



Black Belt  
Community Foundation

# FORWARD MOMENTUM

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## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



# IN MEMORIAM



## **Patricia Diane Wagner Stiles**

Born: November 3, 1960 | Passed: June 16, 2022

BBCF lost a true leader in 2022 with the passing of BBCF Head Start Director Patricia Stiles. Patricia, affectionately known as Pat and Tricia, was born on November 3, 1960 to the union of Frank and Josephine Wagner in Benton, AL.

She received Christ at an early age and joined the Mt. Gillard Missionary Baptist Church in Tyler, AL. As a member, she was active in the choir and Women's Ministry. She attended school in the Lowndes County public school system and graduated from Central High School, class of 1978.

Passionate about education, Pat served children and families in Lowndes, Choctaw, Marengo, Dallas, and Wilcox counties for over 30 years through her work teaching and Head Start. Her most recent work was to become the first Director to steward BBCF's Head Start program. Outside of her work as an educator, Pat was most passionate about her family. She married Samuel Stiles on January 31, 1986 and they started a family, including a daughter and two sons.

Tricia peacefully transitioned to her heavenly home on Thursday, June 16, 2022. She was preceded in death by her grandparents, her brother Michael Wagner, and her father-in-law Willie Stiles. Her beloved mother, Josephine Wagner, joined her in death on Wednesday, June 22, 2022.

In tribute to our beloved Pat, we strive to honor her memory by carrying forward the values she embodied and demonstrated in her leadership: integrity, kindness, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

Rest in peace, Pat. Your spirit lives on in the hearts of those you touched and the legacy you leave behind.

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**Felecia L. Lucky**  
BBCF PRESIDENT



**Darlene Robinson**  
2022 BBCF BOARD CHAIR



Dear Friends and Supporters,

2022, what a year, what a team! A year where we happily saw the uncertainties of the Pandemic start to gradually dim to the brightening light of hope. But just as society seemed to be moving toward a re-opening into a new normal, we ran into an unfortunate resurgence of COVID case numbers. The ebb and flow of progress and regrouping included some devastating losses, including the passing of our Head Start Director, Pat Stiles, after her long and courageous fight against cancer. Through it all, BBCF managed to maintain positive movement forward. Our organization witnessed record growth, adding key new team members with skills and expertise at a level we are so ever thankful to welcome aboard. We consolidated key partnerships and counted the blessings of new and larger funding sources than ever before in our history.

BBCF’s work across 2022 demonstrated a continued resiliency and a creative adaptability we can proudly praise. Meeting the moment head-on, BBCF actually increased its ability to serve our communities. We may not have always been able to gather safely in person at events, but we did not miss a beat as we produced and facilitated a robust schedule of well attended, capacity building workshops, seminars, and grants ceremonies across the year that kept the bar moving ever forward in taking what we had to continue to meet the needs of the moment. We approached new challenges with creativity and a spirit of working together to achieve solid solutions.

2022 Board Chairperson, Darlene Robinson and I are happy to be able to share this annual report that informs across our good news and works for the year. We want to acknowledge and thank our many donors, both individuals and organizations that have consistently stood with us through this unusual time. We hope you will enjoy the following spotlights of hope, progress and inspiration that wove across our year – a year that will be remembered as one of pivotal growth that demonstrated how resiliently strong BBCF has become as an organization. Thanks to all of you for making this possible!

Sincerely,

*Felecia L. Lucky*

Felecia L. Lucky, BBCF President

*Darlene Robinson*

Darlene Robinson, 2022 BBCF Board Chair

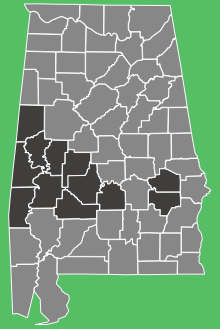
# 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Through the Black Belt Community Foundation’s work, thousands of citizens in the Alabama Black Belt are able to grow and prosper to overcome adversity and societal perceptions. With your support, we are able to continue to provide the programming, resources, and initiatives that drive the vision for a transformed Black Belt region.

## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES

# 93

ACTIVE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES SERVING ACROSS 12 BLACK BELT COUNTIES. THESE TRAINED VOLUNTEERS WORK ALONGSIDE GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP BBCF RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY. THEY SUPPORT EVERY ASPECT OF BBCF’S PHILANTHROPIC WORK.



BULLOCK: 8  
CHOCTAW: 9  
DALLAS: 6

GREENE: 9  
HALE: 4  
LOWNDES: 3

MACON: 11  
MARENGO: 16  
PERRY: 4

PICKENS: 5  
SUMTER: 7  
WILCOX: 11

### COMMUNITY GRANTS



# \$208K

DISTRIBUTED TO 69 BLACK BELT ORGANIZATIONS



# 32,210

PEOPLE IMPACTED BY COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDED PROJECTS

# \$62K

DISTRIBUTED TO 20 BLACK BELT ORGANIZATIONS



### ARTS GRANTS



# \$80K

GRANTED TO 7 ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS FIVE COUNTIES (DALLAS, GREENE, HALE, PERRY AND SUMTER) AS PART OF THE BLACK BELT LIFTS! PROGRAM FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

BBCF HEAD START PARENT VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED

# \$127K

IN FREE SERVICE TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES



# 350 HOURS

AS OF 2022, 35 STUDENTS HAVE ENROLLED IN STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMS FOR A COMBINED TOTAL OF 350 HOURS OF DIRECT LEARNING EXPERIENCES CENTERED ON HEALTHCARE.

# RESTORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

In 2022, BBCF heavily utilized its “Black Belt Lifts!” \$100,000 grant, first received from the Alabama Power Foundation in 2021, to help create effective infrastructure to support criminal justice reform across the Black Belt.

BBCF has partnered with non-profit organizations, faith-based, community, and school leaders, local judges, probation officers, sheriffs, police chiefs and mental health officials to implement measures to decrease mass incarcerations. Black Belt Lifts! has provided restorative justice projects to help incarcerated individuals returning to the community, create alternative sentencing programs, education programs, counseling, job training, family strengthening programs and voter restoration and training to help “Lift” and change lives. These efforts have culminated with BBCF granting out \$80,000 in direct funding support to organizations across five counties (Dallas, Greene, Hale, Perry and Sumter).



## \$80K

DISTRIBUTED TO 7 ORGANIZATIONS

ACROSS

## 5

BLACK BELT COUNTRIES



In November, BBCF announced it is working with Google to provide digital skills programs to advance economic opportunity for people impacted by incarceration. This opportunity arose when BBCF applied for funding through Google’s new \$4 million fund that aims to expand its justice reform work. Over 500 nonprofits across the country applied to receive support from the fund, and BBCF is one of the recipients selected by Google based on its history of helping people impacted by incarceration to receive training, career resources, and job placement support.

## Grow with Google

More than 600,000 Americans leave incarceration each year and face higher jobless rates than the U.S. average. The lack of technology in prison creates further barriers to employment. BBCF will use the new funding to integrate Google’s digital skills curriculum into its existing programming, with the goal of helping people impacted by incarceration learn skills for today’s jobs.

“BBCF has always been devoted to all Black Belt residents having the ability to fully participate in the growth and well-being of their communities. When recently incarcerated people return home, it is important that they can readily access resources and opportunities in their restorative journey. What is good for their own well-being and that of their communities is one and the same.” said BBCF President, Felecia Lucky.

“As we work to create a more inclusive economy, we’re committed to helping people impacted by incarceration access training for today’s jobs,” said Tia McLaurin, Senior Manager, Grow with Google. “We’re proud to work with outstanding partners to ensure more people can qualify for great jobs and create a new beginning for themselves and their families.”

“ **What is good for their own well-being and that of their communities is one and the same.** ”

— FELECIA LUCKY, BBCF PRESIDENT

## NATIONAL DAY OF RACIAL HEALING 2022

The Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Selma (TRHT Selma) program partnership between BBCF and the Selma Center for Nonviolence, Truth and Reconciliation (SCNTR) rolled out the virtual red carpet on January 18, 2022 for its annual observance of the National Day of Racial Healing, as established by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to happen each year on the day following the national Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

TRHT Selma partnered with acclaimed filmmaker, Rachel Boynton (pictured to the right), of “Civil War (Or Who Do We Think We Are)” to present an in-depth, online panel discussion involving two local educators, Denisha Streeter and Colin McConarty, along with community organizer and Executive Director of SCNTR Ainka Jackson and the full TRHT Selma leadership team. This followed licensed movie screenings of the film viewed by local Selma middle and high school students.



“So much of what we have dealt with over the years of the TRHT Selma program work is in creating safe spaces for open discussions about very hard and often bitterly divisive topics. One of our basic tenets of responsibility for TRHT Selma is to tackle racial healing head-on with open discussion and to talk through things together to get them out there and into the healing zone. The American Civil War and how it is taught and discussed in our communities is certainly one of those. We see it played out in the divisive stress associated with the confederate monuments all over our state and the country, for example. History classrooms all over can become battlegrounds of how to wrangle with teaching such a complex and loaded topic,” stated former TRHT Selma program Co-Director, Daron Harris.

The documentary, released in October 2021, follows Boynton throughout the country as she interviews children, teachers and community members to examine how the story of the Civil War varies depending on where someone lives. Following the project in 2022 with TRHT Selma, Boynton and her team have stated a commitment to do more work with the TRHT Selma team in the future.

MIDDLE: Online panel discussion with local educators and TRHT Selma leadership after screening Rachel Boynton’s film.



RIGHT: Cover image of ‘Civil War’, a film by Rachel Boynton



# ARTS EXPOSURE

For its 16th consecutive year, the Black Belt Arts Initiative (BBAI) annual arts grants application cycle sounded off in February of 2022 with a call across BBCF's 12 service counties. BBCF called on all community-based organizations who are active in the arts through activities such as in-school, after-school programs and summer arts education programs, and those who present and/or produce arts programming to apply for grant awards of up to \$3,000 to support their efforts of strengthening and growing the arts ecosystem in the Black Belt.

This year, BBCF emphasized arts exposure. This focus allowed for the arts grants funding to be used for areas reaching beyond traditional art instruction and production into the realm of cultural art experiences. This included virtual field trips to museums, art events, festivals, institutions and galleries which had become increasingly necessary as an educational and experiential tool during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

By the completion of the 2022 arts grants cycle, BBCF awarded a total of \$62,050 in funding to 20 organizations across nine counties of the Black Belt. Two of these grants were for major festivals – supporting the vitally important annual Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee and the Society of Folk Arts and Culture's work producing the annual Black Belt Folk Roots Festival in Greene County, highlighting the arts and music, historically one of Alabama's longest running cultural festivals.



**20**

**BLACK BELT GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS**



**\$62K**

**DISTRIBUTED TO BLACK BELT ORGANIZATIONS**

## – 2022 Arts Grant Recipients –

- » Chilly's ICE Cool Band, Bullock County
- » Fathers of St. Edmund, Southern Missions, Dallas County
- » ArtsRevive CDC, Dallas County
- » Charity Fellowship Outreach, Dallas County
- » Bridge Crossing Jubilee, Dallas County
- » Center For Rural Family Development, Greene County
- » Society of Folk Arts and Culture, Greene County
- » Lowndes County Community Life Center, Lowndes County
- » Too Good for Drugs Photojournalism, Macon County
- » Tuskegee Repertory Theatre, Inc., Macon County
- » From Under the Tree Ministries, Macon County
- » The Podcast Club, Macon County
- » Nature's Garden for Victory and Peace, Macon County
- » Louise O. Newman Center for Learning, Macon County
- » Community Foundation of Uniontown, Perry County
- » Tranquility 2020, Pickens County
- » Divine Girls Coalition, Sumter County
- » Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center, Wilcox County
- » BAMA Kids, Inc., Wilcox County
- » Freedom Quilting Bee Legacy, Wilcox County





ABOVE: The Community Foundation of Uniontown received a 2022 Arts Grant for a community mural project. Designed by resident artist, Jason Irvin, the mural allowed the community to tell its own story and history in a way that is meaningful to them.



LEFT: The Freedom Quilting Bee Legacy group in Wilcox County received a 2022 Arts Grant allowing them to provide a 'Tours of Museums' Day Trip Series. Pictured to the left is FQB Legacy Board Member, Minnie Williams, during a tour of the Birmingham Museum of Art where they saw an original FQB quilt on display.



# \$208K

**DISTRIBUTED TO 69 BLACK BELT ORGANIZATIONS**

## HEALTH

**20 Projects funded impacting 13,335 individuals**

This funding provided support for health awareness, prevention and intervention, physical activity, exercise, more freshly produce foods, healthy living, lifestyle changes, food distribution and community gardens.

## EDUCATION

**15 projects funded impacting 6,218 individuals**

This funding provided support for educational afterschool programs, computer and tech training, cultural excursions, parent education programs, summer reading and math camps, and instruction on swimming from certified swimming instructors.

## RECREATION

**11 projects funded impacting 3,635 individuals**

This funding provided support for physical activities and recreation opportunities for youth and adults across the Black Belt. These activities include sports education and mentoring, sports camps, outdoor experiences and the development and enhancement of local parks.

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**10 projects funded impacting 2,987 individuals**

These projects included the start-up for a certified phlebotomist training program, support for affordable housing and utility assistance, community gardens, entrepreneurship training for young women, workforce development training, and web development.

## MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

**5 projects funded impacting 255 individuals**

This funding provided support to combat the impact that COVID-19 and other stressors have on Black Belt residents.

## CHILDCARE AND SENIOR CITIZENS PROGRAMS

**3 projects funded impacting 185 individuals**

This funding supported a YMCA Day Camp, cultural trips, and a daycare program for disabled and elderly residents.

## VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

**2 local volunteer fire departments funded**

Supported education and training on smoke detector testing, proper fire extinguishers use, and purchasing of needed equipment to improve efficiency of the local volunteer fire departments.

## ANIMAL CONTROL

**1 project funded impacting 5,000 individuals**

For the 4th year, BBCF funding for this project supported a continuation of the free Spay and Neuter program for residents of Bullock County to improve their living environment and allow the elderly to enjoy pet ownership without the burden of costly surgery.

## INDIVIDUAL HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

**1 project funded impacting 50 individuals**

Funding provided individual humanitarian support in Greene County and relief for residents who are suffering from cancer and other medical issues that hinder their ability to have enough funds available to provide for the necessities of life.

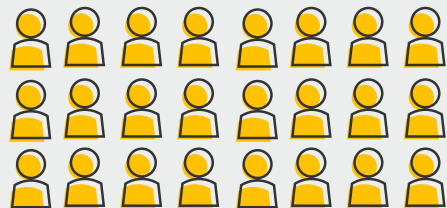
## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

**1 project funded impacting 30 foster parents**

Provided highly qualified training for foster parents who are required by the State of Alabama to receive 15 hours of specified training to maintain current and receive foster care licenses.

# 32,210

**PEOPLE IMPACTED BY COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDED PROJECTS**



# COMMUNITY IMPACT

In March of 2022, BBCF launched its annual Community Grants Cycle to support community-based organizations across its 12 county service region. Since BBCF's founding in 2004, it has worked tirelessly to develop a network of nearly 100 volunteers, such as Lowndes County's Debra Harris, who live and work in the Black Belt. These are the people who know their communities' needs in an immediate way and understand best the work that community organizations are doing, from one hometown to the next.

With this in mind, BBCF actively asks its volunteers for their strong voices in deciding which community grant applicants receive funding. "We, the community associates, are the eyes and ears for the Black Belt Community Foundation," Harris said. "We take what we have to make what we need. Let me just say this, the Black Belt as a whole has some gifted people!"

Pickens County Community Associate Janice Jones saw similar needs in her community, and she quickly learned that connections and relationships are the best resource when it comes to bettering her town. Jones stated, "I believe God has given me a purpose in this life, and I know one of my purposes is to help people," Jones said. "To me, it's a way for you to help your community. Without that Black Belt Community Foundation connection, I think there would be things we would have missed out on."

Jones and Harris both served on their local grants committees for the 2022 Community Grants application cycle whereby a BBCF board member, the county community associate coordinator and two community associates comprised the committee for each of BBCF's 12 service counties.



Collage of photos of 2022 Community Grant winners and the projects that the grants funded.

# WALKING TOWARDS BETTER HEALTH

Saturday, April 23, 2022 was a big day for the community of Orrville, Alabama in Dallas County, just a short 20-minute drive west of Selma. On this sunny, 85 degree day, dozens of residents came out to jubilantly ring in the opening of the new Orrville Community Walking trail. The new walking trail was created at Keith High School in Orrville and is 1/8 of a mile in length.

To support this project, BBCF came together with the Dallas County Board of Education. "It was easy to say yes to this partnership because health and wellness is one of the focus areas in our community outreach efforts," said Felecia Lucky, President of the Black Belt Community Foundation.

"This is something that's readily accessible to the residents here in Orrville," said Tiffany Osborne, Director of Community Engagement for MHRC. "It's a very short drive. As you can see, some of them can walk right across the street and take advantage of this walking path." According to Osborne, Alabama hovers near the bottom of national rankings when it comes to chronic diseases and inactivity.

Osborne said the Black Belt Community Foundation played a crucial role in the project's process. "We worked with them to advertise for this project," she said. "They managed the whole bid process, and they actually dispersed the funds to the contractor that took care of this work."

“

The trail is dedicated to improving the lives of the residents of Orrville.

”



# YOUTH SUCCESS



For the 2nd year, BBCF partnered with Auburn University’s Center for Educational Outreach Engagement and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to support high school students in Bullock and Macon counties enrolled in workforce and professional development courses and training through Auburn University. The three-year renewable grant is funded by the Alabama Department of Commerce with a goal to provide Alabama workforce investment activities by creating opportunities for underserved students to attain nationally recognized postsecondary credentials.

AS OF 2022,  
35 STUDENTS  
HAVE ENROLLED  
IN THIS PROGRAM  
FOR A COMBINED  
TOTAL OF



**350  
HOURS**

of direct learning experiences  
centered on healthcare.

“A major goal of this program and others sponsored by CEOE is to develop deep connections with students to enhance access to an Auburn University education, successful employment and to enhance economic impact on Alabama’s communities,” former CEOE Director Dr. Stacey Nickson said. Dr. Nickson was also a serving BBCF Board Member in 2022. “The WIOA grant has been and continues to be a ‘human touch’ experience,” Nickson said. “We have involved students, parents, teachers, administrators, government officials, community mentors from the Black Belt Community Foundation and Auburn University faculty, staff and students.”

Through this program the students enrolled have been able to visit a variety of colleges on Auburn University’s campus including the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM), the Harrison College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing, College of Veterinary Medicine and the Auburn University Medical Clinic. Their immersive visits to these colleges allowed them to learn directly from the various medical professionals and experience exposure to cutting edge technology and educational equipment, tools that are shaping the face of modern medicine.

# FUTURE STARS

Day one of July saw the successful conclusion to the triumphant return of the annual Future Star Basketball Camp to Sumter County hosted by former Alabama basketball player Marcus Campbell, after a regrettable two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It's the 20th time the basketball skill camp has been held at Sumter Central High School in York. The return of the camp also helps honor the memory of co-founding volunteer and Campbell's cousin, Adolphus Moss, who passed away in 2020. Adolphus was a major part in getting the camp started and helping it run every summer. "He was there with us from day one," Campbell said. "He was also a longtime school board member at Sumter County as well as a West Central (Alabama) official. It'll be a special camp in remembrance of him. We want to carry on, and I know he wants us to carry on, so we're looking forward to it."

The two-day camp is for boys and girls in 5th through 12th grades and is free for all campers. This year, attendees learned from former Alabama players including Campbell and Erwin Dudley, as well as former NBA player Charles Oakley. Former Sumter County High School Coach, Johnny Patrick also volunteered as a camp mentor.

Campbell said he is driven to make an impact on his community and wants children to have fun while learning the basics of basketball. "When I was growing up, I was blessed to be a decent basketball player and I always got invited to camps for free," Campbell said. "When I got older and got to college, I used to hear what it costs and I said, 'I know I probably wouldn't have been going to camp if my parents had to pay \$500 for it.' "

Co-Director Christopher Spencer said he hopes that the attendees are getting more out of the event than they would at your average basketball camp, and he was clear to emphasize that what this program is doing in Sumter County does not represent your "average" basketball camp. "All of these kids are going to be professional at something," Spencer said. "It might not be basketball, but they might be a teacher, fireman, police officer or even a preacher. We want them to get some life skills so they can build (on them)."

Johnny Patrick, the former Sumter County High School Basketball Coach who led the team for an amazing 22-year run stated, "It's all about teaching kids to come in and have fun while working on learning the fundamentals of the game. Also, teaching about discipline, commitment, attitude and teaching all of those different areas so kids can develop those skills, being able to help them in everyday life."

**The Marcus Campbell Future Stars Basketball Camp has served over 5,000 children and young adults during their 20 years in service, providing this free camp to the community.**



**20**  
YEARS



**5,000+**  
KIDS TRAINED SINCE 2000



Collage of photos from the 2022 Marcus Campbell Future Stars Basketball Camp that was held June 30 - July 1, 2022, returning after a 2-year hiatus due to COVID. Campers are seen warming up with jumping jacks and testing their basketball skills on the court. *Photo credit: Drew Kerekes /The Meridian Star*



Collage of photos from the 2022 Dream Bus Tour. Participants enjoyed the colorful pink bus, arts and crafts activities, hair styling demonstrations, games and much much more!

# SOUTHERN BLACK GIRLS

August 20th witnessed the inaugural Southern Black Girls and Women’s Consortium (Southern Black Girls/SBGWC) “Joy is Our Journey Dream Bus Tour” which was an exciting month-long caravan tour across five southern states through nine cities including Atlanta, GA (8/20), Elaine, AR (8/27), Little Rock, AR (8/28), Selma, AL (9/9), Wilcox County, AL (9/10), Livingston, AL (9/10), Jackson, MS (9/11), Houston, TX (9/13) with a final stop in Birmingham, AL (9/17). The tour partnered with the Pete and Thomas Foundation created by chart-topping recording artist, Megan Thee Stallion, who helped produce a special event at the Houston, TX stop.

BBCF’s Southern Black Girls Program Coordinator Samantha Ledbetter stated, “It was an honor that 4 out of the 9 total tour stops were in Alabama with the culminating annual Black Girls Dream Conference taking place in Birmingham. On top of that, being able to reach our Black Belt girls and women directly, by having a third of the tour stops take place in our very own Black Belt from Selma, Camden, and Livingston, really brought this work home in so many real ways!”

The goal of the Bus Tour is to shift the narrative of Black girls and women in the South by providing a platform for girls and women to dream, be their authentic selves, discuss their most pressing concerns, and receive investment for their dreams.

The Selma High School tour stop event reached hundreds of girls who attended from schools covering Selma and Dallas County. Nationally acclaimed community organizer, LaTosha Brown, a graduate of Selma High, led the bus tour team and was accompanied by BBCF President Felicia Lucky, Chauncée Lundy of SBGWC, and Alice Jenkins of the Fund for Southern Communities. Brown was met and celebrated on-site by Selma High’s cheerleader squad, which presented her with a rich and deeply personal moment of homecoming. In 1988, Brown was the only Black cheerleader at Selma High.



LaTosha Brown (middle, pink shirt) poses with the Selma High School cheerleaders during the Dream Bus Tour stop in Selma, AL on September 9, 2022. She was celebrated at the event with photos from her time on the Selma High cheerleading squad in 1988!

# HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

The Black Belt Community Foundation's Community Associates are one of the primary leadership development resources within the Black Belt counties and they are often called upon in times of immediate need. In many cases they are the first "boots on the ground" to help people affected by natural disasters and other emergency situations.

The Greene County Community Associates received such a call in September of 2022 from our Mississippi neighbors over the border in Jackson, Mississippi, during their epic water crisis. Jackson residents regularly experienced trouble with their aging and dilapidated water treatment system, routinely fielding warnings from authorities to boil their water for safety. On August 29, two disasters developed as the flooding of the Pearl river overwhelmed the city's largest water treatment facility into failure, leaving over 160,000 people, hospitals, fire stations, and schools without safe drinking waters, and in many communities, there was no water service at all.



**325K**

WATER BOTTLES  
COLLECTED TO AID  
JACKSON, MS

The Greene County CA's organized a community-wide water collection effort that grew into something larger than initially planned or expected. In total, approximately 38 organizations and 45 families had risen to the call, donating thousands of cases of water. Donations poured in from as far as California, along with donations delivered via FedEx! Black Belt neighbors from Choctaw, Hale, Sumter, and Tuscaloosa counties also contributed.

Over 325,000 bottles of water were collected and delivered and those on the receiving end were grateful to have it and expressed their appreciation for a job well done.



ABOVE (from L to R): Darlene Robinson, BBCF Board President, Community Associates Mollie Rowe, Miriam Leftwich, Geraldine Walton, and John Zippert.

LEFT: Volunteers load cases of donated water into the truck to be delivered to Jackson, Mississippi for the residents in need.

# SUSTAINABLE FOOD COLLECTIVE



At BBCF Head Start, students not only grow food but also use produce for lessons on counting and using descriptive language. The school puts on a farmers market with kids playing the roles of cashier or shopper to understand basic economics. BBCF has increasingly focused on building sustainable food systems since the pandemic and hopes to expand more agriscience education into K-12 schools in the region.

In October of 2022, BBCF completed its Food Security Report. Multiple online meetings and a survey demonstrated an important need and interest to support local efforts to promote community food security, by helping understand the breadth of practices and needs of their local food system, evaluating policy and support barriers and opportunities, developing innovative collaborative solutions, and identifying useful resources. Following this, BBCF began working with its stakeholder partners to utilize the results from this process to articulate an action plan for regranting funds towards local efforts to address food security and food policy in Alabama.

Between June and September 2022, three online videoconferences were held for the Sustainable Food Collective Planning Committee to find disparities in Alabama's food system and identify areas in need of support. The Committee was based on a sample of individuals representing various strata of Alabama food systems including cooperative extension, non-profits organizations, academia, food distributors, and community gardeners.

BBCF's sustainable food collective committee formed with a goal to provide a permanent food presence across the Black Belt region. The committee was formed by assembling some of the members of the food collective created during the peak of the Pandemic along with farmers, former USDA employees, higher education leaders, BBCF staff, farming cooperative leaders and concerned residents. In late November 2022, the BBCF President, staff and sustainable food collective committee members recommended to the BBCF Board of Directors to fund a direct grant in the amount \$84,000 to The United Christian Community Association, Inc. for subgrants to 24 food producers and 20 food distributors in the Black Belt region. The grant was approved by the board and food production and distribution began happening across the Black Belt region.

**It is the goal of the BBCF to do more than “give a man fish, so that he may eat for a day”. It is our desire to “teach men how to fish, that they may eat for a life-time’. – Unknown**



Collage of photos from the December 2022 Community Associates Retreat in Montgomery, Alabama.



# RETREATS PRODUCE FORWARD ACTION



The Annual Community Associates retreat was held December 18-20, 2022 in Montgomery, AL. Linetta Gilbert (pictured to the left), previous Program Manager with the Ford Foundation and Managing Partner of Gilbert & Associates served as the facilitator. Ms. Gilbert has been a lifelong partner and supporter of BBCF and the work accomplished. She was centrally involved in BBCF’s formational planning grant awarded by the Ford Foundation in 2004. During the year’s early Mid-Year Retreat held in July, the Community Associates requested that Ms. Gilbert return to conduct the December Community Associates’ retreat for a more consistent learning experience.

BBCF is strengthening the Community Associates Leadership Program by utilizing the community associates to serve on committees and planning leadership events. This year’s planning committee consisted of four CA’s that assisted staff in the planning and execution of this year’s retreat. The annual retreat was well attended and

received rave reviews by participants and staff. “By far this has been one of the best retreats I have attended,” stated Veronica Drake, BBCF Board Member and Sumter County, County Coordinator.

There were a total of 56 Community Associates that attended the retreat in person and seven that attended virtually. Attendees learned more about systemic/structural change, the key principals and tools of community organizing, how to identify and use the tools to address the needs of the community. Community Partners from the University of Alabama and the Sustainable Food Collective Project along with Community Associates who are involved with these programs, participated on a Community Engagement in Action panel and discussed BBCF current projects. This gave the attendees the opportunity to learn more about BBCF’s work and the roles in which all Community Associates play in supporting the philanthropic work of BBCF.

As BBCF continued its preparation work to move forward with restructuring and strengthening the Community Associates program, the retreat drilled down on community organizing. Also, during the mid-year retreat, the community associates elected a logistics committee that assisted with the planning of the end of year retreat in December. This represented a key step in moving closer to allowing the Community Associates to fully take control of how the Community Associates Leadership Program will function and support the philanthropic work of the BBCF.



# BBCF ADMINISTRATION & STAFF

**Felecia L. Lucky**

BBCF President

**Gwendolyn Blevins**

Head Start HR/Administrator Assistant

**Lydia Chatmon**

TRHT Selma Project Co-Director (Jan - May),  
Project Director (May onward)

**Salaam Green**

BBCF Arts Program Co-Director

**Judith Hardy**

Head Start Family Services Coordinator

**Daron Harris**

Public Relations Director, TRHT Selma  
Project Co-Director (Jan – May)

**Michelle Kine**

Fiscal Officer

**Samantha Ledbetter**

Southern Black Girls and Women’s  
Consortium Program Coordinator

**Jamie Lewis**

Finance Director

**Serena Low**

Chief of Staff

**Christopher Spencer**

Chief Community  
Engagement Officer

**Mynecia Steele**

BBCF Arts Program Co-Director

**Pat Stiles**

Head Start Director

**Robin Stewart**

Head Start Health and  
Nutrition Coordinator

**Calvin Thomas**

Head Start Facilities Manager

**Kathy Thomas**

Head Start Education  
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**Erica Williams**

Community Engagement Officer

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# COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES

Thank you to our Community Associates for their hard work and dedication, ensuring the BBCF continues to provide resources and initiatives that will improve the lives of the residents in the 12 Black Belt counties we serve.

**BULLOCK** – Robert Turner (County Coordinator), Tracy Larkin, Betty Sanders, Juanita Smith, Ron Smith, Theo Smith, Saint Thomas, Ruth Turner

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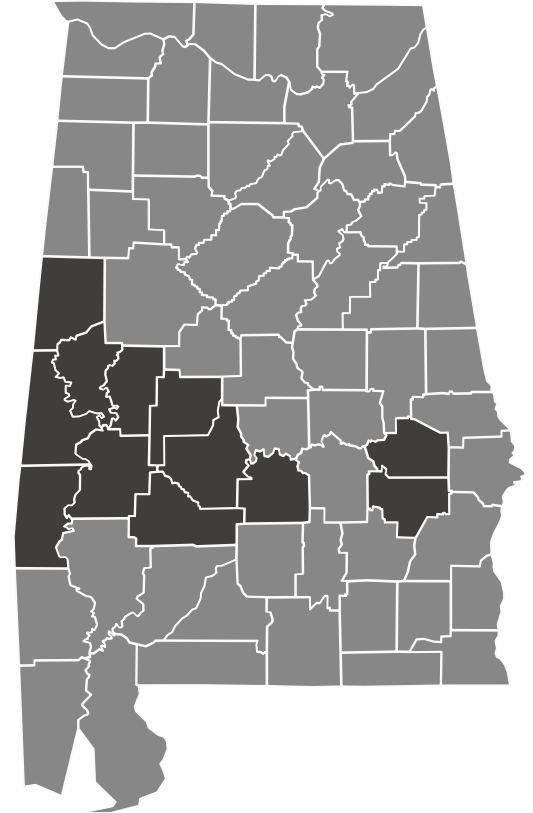
**MARENGO** – Jesse Moore (County Coordinator), Delores Cunningham, Tamika Dial, Willie Dillard, Hattie Moore, Ernestine Mullen, Ella Murdock, Ola M. Nixon, Edward Oates, Alex Roberson, Thomas Rodgers, Rosa Thompson, Mary Williams

**PERRY** – Emefa Butler (County Coordinator), Jamaal Hunter, Tamara Kennie, Albert Turner, Jr.

**PICKENS** – Janice Jones (County Coordinator), Belinda Craig, Paulette Newberns, LaSonja Richardson, Terrence Windham

**SUMTER** – Veronica Drake (County Coordinator), Marcus Campbell, Debra Clark, Tina Jones, Cordelia Turner, Lillian Wideman

**WILCOX** – Rose Garner (County Coordinator), Shelia Dortch, Alma King, Janice Robinson, Sheryl Threadgill-Matthews, Joyce Williams



# THANKS TO OUR DONORS

BBCF gratefully acknowledges our individual and organizational benefactors from across 2022. The past few years have been challenging in many unimaginable ways, making us even more appreciative of your strong action to support the BBCF and our vision of a transformed Black Belt.

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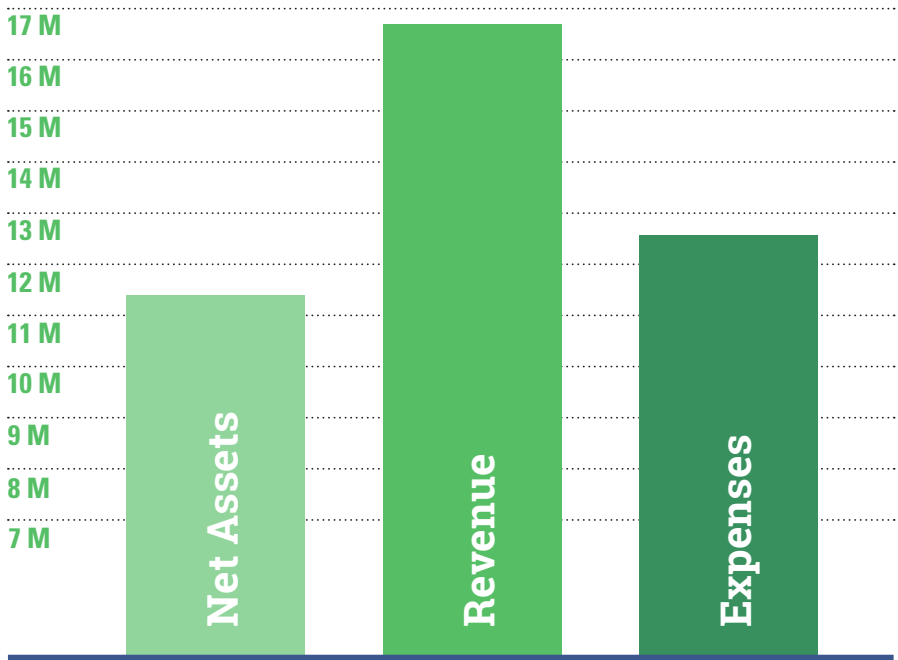
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# FINANCIAL DATA



**\$11,224,655**  
**Net Assets**

Assets	\$13,179,524
Liabilities	\$1,957,869

**\$16,856,072**  
**Revenue**

Grants & Grant Mgmt.	\$15,908,396
Contributions	\$935,179
Misc. Income	\$12,497

**\$12,511,469**  
**Expenses**

Programs	\$11,378,278
Fundraising	\$4,485
Mgmt. & General	\$1,128,706

If you have any questions about the information in this report or would like to learn more about our programs and initiatives, please contact us using one of the methods listed below.

334-874-1126

[info@blackbeltfound.org](mailto:info@blackbeltfound.org)

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### ON THE COVER:

In August 2022, the Southern Black Girl's and Women's Consortium sponsored the inaugural "Joy is Our Journey Dream Bus Tour" which was an exciting month-long caravan tour across five southern states through nine cities. A mini-festiva experience, each tour stop hosted an exciting Dream Village event that featured interactive workshops and programming centered around mental health and wellness, beauty, arts and culture, entrepreneurship, S.T.E.M. and dream-building. The young girl in the cover photo attended the Atlanta Dream Bus Tour event on August 20th, where she thoroughly enjoyed the face-painting booth!

*Photo credit: BBCF Photographer, Tanisha Stephens*



P.O. Box 2020, Selma, AL 36702  
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