



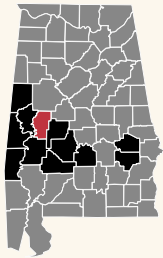
The Black Belt Bulletin

ISSUE 32 | APRIL 8, 2024 | FOCUS ON HOUSING



SPOTLIGHT ON - HALE COUNTY -

Hale County is proudly situated in the center of the Oakmulgee Wildlife Management Area, in the west-central portion of the state, and contributes to Alabama's \$3 billion dollar hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation industry. It is one of the 12 Black Belt counties serviced by BBCF with the City of Greensboro serving as the county seat.



HALE CO. HAS
A TOTAL AREA OF
657
SQUARE MILES



Hale County was established following the end of the American Civil War from portions of Greene, Marengo, Perry, and Tuscaloosa counties, with the vast majority of the territory coming from Greene County.



HALE CO. HAS
A POPULATION OF
14.7K

With a population of nearly 15,000, Hale County's racial make-up is 57.7% Black and 40.3% White. Manufacturing, education, health care, and agriculture (forestry, fishing/hunting) are some of the primary industries in the county.

The town of Greensboro claims the title of Alabama's "Catfish Capital" and is the founding home of the Hale County Civic Improvement League, one of the nation's first civil-rights associations. Greensboro also boasts the Safe House Black History Museum, where Martin Luther King once hid from an active Ku Klux Klan contingent while fighting for citizens rights in 1968.

In 1993, Auburn University's Rural Studio Project was founded and headquartered in Newbern, where it addresses affordable housing by having university architecture and construction students build unique home structures for Black Belt families in need. To date more than 1,200 students have built 220 homes and community structures in Hale County.

The Black Belt Community Foundation actively engages with and supports the citizens of Hale County through community and arts grants and other programs. Those living in Hale County can access the resources of the BBCF or donate to the organization through one of your local Community Associates.



Marvin W. Wiggins
BBCF Board Member
Hale County

BBCF HALE CO. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES:

Willie Hudson, Marilyn Pickens, Patti Rhodes, Jonathan Rossell, Ada Webb

BBCF HALE CO. 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS:

(ARTS GRANTS & COMMUNITY GRANTS)

- Black Belt Workshop
- Newbern Library, Inc.
- Healing Steps Movement, Inc.

BBCF and Selma Housing Authority Collaborate

Federally subsidized housing in the United States can be traced to President Roosevelt's New Deal and the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works initiated in 1933. The goal of the program was to spur economic recovery in the construction industry. Locally run housing authorities, like the Selma Housing Authority (SHA), were created from federal legislation in 1937 (Wagner-Steagall Act), that loaned funds to public housing authorities formed by local governments for the construction and operation of public housing developments.

Today, the Selma Housing Authority is funded with the support of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The current success and future plans for SHA are fueled by innovative leadership from both its board of commissioners and President/CEO Kennard Randolph. According to Randolph, "We serve almost 2,500 local families who deserve clean and decent dwellings now, while building resources with the goal of owning affordable housing. Our goal is to engage with our community as trusted public servants, delivering opportunity and instilling hope."



SHA President/CEO Kennard Randolph was recently featured in our 'Black Belt Bold' series. Read more: blackbeltfound.org/bold

As part of their inspired approach, SHA partners with the City of Selma, along with local non-profits and businesses, to support a variety of community needs. Two examples of the exceptional initiatives the SHA has put forth are the Annual Build-A-Bed Giveaway project and the Perfect Attendance Incentive. In July of 2023, the SHA staff distributed new bedroom and living room furniture to residents who desire to enhance their homes and need a helping hand. This initiative, which began in 2019, has become one of the housing authority's most meaningful programs. The Perfect Attendance Incentive is a newly announced project from SHA that will give the families of about 300 students, living at four local housing complexes, a chance to win a \$500 incentive if their child maintains perfect attendance throughout the school year. This initiative, funded by the BBCF, seeks to reduce truancy by teaching children the importance of attendance and being on time, which will help them become better citizens in the community.



This beautiful home, located at 1425 Washington St., will be awarded to the winner of a lottery selection held on Sunday, April 21, at 3pm. For more info call: 414-301-3826

The SHA and BBCF are also teaming up to offer residents who lost homes in the January 2023 tornado a chance to win a 3-bedroom, 2-bath house via lottery. Residents must complete all requirements to be eligible to win, including attendance at mandatory workshops. "Partnering with SHA, especially around housing, is evidence of BBCF's long term commitment to supporting the many and complex needs of our community," states Felecia Lucky, BBCF President.

NEXT WORKSHOP:

APRIL

13

10AM - 2PM

@ GWC CENTER
IN SELMA, AL

For the next two years, the Selma Housing Authority will utilize a \$500,000 HUD Choice Neighborhood planning grant to create and build support for a plan to transform George Washington Carver (GWC) Homes. SHA has its sights on a major Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant (up to \$50 million) and continuing partnerships with the City of Selma, BBCF, business, industry and all who are working towards creating affordable housing as a cornerstone of community development.

Sources: blackbeltnewsnetwork.com (7/21/23 & 2/5/24); encyclopediainalabama.org (6/3/24); ruralstudio.org; selmahousing.com; selmasun.com (4/5/24); selmatimesjournal.com; waka.com (11/30/23); wsfa.com (1/31/24).