



The Black Belt Community Foundation

# DATA IMPACT CENTER

# The Black Belt Bulletin

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## Southern Black Girls Dream Conference



A striking scene evolved in a cloud of pink joy when over 1200 delegates converged at the Southern Black Girls Dream Conference, held at the Marriott Marquis, downtown Atlanta, June 6-8, 2024. Sponsored by the Southern Black Girls and Women’s Consortium (SBGWC), this full-fledged conference was designed to help youth claim their vision, practice leadership, community organizing, health and wellness, fuel entrepreneurship and pursue STEM dreams. Black girls and gender expansive youth and women were catapulted into a sea of possibilities based on vision. The SBGWC, led by three anchor organizations serves Black girls and women across 12 southern states by giving them access to knowledge, skills and self-efficacy as they fulfill their vision.



Crowd in attendance at the 2024 Black Girls Dream Conference.

As SBGWC co-founder LaTosha Brown invoked the audience to tap into their dreams, she challenged them to answer the question, “What are you willing to do to make your vision manifest?”. Malika Berry-Rogers, Executive Director of SBGWC, praised the Youth Ambassadors, “We are guided by the voices of Black girls, we are centered in their voices, they lead us, tell us what we should do with our money and how to love and serve all of you.”



SBGWC founding members at the Dream Conference in Atlanta. Left to Right: Alice Eason Jenkins, LaTosha Brown, Felecia Lucky, and Margot Miller.

The conference featured workshops, hands-on STEM activities, networking with experts, business demonstrations, and participants sharing the development of their vision, in order to accomplish their dreams. Felecia Lucky, President of the Black Belt Community Foundation, an anchor organization for SBGWC, addressed the enthusiastic attendees with a heartfelt message, “When I walked down the hall

(of the hotel) today and I saw your faces, my heart just felt some kind of way, so thank you for what you do, who you are, and I am looking forward hearing more about your dreams.”

Darlene Robinson (BBCF Board Member) attended the conference with 3 generations of her family (including her son and grandson). According to Robinson, “we decided to make this a family affair since there is so much for everyone to learn and experience. Exposure is key to our youth’s vision for their lives.”

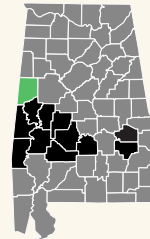
If you would like more information or to follow the activities of SBGWC, please visit [southernblackgirls.org](https://southernblackgirls.org) or follow us on social media!



Darlene Robinson's grandchildren in attendance at the conference. Left to Right: Aniah, Aaliyah, Savanna, and Olivia Robinson.

## SPOTLIGHT ON – PICKENS COUNTY –

Pickens County is located on the west central border of Alabama and is one of the 12 Black Belt counties serviced by BBCF. The City of Carrollton serves as the county seat.



PICKENS CO. HAS A TOTAL AREA OF **890** SQUARE MILES

Pickens County was carved from Tuscaloosa County in 1820, (originally formed from land taken in a treaty with the Choctaw and Cherokee Nations). The county was named in honor of Gen. Andrew Pickens of South Carolina, a Revolutionary War hero.



PICKENS CO. HAS A POPULATION OF

**19.1K**

With a population of just over 19k, Pickens County is 57% White, 40% African-American, and 5% Hispanic. The majority of residents are employed in education, manufacturing, retail, construction, transportation & warehousing.

In Pickens County, you are directly connected to the state’s 6 interstate highways, seven commercial airports, five railroads, a deepwater port, and one of the largest inland waterway systems in the nation, the Tombigbee River. There is less than a 4.5 hour drive from Pickens to most of the major cities in the Southeast U.S.

Historical sites and other places of interest include: The Tom Bevell Center and Museum (featuring Snag boat *The Montgomery*), Shark Tooth Creek, Pirates Cove, Aliceville Lake, and the Tom Bevell Lock and Dam. The Aliceville Museum boasts the largest collection of POW memorabilia from WWII German soldiers in the US.

**BBCF PICKENS CO. BOARD MEMBER**  
Patricia A. Windham  
Pickens County

The BBCF is active in Pickens through the disbursement of arts and community grants along with other civic projects. Those living in Pickens County can access the resources of the BBCF or donate to the organization through one of your local Community Associates.

### BBCF PICKENS CO. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES:

Paris Cousette, Belinda Craig, Janice Jones, Paulette Newberns, LaSonja Richardson, Terrence Windham

### BBCF PICKENS CO. 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS:

(ARTS GRANTS & COMMUNITY GRANTS)

- Awareness Spoken Outreach Organization
- Harvest Outreach Ministries
- Pickensville Community Center Council
- Tranquility 2020

Sources: [encyclopediaofalabama.org](https://encyclopediaofalabama.org) (7/28/23); [pickenscountyal.com](https://pickenscountyal.com)

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