

# ***Gathering, Growing, and Gleaning Vital Resources for our African American Museum Spaces***

**Wednesday, August 7<sup>th</sup> 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.**

**A FREE Interactive Pre-conference Workshop**

**presented by the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission\***

**at The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture 551 S Tryon St, Charlotte, NC 28202**

## **Gathering, Growing, and Gleaning Vital Resources for our African American Museum Spaces**

Included in this document you will find:

- 1. Short Pre-Conference Description**
- 2. Pre-Conference Workshop Agenda**
- 3. Presenter Biographies**
- 4. Background Information about The Gathering Place Project**

### **1. The Gathering Place Project Pre-Conference Workshop Details**

**"Gathering, Growing, and Gleaning Vital Resources for our African American Museums"** is an interactive workshop that will focus on surviving and thriving in the midst of a continuously challenging economic climate. Participants will see dynamic examples of how to cultivate donors for historically African American heritage and museum spaces and will engage in activities geared toward growing and sustaining fiscal health. Registrants will also hear expert advice around grant writing and programming "on a shoestring," across the disciplines. All will receive take-home materials for ongoing growth.

Additionally, all participants will have the opportunity to connect with and learn from the following heritage professionals: **Bamidele Demerson** (The International Civil Rights Center and Museum), **Valaida Fullwood** (New Generation of African American Philanthropists), **Tamara Holmes-Brothers** (Fayetteville State University), **Morenga Hunt** (Arts and Non-Profit Development Consulting), **Mark Isaksen** (Institute of Museum and Library Services), **Michelle Lanier** (NC African American Heritage Commission), **Andrea Lawson** (NC Arts Council), **Darryl Lester** (The African American Cultural Center at North Carolina State University), **Michele Parchment** (The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture), **Holly Smith** (African American Collections, The Southern Historical Collection), **Darrell Stover** (NC Humanities Council), **Belinda Tate** (Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University), **Charles Thomas** (Queen City Forward), **LeRae Umfleet** (NC Office of Archives and History).

**"Gathering, Growing, and Gleaning"** is the official launch of the IMLS-funded Gathering Place Project (GPP), which has as its goal, the transformative growth and development of best practices in African American museum spaces and the up-building of our future African American heritage practitioners. GPP is an anchor program of the NC African American Heritage Commission\*.

\*The NC African American Heritage Commission works across the state and nation to preserve promote and protect North Carolina's African American history, arts, and culture for *all* people. The NC African American Heritage Commission is based in the NC Arts Council in the state Department of Cultural Resources.

## 2. Pre-Conference Workshop Agenda

9:00-9:30 Registration and Gathering

### GATHERING

9:30 Welcome and Orientation: **Michelle Lanier** (NC African American Heritage Commission)

9:45 Greetings from the GPP Advisory Board: **Tamara Holmes-Brothers** (Fayetteville State University)

10:15-1:00 Gleaning: Interactive Fiscal Health Session with **Morenga Hunt** (Arts and Nonprofit Development Consulting)

1:00-1:15 Truth Be Told: Six-minute Oral Presentation of a story from the book *Giving Back* followed by a book signing by **Valaida Fullwood** (New Generation of African American Philanthropists) and **Charles Thomas** (Queen City Forward)

1:15-2:30 FEAST AND FELLOWSHIP TIME: Lunch on Your Own

### GROWING

2:30-3:30 Fruits of Our Labor: Growing a Collection through Cultivating Donor Relations  
Show and Know Grow Show and Tell at the Gantt

led by **Michele Parchment** (The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture)

3:30-4:30 Spinning Straw into Gold: Dynamic Programming with Minimal Resources **Bamidele Demerson** (International Civil Rights Center & Museum), **Darryl Lester** (The African American Cultural Center at North Carolina State University), **Belinda Tate** (Diggs Gallery, WSSU), and **Holly Smith** (The Southern Historical Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill)

BREAK: 15 MIN

### GLEANING

4:45-5:45 Behind the Veil: Mysteries of the Grant World Revealed: A conversation with funders and successful grant recipients including **Andrea Lawson** (NC Arts Council), **Darrell Stover** (NC Humanities Council), **LeRae Umfleet** (NC Office of Archives and History), & **Mark Isaksen** (Institute of Museum and Library Services).

5:45-6:00 Harvest: Take Always for Today and Seeds for Tomorrow

### **3. Presenter's Biographies**

#### **Bamidele Demerson**

Bamidele Agbasegbe Demerson, executive director of the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in Greensboro, North Carolina, also serves as the institution's curator and director of programs. Prior to coming to Greensboro, he held the post, executive director of the Harrison Museum of African American Culture in Roanoke, Virginia. When Demerson lived in Michigan, he fulfilled the role, director of education, research and exhibitions at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit. In addition to his work in museums, he has also taught in the Division of Black Studies and Division of Humanities at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, and served as a consultant to school districts in the area of multicultural education. An alumnus of The University of Michigan, Demerson received undergraduate and graduate training in cultural anthropology with a special focus on Africa and the African diaspora. He has conducted fieldwork on three continents where he studied family life, spiritual beliefs and practices, and visual arts in southwest Nigeria (Africa), northeast Brazil (South America), and southern United States (North America). Demerson's current initiatives in museum education and curatorial practice focus on human rights and societal change.

#### **Valaida Fullwood**

An "idea whisperer," Valaida brings unbridled imagination and a gift for harnessing wild ideas to her work around philanthropy, education and arts and culture. She helps organizations drive ideas forward by managing their projects and writing their stories.

*Giving Back*, her 400-page hardcover book, reframes portraits of philanthropy with prose, poetry and photography. The book features more than 200 black donors, across generations and largely from North Carolina. Developed in collaboration with photographer Charles Thomas, *Giving Back* was named among the 10 Best Black Books of 2011 and received the prestigious 2012 McAdam Book Award, which recognizes "the best new book for the nonprofit sector." During 2012, Valaida was named a Charlotte Catalyst by Uptown magazine and selected the 2014 Lake Distinguished Visitor at the School of Philanthropy at Indiana University. She is a founder of New Generation of African American Philanthropists and a contributing writer for BlackGivesBack.com. Connect and learn more via [valaida.com](http://valaida.com) and @ValaidaF on Twitter.

#### **Tamara Holmes-Brothers**

Tamara Holmes-Brothers is the Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations at Fayetteville State University (FSU). She has experience in grassroots marketing and leadership in quantifying the value of brand and philanthropic outcomes. She is responsible for initiating and cultivating relationships between the university and private organizations in a way that advances the priorities of both entities. As Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations, Mrs. Brothers has worked with companies such as BET Networks, Coca Cola, Morgan Stanley, Bank of America, The Hershey Company, Food Lion, Wells Fargo, The Tom Joyner Foundation, Ford, Belk, GlaxoSmithKline and more.

Mrs. Brothers is a native of Fayetteville, NC and a graduate of E.E. Smith Senior High School. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Art from Hampton University, a Master's degree in Sport Management from West Virginia University, as well as a certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Mrs. Brothers is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Educational Management from Hampton University.

#### **Morenga Hunt**

Morenga Hunt's professional history includes 11 years as Vice President of Education at the North Carolina Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Charlotte, NC, 7 years as the former Managing Director of an arts and cultural center in Manchester, England, UK, and 6 years managing festivals and musicians in Washington, DC. He is an experienced educator and administrator, and has served as a national and international consultant to various arts, civic, higher education, and community-based organizations.

### **3. Presenter's Biographies (contd.)**

#### **Mark Isaksen**

Mark Isaksen began working at IMLS in 2010, with primary responsibility for two programs that strengthen the capacity of the museum field, the Museum Grants for African American History and Culture and the 21st Century Museum Professionals Grants. The Museum Grants for African American History and Culture program has awarded 80 grants totaling \$8.2 million to enhance institutional capacity and sustainability through professional training, technical assistance, internships, outside expertise. The 21st Century Museum Professionals program has awarded 64 grants totaling \$14.8 million to help museum professionals acquire, improve, and maintain their knowledge and skills. His previous experience includes working at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Independence Seaport Museum, and the National Building Museum as well as working as a commercial fisherman. Isaksen received his MS degree in historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania and his BA degree in History from American University. He resides in Washington, D.C. with his partner and two children.

#### **Michelle Lanier**

Michelle serves as director of the NC African American Heritage Commission and the NC African American Heritage Development and Cultural Tourism, programs of the NC Department of Cultural Resources, in the Division of the state Arts Council. Michelle uses her background as an oral historian and folklorist to connect communities around the state's rich cultural resources. She also brings the ethical issues of public history and documentary work into the classroom, as an instructor since 2000 with Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies.

Michelle's work with Gullah communities, which she began at Spelman College and completed through UNC-Chapel Hill's Curriculum in Folklore, paved the way for her to become one of North Carolina's liaisons to the federal, Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. Michelle is currently involved in the powerful work of engaging communities towards envisioning and growing the future of African American heritage in the state of North Carolina.

#### **Andrea Lawson**

Andrea Lawson is the Music, Dance and Community Engagement Director for the North Carolina Arts Council, a State agency of the Department of Cultural Resources. She has been with the Arts Council for 11 years. Andrea holds a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Arts, Arts Administration from Virginia Tech and a BA in Music from Cleveland State University, where she studied viola privately with Cleveland Orchestra member, Lucian Joel. Before her work at the NC Arts Council, Andrea was the Managing Director and Development Director of the Freed Center for the Performing Arts at Ohio Northern University. There she managed a 550-seat performing arts venue, technical and scenic staff, box office staff, student volunteers and contracted with 10 headliners each season.

#### **Darryl Lester**

Darryl Lester currently serves as the Interim Assistant Director of the African American Cultural Center at North Carolina State University. Prior to joining NCSU, this social entrepreneur and community philanthropist, founded HindSight Consulting in 2001 and the Community Investment Network in 2006 --- but his passion for philanthropy was rooted during his early life in Marion, South Carolina. Prior to creating HindSight Consulting, Inc, Darryl served as the Director of Community Leadership and Programs at the Triangle Community Foundation (NC) and as Trustee of the Warner Foundation. He was also an Associate Counsel at Capital Development Services and a Training Manager at N.C. Public Allies. He is well acquainted with educational institutions, having served as an Assistant Dean at UNC-Chapel Hill, the Assistant Director of African American Student Affairs at North Carolina State University and as a Counselor at Shaw University Counseling Center (NC).

Darryl is a graduate of both Wofford College (B.A., Economics) and North Carolina State University (M.A., Psychology) and enjoys the brotherhood that he shares as a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Within the city of Raleigh, where he resides, he is a Development Chair for Sassafras All Children's Playground, a project that is working to provide a safe play environment for children with special needs.

### 3. Presenter's Biographies (contd.)

#### **Michele A. Parchment**

Michele A. Parchment extensive resume includes more than 25 years working with nonprofit and for-profit organizations, including 21 years in the arts and museum management and as a senior supervisor for public and educational programming, collections, exhibitions, cultural festivals and community initiatives. Parchment has worked with several well-known museums across the United States, including facility start-up experiences at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History in Detroit, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African-American History and Culture in Baltimore, Maryland and the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charlotte, NC. Parchment has held project management, education, collections and exhibition and programming positions. In her present position, Parchment is directing and managing the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture collections and acquisitions. She is currently developing and implementing policies and procedures for the Gantt Center's permanent collection and The Hewitt Collection of African-American Art and exhibition departments.

#### **Holly A. Smith**

Archivist, Holly A. Smith works to facilitate better access to archival collections related to African American history and culture, which have been historically underrepresented in the archival record. Holly serves as the African American Materials Specialist for Wilson Special Collections Library, at UNC Chapel Hill. Holly supports students, faculty, staff, and the community in the discovery and use of materials about African Americans in the South - from 19th century letters written by enslaved men and women to interviews from the Southern Oral History Program at UNC. She cultivates donor relationships and instructs undergraduates and graduates, helping them think about history in innovative ways. Working with diverse institutions and community organizations, Holly curates exhibitions, creates workshops, and lectures at conferences. Working to change the concept of how archivists preserve and present African American history, Holly empowers researchers, scholars, and other archival users in attaining a better understanding of how to use archival materials and gain a broader view of African American history. Holly considers it a true honor and privilege to work to uncover the stories of the community and the ancestors.

#### **Darrell Stover**

Darrell "SCIPOET" Stover is a cultural historian, poet and performance artist consistently engaged in raising consciousness and the quality of life of individuals and communities through creative expression fortified by ancestral rememory. He found and directed the Spoken Word Performance Poetry Ensemble in Washington, DC and he served as the Program Director of the Hayti Heritage Center in Durham, NC. Presently, he is Program Director at the North Carolina Humanities Council. He studied microbiology and American studies at the University of Maryland at College Park and received his M.A. in Writing from Johns Hopkins University. He has just released his new volume of poetry, *Somewhere Deep Down When*. He has been published in *Literary Trails of the North Carolina Piedmont*, *Gargoyle*, *Fast Talk Full Volume*, *Obsidian*, *Drumbeat*, *Beyond the Frontier: African-American Poetry for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the *Washington Post*, *Independent Weekly*, *the Hip Hop Tree: Seeds, Essays, and Thoughts*, and *Kiss the Sky: Fiction and Poetry Starring Jimi Hendrix*.

#### **Belinda A. Tate**

Belinda Ann Tate has served as the Director of Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) since 1999. In that capacity, she has overseen all curatorial, educational, operational and financial aspects of the gallery, one of North Carolina's largest exhibition spaces dedicated to the art of Africa and the African Diaspora.

Ms. Tate received her undergraduate degree in Art History/Museum Studies from Yale University and her MA in Liberal Studies from Wake Forest University. She has traveled extensively to more than 16 countries in Europe and Africa and has served as a Fulbright-Hayes Fellow where she evaluated South African public education a decade after the end of apartheid. Ms. Tate's over-arching goal is to consistently promote goodwill through the arts and to mentor young professionals.

### **3. Presenter's Biographies (contd.)**

#### **Charles Thomas**

Charles Thomas is the Executive Director of Queen City Forward, a non-profit focused on enabling and growing social entrepreneurs and businesses in Charlotte, NC. Charles is the former Education Director of The Light Factory Contemporary Museum of Photography and Film. During his tenure, he expanded the Museum's community outreach program, increasing impact and earned revenue. Charles recently co-published a book of photography and stories with author Valaida Fullwood called *Giving Back: A Tribute to Generations of African American Philanthropists*. *Giving Back* was recently awarded the 2012 McAdam Book Award naming the book "the nation's most inspirational and useful new book for the nonprofit sector." Charles owns Sankofa Photography.

Charles graduated from Duke University with a degree in Economics. He started his career as a consultant for Andersen Consulting (Accenture). Charles is active in the community and currently serves on the board of the New Generation of African American Philanthropists (NGAAP-Charlotte) and Conscious Seekers for Intentional Living.

#### **LeRae Umfleet**

LeRae Umfleet works as the Administrator of the Education and Outreach Branch of the Office of Archives and History and as Curator of Collections Management for the Department of Cultural Resources. In this position, LeRae manages how the agency cares for, collects, stores, and exhibits the objects in its custody. LeRae also manages the NC Connecting to Collections project, an IMLS grant-funded initiative to help museums, libraries, historic sites, and archives improve their collections care and disaster preparedness techniques.

Originally from Bath, North Carolina, LeRae graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1991 with a Bachelor's Degree in History. She then attended the Archival Management Program at NC State and transferred to East Carolina University where she graduated with a Master's Degree in 1998. LeRae is married to a wonderfully understanding husband who shares her love of history, Chris, and they have two children, Alex age 18 and Fletcher age 11.

#### **4. Background Information about The Gathering Place Project:**

In North Carolina's African American communities, more and more museums are developing to gather people, memories, and objects in order to preserve a rich heritage. The Gathering Place Project (GPP), a training and outreach initiative of the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission (AAHC), provides statewide assistance in improving the knowledge, skills, and abilities for staff and volunteers at African American museums in caring for their collections and sharing their stories. Further, the project offers training opportunities for students from local Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to create a new generation of museum workers. The Gathering Place Project encourages networking and skills sharing between museums and students to provide reciprocal learning in a hands-on environment.

The AAHC, a part of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources (NCDRC), successfully attained funding to launch the Gathering Place Project from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The North Carolina General Assembly created the AAHC to "assist the Secretary of Cultural Resources in the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of African American history, arts, and culture." With this legislative mandate, the AAHC has identified African American Heritage Practitioners, such as curators, docents, and museum directors, as priority service populations. The commission's guiding legislation, vision, and mission all direct its work towards supporting African American museums. To ensure the success of GPP, the AAHC will be partnering with the International Civil Rights Museum, Historic Stagville, Fayetteville State University, and Bennett College. Further, the GPP will seek advice from an advisory body composed of community and academic leaders from African American museums and HBCUs.