



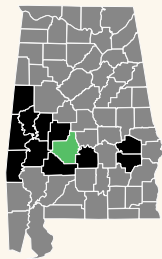
The Black Belt Bulletin

ISSUE 30 | MARCH 11, 2024 | FOCUS ON LOCAL ARTISTS



SPOTLIGHT ON - DALLAS COUNTY -

Dallas County is located in the central part of Alabama and is one of the 12 Black Belt counties serviced by the BBCF. The City of Selma serves as the county seat.



DALLAS CO. HAS
A TOTAL AREA OF
975
SQUARE MILES



Historically, Dallas County was organized by the Alabama territorial legislature in 1818 as a portion of the Creek cession of land to the US Government. By 1860, Dallas County produced more cotton than any other county in the state, relying on the labor of mostly enslaved people.



DALLAS CO. HAS
A POPULATION OF
38.2K

Today, the population of Dallas County is 70% Black and 30% White. Manufacturing, healthcare, retail and education are the primary employers throughout the county. The Dallas County city of Selma is home to the state's largest historic district and is known for its place in the civil

rights movement, with 'Bloody Sunday' happening during the Selma-to-Montgomery March. Dallas County is also home to a well of internationally known artists, including the Gees Bend Quilters Collective and renowned sculptor Charlie "Tin Man" Lucas.

Dallas County is an original service area of the BBCF and serves as its home, with offices located in Selma. Those living in Dallas County can access the resources of the BBCF or donate to the organization through one of your local Community Associates.

BBCF DALLAS CO. BOARD MEMBERS

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BBCF DALLAS CO. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES:

Mae Frances Brown, Sandra Cowan, Keith Jones, Iona Martin, Shelly McGee, JoAnn Smith, Lawrence Wofford

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MICHAEL 'BIG MIKE' GOINGS



Former Dallas County Community Associate and longtime BBCF friend and supporter, Deacon Michael 'Big Mike' Goings, passed away on February 27, 2024. "A great soul serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies. It brings us together again and again." - Maya Angelou

The Artist Storm Relief Fund

The Selma-West Alabama tornado that struck in January of 2023 caused considerable damage to several of the communities that the Black Belt Community Foundation serves. This past year, we have remained focused on providing support for individuals and groups affected by the storms. One such effort, the Artist Storm Relief Fund, was made possible through a \$50,000 targeted grant from The Educational Foundation of America to assist artists and arts organizations in the Black Belt region (Dallas, Greene, Hale, Marengo, and Sumter counties) with post-storm recovery.

The Educational Foundation of America supports nonprofit organizations that focus on the arts, the environment, democracy, health, and justice. The EFA's contribution to the Artist Storm Relief Fund was intended to help artists recoup and/or rebuild their lost time, inventory, materials, or studio space due to the storms of January 2023. With this funding, BBCF was able to distribute individual \$1,000 grants to 47 local artists, supporting visual artists, musicians, writers, performers, and other creative individuals who faced challenges in the aftermath of the natural disaster.

Using the BBCF's network of Community Associates, within the eligible counties, enabled outreach to artists across the region, including those in very rural areas and those without computer access or internet. Under the leadership of Aaron Head, BBCF Arts Program Director, each application was judged based on the artists' financial need, the extent of the tornado's impact on their work and livelihood, and their contribution to the cultural enrichment of the community. Those selections were then presented to the BBCF Arts Grants Committee and Board of Directors for approval. According to Head, "With the Artist Storm Relief Fund, we were able to provide more financial stability for artists. Many were able to address pressing concerns such as housing, studio repairs, and replacing damaged equipment. This financial injection helped prevent further economic strain on the artists and allowed them to focus on rebuilding their lives."



Renowned Black Belt Artist, Charlie "Tin Man" Lucas, was also one of the recipients of a grant from the Artist Storm Relief Fund. Lucas was recently featured in our Black Belt Bold series, read more here: blackbeltfound.org/bold



Karyn Reddick is an accomplished local artist, based out of Selma, AL, and was one of the 47 recipients who received a grant from the BBCF's Artist Storm Relief Fund.

BBCF President, Felecia Lucky, believes the organization's commitment to the arts "enables an increase in artist visibility, and a heightened appreciation for the role of artists in the community, leading to continued support and recognition for their contributions, and more long-term sustainability of the local arts community."

BBCF DALLAS CO. 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS (ARTS GRANTS & COMMUNITY GRANTS):

- AGES CDC
- ArtsRevive CDC
- Bridge Crossing Jubilee
- Dallas County Family Resource Center
- Fathers of St. Edmund, Southern Missions
- McRae Learning Center
- Orrville Volunteer Fire Department
- Selma Police Athletic League
- Something Better Lifestyle Improvement Project
- Women and Youth Services of Selma AL, Inc.