

THE
AFRICAN AMERICAN
HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTER
OF NEW BERN
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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**The African American Heritage & Cultural Center of New Bern Launches
with a Celebration of JUNETEENTH 2019**

New Bern, North Carolina (June 2019) - On June 19, 2019, eastern North Carolinians celebrated JUNETEENTH with the launch of The African American Heritage & Cultural Center of New Bern.

The evening started with Presentation of Colors by members of the 35th US Colored Troop Regiment and the national anthem. A choral performance by members of the Craven Community Gospel Choir was followed by an inspiring presentation of “The Story of the Emancipation Proclamation” by acting students J’Kahri Bryant, Sophie Oliver and Francine Robinson with Katherine Adolph. In his welcome remarks, AAHCC Board President Rick Fisher noted that “JUNETEENTH 2019 was chosen to publicly launch our new nonprofit because of its significance to African Americans throughout the country. JUNETEENTH is the national celebration of the emancipation of formerly enslaved peoples. This event in New Bern

demonstrates our commitment to presenting the historical impact and progression of African American heritage and culture in Eastern North Carolina.”

The AAHCC launch event was 6 to 8:00 pm at 408 Hancock Street in New Bern. “It was a memorable evening of fellowship, good traditional food, music, and art”, said Board Vice-President Ann Herndon. “I am honored to be on the founding Board of Directors and enjoyed seeing the community come together for AAHCC’s first public event.”

Following a champagne toast to launch the organization, guests enjoyed contemporary soul tastings by Chef Smoke of “The Fame Catering & Banquet Center”, beverages compliments of “The Birthplace of Pepsi”, Champagne compliments of “Savi’s Wine Shop” surrounded by flowers donated by Harris Teeter. The City of New Bern City Council endorsed the AAHCC and its launch following a presentation in March - the Parks and Recreation Department supported the AAHCC by opening the doors of 408 Hancock Street “The Old Fireman’s Museum” for meetings space since late 2018 and preparing the location for the launch event.

AAHCC thanks its guests, founding donors and contributors including sponsors of the launch - NC Arts Council/Craven Arts Council & Gallery, Potter Ben Watford, Ceramic Artist Michaele Rose Watson, Artist Lee Hood, Katherine Adolph and Tahira and Jim Copland.

The African American Heritage & Cultural Center launch on JUNETEENTH was one event among many planned throughout New Bern. The AAHCC leadership supported all the events through social media, announcements and outreach by encouraging individuals, groups and families throughout the region to come to New Bern for JUNETEENTH celebrations.

ABOUT AAHCC

A strategic group of community leaders, elected officials and nonprofit organization leaders gathered early in 2018 to discuss the continuing need to increase the visibility of the heritage of eastern North Carolina's African American community. Beyond the recorded history of the region that is included in traditional educational environments exists an important legacy of remarkable and determined individuals who contributed to the development of this region. As 2018 discussion continued, these early AAHCC leaders determined to established a 501(c)(3) nonprofit which would collaborate with existing nonprofits, organizations and groups to secure resources to present a broad spectrum of the African American Experience.

In early 2019, AAHCC became a nonprofit organization and elected is founding Board of Directors and Officers. Officers are Rick Fisher – President, Ann Herndon – Vice-President, Kathy Adolph – Secretary, Jim Copland – Treasurer, and Board Directors are Carol Bonner Becton, Maria Cho, and Tahira Coble Copland. AAHCC is staffed by Executive Director Carrie Gallagher.

Future AAHCC programs will include collaborating with other organizations to build an oral history library with universal access, and presenting creative performances, seminars and lectures, exhibitions of artwork including murals, artifacts and personal collections, along with music, food and live art events.

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The African American Heritage & Cultural Center of New Bern is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in New Bern North Carolina and serving communities throughout Eastern North Carolina. Contact information: Post Office Box 1354, NBNC 28563-1354 or TheCenterofNewBern@gmail.com.