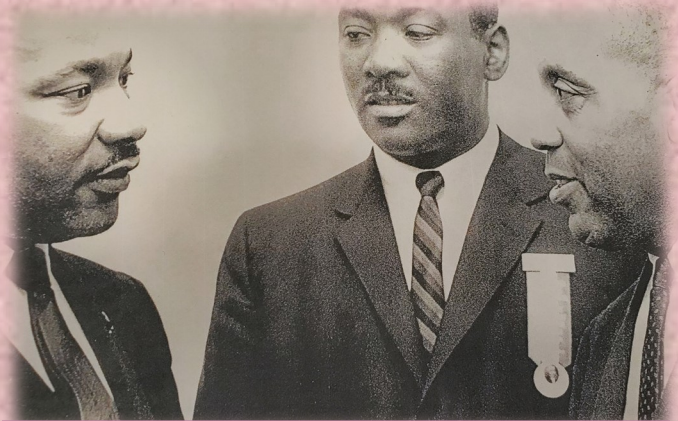
On July 23rd, the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission and Columbia S.C. 63 honored Bishop Frederick Calhoun James, legendary minister and civil rights leader, with the **Leon A. Love Lifetime Achievement Award** during a socially distanced ceremony at his home in Columbia.

Born in Prosperity, S.C., Bishop James received his bachelor's degree from Allen University and got his master's of divinity at the Howard University School of Religion. He has ministered in Winnsboro, Columbia, Sumter, and countless other cities worldwide.

In addition to being a renowned minister, Bishop James was a prominent civil rights organizer during the 1960s movement.

He spearheaded the Sumter Movement, a nonviolent direct action and political organizing campaign that toppled Jim Crow segregation in the Midlands city.

Bishop James also worked closely with civil rights leaders Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and John Lewis. He was among the dignitaries present in the Capitol Rotunda during the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Bishop James, and an unidentified gentleman at the AME General Conference in Cincinnati, OH, May 1964. Photo courtesy of Bishop



*In Loving
Memory
Leon A. Love
(1950-2016)*

The now 98-year-old minister continued his religious and political work in later decades. Under his leadership, Allen University reached new heights during the 1980s. He also served on the White House advisory board during the Clinton administration.

In 2003, he received the state's highest award, The Order of the Palmetto, for his lifelong commitment to improving the lives of citizens in our state.

Center Stage



South Carolina African American Heritage Commission

Members

Ms. Pontheolla Mack Abernathy
Spartanburg

Mr. Michael Allen
Mount Pleasant

Dr. Abel Bartley
Clemson University

Mrs. Felicia Flemming McCall
Cheraw

Ms. Shelby Henderson
Seneca

Mr. Joseph James
Columbia

Mr. Terry James
Florence

Dr. Barbara Williams Jenkins
Manning

Ms. Cassandra Williams Rush
Columbia

Ms. Strauss Moore Shiple
York

Ms. Victoria Smalls
Mount Pleasant

Mr. Dontavious Williams
Edgemoor

Mr. Bernie L. Wright
Orangeburg

Introducing SCAAHC Commissioner Victoria A. Smalls



Since its inception in May 1993, the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission (SCAAHC) has benefited from the work of historians, preservationists, cultural interpreters, and a host of passionate community activists interested in documenting and preserving our state's rich African American history and culture.

The SCAAHC is comprised of fifteen commissioners representing each congressional district and a host of ex-officio members, all of whom were chosen due to their excellence in their chosen professions. All are first among equals but this new section in *Call & Response* will allow readers to learn a bit more about each commissioner and the communities they serve.

Taking "Center Stage" today is Victoria A. Smalls, a dynamic and talented historian, educator, and cultural interpreter who has worked for the forthcoming International African American Museum and historic Penn Center on St. Helena Island.

— Continued on Next Page

**South Carolina African American
Heritage Commission
Ex-Officio Members**

Mr. Michael Bedenbaugh
Preservation South Carolina

Dr. Jacob Butler
Morris College

Ms. Joyce Farr Cheeks
Attorney at Law

Ms. Dawn Dawson-House
SC Parks, Recreation, and Tourism

Ms. Anita Dantzler
SC Commission on Human Affairs

Mr. George Dennis
Columbia

Ms. Cynthia Haddad
SC Commission for Minority Affairs

Mr. Richard Devoe
South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium

Dr. Bobby J. Donaldson
University of South Carolina

Ms. Oveta Glover
Allen University

Rev. Merritt Graves
Mt. Zion AME Church

Dr. Jennifer Heusel
Coker College

Mrs. Kathy Jenkins
SC NAACP

Dr. Ronnie Hopkins
Voorhees College

Ms. Kristy Quattrone
Office of the Governor

Ms. Brenda Tindall
International African American Museum

Dr. Louis Venters
Francis Marion University

Dr. Larry Watson
South Carolina State University

Dr. George Devlin
Benedict College

Ms. Ce Scott-Fitts
South Carolina Arts Commission

Bishop Thomas Bell
Cathedral of Praise Church

Mr. Stephen Corsini
**South Carolina Department
of Education**

Call & Response

Page 4



Smalls was one of dozens of Gullah scholars, performers, and cultural ambassadors to participate in a homecoming in Sierra Leone last winter. "[Gullah Roots](#)," an hour long documentary by SCETV, captures their experience and delves into the cultural links between SC and West Africa.

Photo courtesy of Victoria Smalls.

Victoria has supported the work of the SCAAHC in countless ways including the coordination of historical marker and National Register district projects, leading seminars and public lectures about Gullah and African American history, and, last year, hosting our annual teacher workshop at Penn Center.



A native of St. Helena Island and 1988 graduate of Beaufort High School, Victoria Smalls has spent her career documenting and sharing the often overlooked history of African Americans within the broader Gullah-Geechee Heritage Corridor, which includes sections of the South Carolina Lowcountry, Georgia, Florida, and North Carolina.

"It's history. It's been buried so long, I just had to share it," Smalls shared in a [2018 profile](#). "It's going to make us more critical thinkers, more active in what's going on today in our daily lives." Few have a better understanding of history's relevance than Smalls, whose research on Penn Center shed new light on her [own family's story](#). Her late father, Elting Smalls, graduated from the Penn School in 1943, further strengthening her connection to the historic school and cultural center, the beating heart of Black life on St. Helena Island.



Standing over 6 feet tall, Victoria's kindness, grace, soulfulness, and towering intellect endear her to everyone she meets. The SCAAHC is grateful for Victoria's tireless efforts to preserve our places in history.

Victoria Smalls recently accepted a position with the National Park Service at the Reconstruction Era National Historic Park!

Learn more:

<https://www.nps.gov/reer/index.htm>



Photo courtesy of Dr. Portia E. Cobb

The South Carolina African American Heritage Commission extends its condolences to all affected by the recent passing of Dr. Ade Ofunniyin.

“Dr. O” as he was affectionately known, transitioned to join the ancestors on October 7, 2020, surrounded by his family. He was 67 years old.

Dr. O, founder and director of the Gullah Society and a beloved professor at The College of Charleston, was a staunch advocate for the documentation and preservation of Gullah and Black history in public and academic circles. Born in Charleston, he was the grandson of iconic Charleston blacksmith Phillip Simmons, whose historic ironwork is known worldwide. Dr. O returned to Charleston in 1985 and began an apprenticeship at his grandfather’s blacksmith shop. He later earned a master’s degree in archaeology and his PhD in anthropology from the University of Florida. After completing his studies, Dr. O returned to the “Holy City” and founded the Gullah Society, whose projects have included the documentation and preservation of burial grounds and exhibitions on the African diaspora.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that those seeking to pay their final respects [donate to the Gullah Society](#), to ensure that Dr. Ofunniyin’s legacy continues.





Jonathan Green, "Communal," 2019, Used with Special Permission.

Black Carolinians Speak: Portraits of a Pandemic

Launched by the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission (SCAAHC) in May 2020, *Black Carolinians Speak: Portraits of a Pandemic* is a document collection and oral history initiative that seeks to capture the story of the African American experience in South Carolina during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

African Americans, as reported in state and national media, have been disproportionately impacted by this public health crisis and the accompanying social and economic distress it has caused. As of the week of October 5th, 34% of those who have died from the virus in South Carolina were African American. The pandemic has also exacerbated existing inequalities and disparities in education, health, and employment. Future generations will seek to understand how this global pandemic redefined what it meant to be Black in South Carolina and how this crisis altered the rhythms and traditions of African American life in the Palmetto State.

African American residents of South Carolina are invited to submit the following:

- First person testimonies
- Letters
- Photographs
- Videos
- Original poetry, art, music
- Journal entries



ALL materials will be housed in the SCAAHC papers at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History and made available to researchers at a later date.



Share Your Story: www.greenbookofsc.com/speak



is ON THE MOVE!!!

The **WeGOJA Foundation**, formerly the South Carolina African American Heritage Foundation, was awarded funding from **SC Humanities** to support the *Black Carolinians Speak: Portraits of a Pandemic* project.

Funding will be used to conduct and transcribe additional oral histories and develop exhibits and public programs for the project. More details to come.



The **1772 Foundation** and the **Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation** have also provided funds to support the broader *Black Carolinians Speak* oral history initiative.

Funds provided by the Donnelly Foundation will be used specifically to enhance the collection of oral histories from African American residents in the Lowcountry for *Portraits of a Pandemic*.



We also received funding from the **South Carolina Arts Commission** and the **South Carolina Department of Education** to provide professional development for K-12 educators.

The funding will be used to develop professional development sessions to improve content knowledge, cultural competence, and racial sensitivity when dealing with sensitive subject matter in the classroom.



Recordings of these workshops will be utilized as part of a new section for educators on ***The Green Book of South Carolina*** website. They will be paired with exciting Black history lesson plans, primary and secondary source materials, and a future "Historic Green Book Tour," a public Humanities project that will highlight the history of the *Negro Motorist Green Book* in South Carolina.

Other Grants Received During This Quarter

The South Carolina Department of Archives and History has provided funding to support our “Historic Green Book Survey and Virtual Tour,” a statewide survey of extant buildings that once housed businesses listed in the *Negro Motorist Green Book*, a popular travel guide for Black travelers during the Jim Crow era.

Funds will be used to support research and documentation of these sites in six SC counties—Richland, Charleston, Chesterfield, Greenville, Florence, and Marion—an important step to preserve these spaces. A virtual tour of one of these sites will be developed as a pilot for the larger “Historic Green Book of South Carolina Tour.”



Lastly, the WeGOJA Foundation received funding from the **U.S. Department of Agriculture** to erect 20 South Carolina historical markers in rural, underserved areas of the state.

The South Carolina African American Heritage Commission is working with the State Historic Preservation Office staff diligently to complete these markers by early Spring 2021.



[Take Action](#)

Support African American Heritage!

You can support the WeGOJA Foundation in a variety of ways and help preserve African American heritage in South Carolina.

One of the best ways to support WeGOJA is by committing to a monthly donation at the link below.

Memberships (Individual, Family, Church or Organization) provide engagement with our ongoing work.

Membership Benefits Include:

- Invitations and discounted registrations to all SC African American Heritage Commission conferences
- A subscription to the SCAAHC's Call & Response quarterly e-newsletter
- A subscription to "News and Notes," a monthly online e-newsletter from the Historic Preservation Division of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History

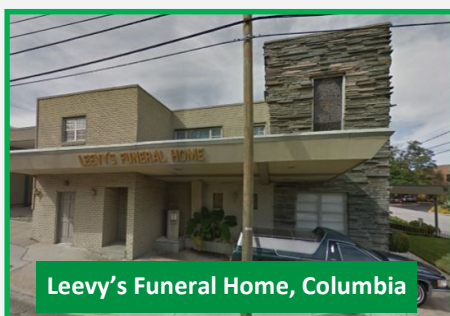
Other ways to help include:

- Shift your regular Amazon shopping to the Amazon Smile Program and choose "WeGOJA Foundation" as your charity of choice
- Make a one-time donation of \$10 or more at the link below

[Donate](#)[Join](#)

Green Book Spotlight

First published in 1936 by New York postal worker and entrepreneur Victor Hugo Green, the original *Negro Motorist Green Book* was created to provide African American travelers with vital information to avoid the embarrassments, difficulties, and dangers caused by southern Jim Crow customs and de facto segregation in other sections of the country. Aided by a cadre of informants—most of whom were Black postal workers—Green and his small, dedicated staff began to list businesses that accommodated Black customers nationwide beginning in 1938. Roughly 200 Black owned businesses and other institutions in South Carolina were listed prior to its final edition in 1967.



Leevy's Funeral Home, Columbia



S.H. Smith Tourist Home, Columbia



Ebony Guest House, Florence

We are pleased to announce that the historic house located on 1221 Pine Street, the former site of Ruth's Beauty Parlor, has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places!!!

On November 20th, the State Review Board will review nominations for three additional extant *Green Book* sites for consideration by the Department of Interior. If approved at the national level, these sites will join Ruth's Beauty Parlor and the former tourist home owned by Harriet Cornwell, located on 1713 Wayne Street in Columbia, on the list of national sites deemed worthy of preservation.

Stay tuned to our social media for more details about the virtual Review Board meeting!



A Travel Guide to S.C.
African American Cultural Sites

Visit Our Website!

The Green Book of South Carolina

www.greenbookofsc.com

Join the conversation on social media:

[@SCAAHC1993](https://twitter.com/SCAAHC1993)



SWEET SUCCESS!

Michael and LaTanya Allen Savor Sweet Success While Sharing the Richness of Gullah Culture



Michael and LaTanya Allen

As is common within Gullah culture, adversity offered an opportunity to make something from nothing. “When COVID hit, all of the markets shut down,” LaTanya Allen remembers, “We had the grand idea to start selling our products virtually.” Inspired by necessity, she and her husband, Michael Allen—a veteran historian, cultural interpreter, and SCAAHC charter member—started selling Gullah delicacies online. The outcome was *Tastee Treats*, an exciting new business venture rooted in Gullah culinary traditions that is taking the world by storm.

“My grandmother would make fruitcakes, nut cakes, and Charleston chews, pound cakes, and bread pudding, and she would sell them. She just didn’t have the internet. It was done word of mouth. She would sell them to all of her church people, friends and family.” During visits home from college, LaTanya shelled and grinded nuts, mixed ingredients, packaged baked goods, and cleaned the kitchen.

“It was a bonding time. She would tell me stories about her mother or her upbringing that I could pass on to my children,” she recalled. Equally important were the family recipes and secret techniques she shared.

The Tastee Treats menu features a variety of Gullah delicacies made from recipes that once belonged to her mother and grandmother, with a few modern twists. Among them are Charleston Chews, a confection made with dates, cranberries, walnuts and pecans. These are sold individually and as a dry mix for customers seeking to indulge in the taste of the Lowcountry at home. They also sell a variety of syrups and preserves in traditional and unique modern flavors.

“On our product it says ‘Indulge in the Rich Gullah Flavor,’” Michael adds. “It’s an acknowledgement of our Gullah history and culture, how Gullah culture influenced the development of the New World, and how American cuisine has evolved.” Both stressed that these confections are evidence of how Black people have survived across generations and enjoyed life despite hardship. LaTanya creatively adopts flavors from other cultures, such as mango, to flavor her syrups and preserves, which add a touch of flair to simple dishes like sea bass.



**Charleston
Chews**



— Continued on Next Page



The couple is well aware that commercial references to Gullah often result in questions of authenticity. Being “fo’ true” Gullah descendants not only nullifies claims of appropriation but motivates them to connect the story of their people to the product. “We’re selling these items at former places of enslavement where these goods were made historically but they weren’t wrapped in a nice package and the enslaved weren’t paid for it,” Michael explains. To date, the Allens have negotiated agreements to sell their products at Lowcountry historic sites such as McLeod, Boone Hall, and Middleton Plantations and the Caw Caw Interpretive Center.

What started as a conversation about their business quickly became a master class on Gullah culinary traditions. “People think that because you’re Black, everybody cooks the same way. That’s not true. Each family cooks a certain way,” she explains. Her parents’ families cooked the same foods in different ways despite being from James Island and Charleston, only 30 miles apart.

“We make prioleau rice,” LaTanya explains, “We consider it to be any rice that you cook with meat. My grandfather makes okra prioleau. It’s okra cooked with rice but you add pork—bacon, sausage, and ham.” Michael’s family in Kingstree, however, eats soft rice which LaTanya considers “mushy.” “Our rice has to be fluffy and flaky, not hard, and separated,” she explains.

“We’re in this intersection of COVID-19, social unrest, political shifts...People of Gullah persuasion have managed to always make it through. Cooking and eating was one way we have demonstrated our capacity to survive. We know historically that people of Gullah descent on plantations were not always given the best cuts of meat or the best food but they made the best of it,” Michael explains. Indeed, the Allens are a perfect marriage of historical expertise and culinary skill.

“Gullah-Geechee people show our love through food...Some people say they make Gullah food but they are trying to make it healthy. It’s not truly Gullah without a little pork.”

Armed with deep historical knowledge and culinary skill, the Allens have big dreams for their business and their efforts to share Gullah foodways worldwide. They hope to achieve success similar to famed BBQ master Rodney Scott, a native of Hemmingway, or Edisto Island’s own Kardea Brown, host of “Delicious Miss Brown” on the Food Network. A piece of their success, Michael stressed, can be credited to the SCAAHC. “Being a part of the African American Heritage Commission and just seeing how the interpretation and respect for Gullah history has grown...it has been an essential part of this journey. Maybe we don’t toot our horns enough but we were there. People need to know that.” — **Ramon Jackson**

To Learn More About this Amazing Black Owned Business visit: <https://tasteetreats-sc.com/>

South Carolina African American Heritage Commission
Presents

Drumbeat

The Rhythm of African American History and Culture in South Carolina



Sundays at 5pm

October 4th and 18th
November 1st, 15th, and 29th
December 13th and 27th

Livestreaming on Facebook

- **WeGOJA Foundation:**
<https://facebook.com/SCAAHistory/?ref=bookmarks>
- **South Carolina African American Heritage Commission:**
<https://facebook.com/SCAAHC1993/>
- **Bhakti's New World Arts:**
<https://www.facebook.com/bhaktilarryhough>

Sponsored by the WeGOJA Foundation





SCDAH is NOW HIRING!

Please share this advertisement with those who may be interested in this excellent opportunity.

Historic Architecture Consultant

Salary ⓘ	\$33,494.00 - \$61,975.00 Annually	Location ⓘ	Richland County, SC
Job Type	FTE - Full-Time	Agency	Department of Archives and History
Job Number	106892	Phone	803-896-6160
Class Code:	CE60		
Position Number:	60011833		
Normal Work Schedule:	Monday - Friday (8:30 - 5:00)		
Pay Band	Band 5		
Opening Date	10/27/2020		
EEO Statement	Equal Opportunity Employer		
Agency Specific Application Procedures:	Please complete the online state application to include all current and previous work history. Please include a cover letter. A resume WILL NOT be accepted in lieu of a complete application.		

Job Responsibilities

The position reviews plans and specifications and completed work for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for State Historic Preservation Office programs that assist in the rehabilitation of historic buildings. The position also assists in the administration and promotion of tax incentive programs for the rehabilitation of historic buildings and provides general technical assistance about preservation to the public.

Key functions: Serves as an architectural reviewer for the tax incentives, review and compliance, and Historic Preservation Fund grant programs. Reviews plans and specifications, design guidelines, and other related documents for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Inspects and evaluates work on historic properties based on the Standards. Manages the South Carolina state income tax credit program for homeowners: explains program requirements and guidelines to applicants, processes applications, and maintains databases and project files. Assists with administration of federal tax incentive program. Provides technical assistance on appropriate historic preservation practices to owners and managers of historic structures, architectural consultants, government officials, and the public. Assists in the development of educational and promotional materials and activities.

To learn more about qualifications or to apply now, visit:

[https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/sc?department\[0\]=Department%20of%20Archives%20and%20History&sort=PositionTitle%7CAscending](https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/sc?department[0]=Department%20of%20Archives%20and%20History&sort=PositionTitle%7CAscending)





SCDAH is NOW HIRING!

Please share this advertisement with those who may be interested in this excellent opportunity.

Archaeologist II

Salary ⓘ	\$33,494.00 - \$61,975.00 Annually	Location ⓘ	Richland County, SC
Job Type	FTE - Full-Time	Agency	Department of Archives and History
Job Number	106404	Phone	803-896-6160
Class Code:	CE10		
Position Number:	60011846		
Normal Work Schedule:	Monday - Friday (8:30 - 5:00)		
Pay Band	Band 5		
Opening Date	10/12/2020		
EEO Statement	Equal Opportunity Employer		
Agency Specific Application Procedures:	Please complete the online state application to include all current and previous work history and education, and include a cover letter. Please note: A resume will not be accepted in lieu of a complete application.		

Job Responsibilities

Carries out the archaeological component of the review and compliance program for the State Historic Preservation Office. Reviews and comments on projects submitted for review, survey reports, data recovery reports, and memoranda of agreement related to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and certain state-level reviews. Evaluates significance of archaeological sites based on National Register of Historic Places criteria. Assesses the potential effect of proposed projects on archaeological sites. Provides archaeological expertise to federal and state agencies, consultants, and private individuals. Make site visits as needed. Interprets federal and state laws and regulations related to cultural resources. Supports ArchSite, the state's online GIS cultural resources information system in cooperation with the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology.

To learn more about qualifications or to apply now, visit:

[https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/sc?department\[0\]=Department%20of%20Archives%20and%20History&sort=PositionTitle%7CAscending](https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/sc?department[0]=Department%20of%20Archives%20and%20History&sort=PositionTitle%7CAscending)



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African American Heritage in South Carolina

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Type of membership

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Mail to: Jannie Harriot, Executive Director, WeGOJA Foundation, PO Box 1053, Hartsville, SC 29551



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Thank You for Your Support!

