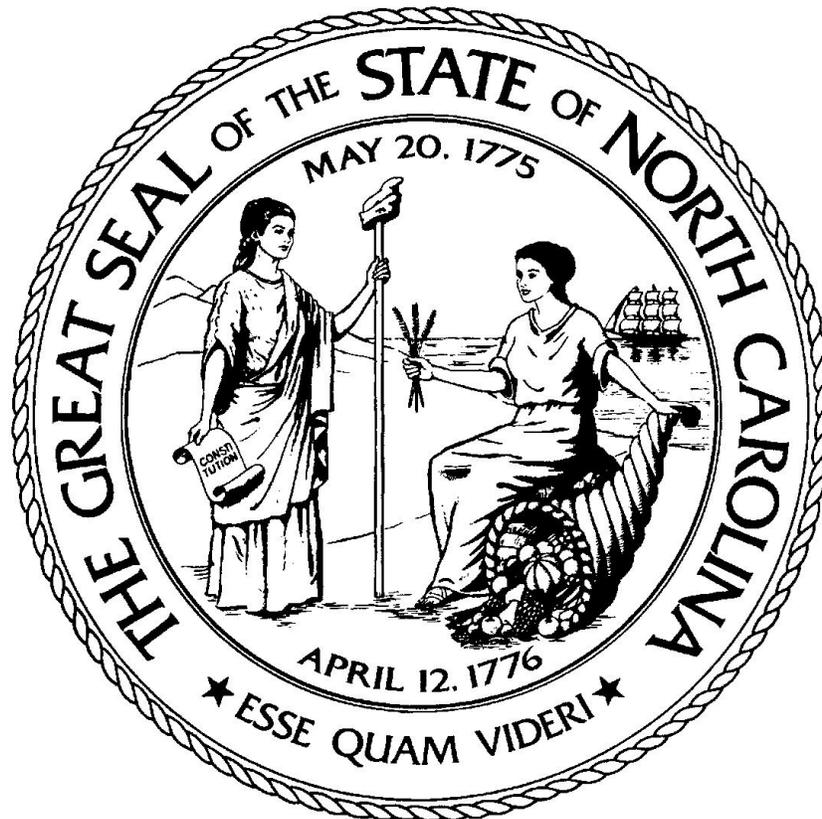


# N.C. Department of Cultural and Natural Resources

Strategic Plan

2021 – 2023



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# 1. Strategic Plan Executive Summary

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The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) manages, promotes, and enhances the things that people love in North Carolina – its diverse arts and culture, rich history, spectacular natural areas.

With 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, three science museums, three aquariums, Jennette's Pier, 41 state parks and recreation areas, the N.C. Zoo, the nation's first state-supported Symphony, the State Library, the State Archives, the N.C. Arts Council, the African American Heritage Commission, State Preservation Office, Office of State Archaeology, and Division of Land and Water Stewardship, DNCR manages the treasures of the state. These things unite North Carolinians, create a shared identity, and provide common ground.

DNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in North Carolina by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries, and nature by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

DNCR's vision is to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. Every day, DNCR's places, programs, and ideas strengthen education, improve public health, enhance quality of life, and support robust economic growth across North Carolina.

DNCR anchors its strategic goals around Governor Cooper's priorities:

- Positioning North Carolina to create new jobs and grow middle class paychecks
- Making North Carolina a top ten state in education
- Promoting healthier and safer communities
- Ensuring an effective, accountable, well-run state government

DNCR's goals for the next biennium include:

- Goal 1 - Expand educational opportunities for children and families by increasing access to our state's innovative, interactive, and inspirational natural and cultural sites, programs, and services.
- Goal 2 - Boost economic growth through the "Hometown Strong" initiative to support rural communities, and other efforts.
- Goal 3 - Preserve, enhance, and expand North Carolina's natural and cultural resources in an effective, efficient, collaborative, and customer-friendly manner.
- Goal 4 - Promote diversity, equity, accessibility, and cultural inclusion in departmental programs, recruitment, administration, and community engagement.
- Goal 5 – Evaluate the impact of climate change and integrate climate change mitigation, adaption, education, and resiliency practices into DNCR programs and operations.

These goals will place the department at the forefront in providing high quality non-formal education programs, boosting workforce development and rural economies, building communities' resiliency to natural disasters, strengthening public health, and improving quality of life. Across the department, staff will pursue these goals and objectives through creative collaborative partnerships that efficiently leverage state resources with those from federal and local governments, nonprofits, and private entities.

DNCR used the following methodology to create this strategic plan:

- Senior leadership to use the existing vision, mission, and values;
- Senior leadership revised the department's goals to align with Governor Cooper's goals and "mission statement" for the state, and to reflect current performance goals for all DNCR employees;
- All divisions reviewed DNCR Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats analysis, goals, objectives, measures, highlights, and opportunities, and submitted updates;
- A team reviewed and synthesized the information submitted by divisions to update department objectives, measures, and milestones;
- Strategies, initiatives and targets are separately tracked in the DNCR annual plan;
- Senior leadership reviewed and revised the draft strategic plan (including the complementary IT strategic plan) and approved the final version of the plan; and
- The department shared the final plan with all employees and featured it on the DNCR website.

## 2. Mission, Vision, and Values

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### Agency Mission Statement

Our mission is to improve quality of life in North Carolina by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North Carolina by:

- stimulating learning
- inspiring creativity
- preserving the state's history
- conserving the state's natural heritage
- encouraging recreation and cultural heritage tourism
- promoting economic development

### Agency Vision Statement

Our vision is to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina.

### Agency Values

#### *Accountability*

Accepts full responsibility for oneself and for one's contribution as a team member; displays honesty and truthfulness; confronts problems quickly; displays a strong commitment to organizational success and inspires others to commit to goals; demonstrates a commitment to delivering on his/her public duty and presenting oneself as a credible representative of the agency and state, to maintain the public's trust.

#### *Innovation & Creativity*

Applies creative problem-solving skills to his/her work to develop solutions to problems; recognizes and demonstrates the value in taking calculated risks and learning from mistakes; develops multiple alternatives and understands the feasibility of each; effectively shares and implements his/her ideas. Continually seeks imaginative, innovative, and efficient solutions to business problems, both old and new.

### *Quality*

Consistently delivers high-quality products, services, processes, programs, and projects. Regularly and proactively seeks ways to improve outcomes and results. Produces work that is accurate, efficient, and timely.

### *Customer Service*

Consistently demonstrates a strong commitment to providing value-added services to external and internal customers; proactively identifies customer needs and requirements, delivers quality service, and continuously improves performance of self and others. Develops, implements, and evaluates work processes which are both efficient and effective from the customers' perspectives.

### *Diversity & Inclusion*

Demonstrates an open-minded approach to understanding people, regardless of their gender, age, race, national origin, religion, ethnicity, disability status, or other characteristics; treats all people fairly and consistently and with dignity and respect; effectively builds an inclusive work environment, composed of people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse perspectives, where everyone feels welcomed and valued and is allowed the opportunity to use his/her skills, abilities, and knowledge to succeed.

### *Safety & Health*

Consistently demonstrates a strong commitment to providing state employees with a safe and healthy workplace; proactively identifies and reduces, or takes action to reduce, risks and hazards and abides by regulatory requirements; understands the importance of safe work practices and personal protective equipment, enables assigned employees to do the same, and acts to correct unsafe conditions, not waiting for others to correct issues; develops, implements, and evaluates work processes (utilizes Hazard Recognition practices) that addresses immediate risk and also improves systems to address future risk. Complies with all state and agency safety requirements for the position, including training, medical clearance, use of personal protective equipment, injuries/illness reporting requirements, and medical treatment for work-related injuries/illness.

### *Teamwork & Collaboration*

Cooperates with others to accomplish common goals; works with external constituents and other employees to achieve shared goals; treats others with dignity and respect; maintains a friendly demeanor; values the contributions of others; communicates confidently and clearly using visual, written, and verbal methods; understands, respects, and responds nonjudgmentally to those different from him-/herself; builds effective teamwork; uses negotiation and persuasion to mobilize others to work toward a common goal.

### 3. Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

<b>Goal 1 - Expand educational opportunities for children and families by increasing access to the state's innovative, interactive, and inspirational natural and cultural sites, programs, and services.</b>	
Objectives	Performance Measures or Milestones
<b>Objective 1.1 - Increase on-site visitation across divisions/sites through creation of new programs and exhibits, and targeted initiatives.</b>	<p><b>Milestone 1.1.1</b> NC Symphony Grant Funds: Provide Grant funds for the Symphony to pay musicians' salaries and benefits and pay public school transportation</p> <p><b>Milestone 1.1.2</b> Successful implementation of new programs and exhibits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NC Music: All-inclusive initiative to capture and promote authentic and compelling stories in NC (both past and present) as a cultural asset to residents and visitors</li> <li>• Continue Museum of Natural Sciences for the Dinosaur Lab and Exhibit to display Dueling Dinosaurs and paleontology work on the fossils.</li> <li>• The Museum of Natural Sciences will develop and implement a DNA-framed learning opportunity menu to advance the race equity goals of the State called, "Statewide Race: Are We So Different?".</li> <li>• America250: Develop innovative and inclusive DNCR programming and resources for the America 250<sup>th</sup> commemorative period. Foster and support programming with partners across the state.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 1.2 - Increase engagement with DNCR programs and sites through expanded online outreach, distance learning opportunities, live-streaming, social media, and traveling exhibits.</b>	<p><b>Measure 1.2.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase web traffic and social media growth by 20%</li> <li>• Marketing Digital Production of Online Content: Reach schools in all 100 counties</li> <li>• Increase the libraries participating in Cardinal to 50% of library systems</li> </ul> <p><b>Milestone 1.2.2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with Department of Public Instruction to use DNCR educational resources</li> <li>• A North Carolina Online History Resource (ANCHOR): Provide an online resource to every 8th grade teacher</li> </ul>

**Objective 1.3 – Expand interactions with schools through partnerships and programs.**

**Measure 1.3.1** Arts Council A+ Schools: Maintain the level of training and support for current network and recruit an additional 3 to 5 schools each year

**Milestone 1.3.2** Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Student Curriculum: Initiate pilot program and expand each year to reach every North Carolina fourth grader

**Goal 2 – Boost economic growth through the “Hometown Strong” initiative to support rural communities, and other efforts.**

Objectives	Performance Measures or Milestones
<p><b>Objective 2.1 - Enable divisions to work collaboratively in economically distressed counties.</b></p>	<p><b>Measure 2.1.1</b> Increase the communities participating in the SmART program by 2 to 10 towns and cities</p> <p><b>Milestone 2.1.2</b> Grants awarded to arts councils and schools located in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties</p> <p><b>Measure 2.1.3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadband adoption to reach 10% of tier 1 and tier 2 counties</li> <li>• Digital access for residents of rural and underserved areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Measure 2.1.4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate at least 2 historic preservation surveys</li> <li>• Eliminate sunset on state historic preservation tax credit</li> </ul> <p><b>Measure 2.1.5</b> Reach 10 to 12 counties to provide capacity building assistance to rural counties for grant writing, networking, potential partnerships</p> <p><b>Milestone 2.1.6</b> Partner with the outdoor recreation industry</p>
<p><b>Objective 2.2 - Engage young people in the department’s work by expanding programs that provide paid positions and internships.</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 2.2.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Conservation Corps in State Parks: Implement programming to serve teens and young adults</li> <li>• Coordinate and add to the internship programs across the Department</li> </ul>

**Goal 3 – Preserve, enhance, and expand North Carolina’s natural and cultural resources in an effective, efficient, collaborative, and customer-friendly manner.**

Objectives	Performance Measures or Milestones
<p><b>Objective 3.1 - Increase staffing in programs and sites stretched thin by growth in visitation and stagnant or declining staff levels</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 3.1.1</b> Sea Turtle Assistance and Rehabilitation Center Staffing Expansion: Provide enhanced and increased conservation of sea turtles and education about sea turtles for visitors to the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island.</p> <p><b>Milestone 3.1.2</b> Complete construction, fully staff and operate all Connect NC bond projects</p> <p><b>Milestone 3.1.3</b> Obtain criminal background evaluations on all employees prior to employment.</p> <p><b>Milestone 3.1.4</b> Examine and research Queen Anne’s Revenge conservation and excavation project</p>
<p><b>Objective 3.2 - Complete capital projects and strengthen safety and security programs at sites with high visitation.</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 3.2.1</b> Reduce the deferred maintenance of buildings for State Historic Sites and Tryon Palace</p> <p><b>Milestone 3.2.2</b> Complete the funded projects on the Capital Improvements Plan</p>
<p><b>Objective 3.3 - Create more outdoor recreational opportunities in response to rapidly increasing visitation to state and local parks, reinstate dedicated revenue source for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) and NC Land and Water Fund (NCLWF) to conserve land, protect water quality, and create and expand state and local parks, trails, and greenways</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 3.3.1-2</b> NC LWF and PARTF Grants: Increase grants awarded</p> <p><b>Milestone 3.3.3</b> Create a statewide strategy for the Great Carolina Trails Master Plan</p> <p><b>Milestone 3.3.4</b> Natural Heritage Program Biological Surveys: Conduct surveys of potential nature preserves</p>

**Goal 4- Promote diversity and cultural inclusion in departmental programs, recruitment, administration, and community engagement.**

Objectives	Performance Measures or Milestones
<p><b>Objective 4.1 - Diversify who we are (DNCR staff, boards &amp; commissions appointees, support groups)</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 4.1.1</b> Preserve and interpret histories of marginalized communities throughout DNCR.</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.1.2</b> Continue Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Internship Program</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.1.3</b> Develop a strategy to increase the number of minority employees</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.1.4</b> Develop, manage, and promote African American Heritage Commission initiatives</p>
<p><b>Objective 4.2 - Diversify who we serve.</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 4.2.1</b> Develop a strategy for outreach and collaboration with Latinx communities</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.2.2</b> Update content for the "Race: Are we so Different?" exhibition</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.2.3</b> Plan, design, and develop an African American Monument on the State Capitol Grounds</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.2.4</b> Assess existing programming, exhibits, and content to promote diversity, accessibility, and inclusion throughout DNCR.</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.2.5</b> Meet or exceed Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) goal</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.2.6</b> Reach new audiences and diversify marketing programs</p> <p><b>Milestone 4.2.7</b> Utilizing the America250 theme of "When Are We US?" the Department will create diverse content and programming to explore and highlight a broad range of people and times when North Carolinians have sought to transform their lives and communities to live into the ideals and promise of the Revolution.</p>

**Goal 5 – Evaluate the impacts of climate change and integrate climate change mitigation, adaptation, education, and resiliency practices into DNCR programs and operations.**

Objectives	Performance Measures or Milestones
<p><b>Objective 5.1 – Incorporate best practices for state government building energy efficiency to reduce energy consumption.</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 5.1.1</b> Improve tracking energy use to reduce energy consumption</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.1.2</b> DNCR will lead by example to increase state employees’ familiarity with Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEV), prioritizing ZEVs and hybrids in the purchase or lease of new vehicles and shall use ZEVs for agency business travel when feasible.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.1.3</b> Partner with Capital Projects to integrate energy efficiency measures and reduce energy consumption for facility construction and upgrades.</p>
<p><b>Objective 5.2 - Mitigate against future catastrophic events and assist with disaster recovery at DNCR sites</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 5.2.1</b> Renovate and expand the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.2</b> Floodplain and wetland acquisition and restoration</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.4</b> Complete repairs at State Parks related to storm damage</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.5</b> Complete repairs at Museum of Natural Sciences Whiteville</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.6</b> Develop on-demand training for public records custodians, cultural heritage practitioners, and the public around disaster preparedness and recovery for public records and documentary heritage of the state.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.7</b> Protect historic structures and artifacts</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.8</b> Complete the relocation of Underwater Archaeology artifacts</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.9-10</b> Conduct environmental reviews and provide assistance to constituents for disaster recovery, response, and mitigation for future events</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.11</b> NC Museum of Art: Complete bridge, culvert, path repairs and replacement and stream restoration</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.12</b> Evaluate off site storage solutions for collections at risk from the triple threats of</p>

	<p>flooding, heavy precipitation, and sea level rise climate risks</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.13</b> Introduce and promote land management practices to restore long-term resilience and mitigate climate change, such as prescribed fire, hydrologic restoration, reforestation, and natural riparian vegetation.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.2.14</b> Consider climate-related hazards when developing master plans for natural areas, parks, and nature preserves.</p>
<p><b>Objective 5.3 - Evaluate the impacts of climate change on DNCR programs and operations to ensure meaningful engagement with communities.</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 5.3.1</b> Increase outreach efforts in impacted communities. Implement a coordinated, strategic approach to increase communication and interaction, with an emphasis on vulnerable and historically marginalized communities.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.3.2</b> Publish clear percentages of newly established jobs or contracts that should go to vulnerable communities and for which historically marginalized businesses receive priority bidding.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.3.3</b> Increase outreach efforts for hiring in communities where work will be completed. Continue to partner with the DOA Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses, NC Institute of Minority Economic Development, and other entities to increase outreach efforts of bidding and contracting opportunities for underserved communities.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.3.4</b> Leverage disaster recovery funds and other sources of capital to promote equitable job creation and inclusive business development in communities most vulnerable to climate change.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.3.5</b> Develop a statewide science trail of venues to offer unique science experiences with the natural world for visitors and citizens.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.3.6</b> Environmental Justice and Inclusion – Promote Environmental Justice and Inclusion through collaboration with DNCR environmental, conservation, and preservation programs to ensure appropriate and fair uses of natural resources.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.3.7</b> Promote equal access for communities of all backgrounds to parks, trails, greenways and other open spaces, and make</p>

	<p>recommendations through DNCR divisions to improve outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Objective 5.4 Foster resiliency through local and statewide planning efforts, education, and grant opportunities to constituents.</b></p>	<p><b>Milestone 5.4.1</b> Complete the statewide historic resilience project through cooperative agreement between the Historic Preservation Office and the UNC School of Government by September 2023</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.4.2</b> Broaden constituent outreach and education for resiliency measures, such as restoration workshops on how to floodproof or dry out buildings, CREST-led disaster planning training, and Register of Deeds training, to aid in better statewide preparation for flooding events.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.4.3</b> Bring resiliency-oriented grant projects (constituent and internal) to completion through the State Historic Preservation Office hurricane grant program for Hurricanes Florence and Michael recovery.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.4.4</b> Provide greater services such as resiliency-oriented technical assistance to locally-owned cultural resources</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.4.5</b> Increase funding for the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and Land and Water Fund.</p> <p><b>Milestone 5.4.6</b> Incorporate climate change and resilience information into DNCR educational materials, campaigns, and social media feeds.</p>

## 4. Highlights and Opportunities

### Agency Highlights and Best Practices

#### ***Department-wide - Hometown Strong Initiative***

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources help to create and has supported Governor Cooper's *Hometown Strong* initiative. Secretary Wilson and Assistant Secretary Holmes serve as standing members of the interagency steering committee. DNCR has increased its presence and programming in *Hometown Strong* communities, which now includes approximately 80 counties. With the addition of an Assistant Secretary position in 2019 to focus on rural work, DNCR's collaboration with rural communities and other agencies has grown and success in rural North Carolina has followed. Most recently, DNCR spearheaded an effort during the pandemic to purchase and distribute hotspots to more than 85,000 students in more than 200 school districts or charter schools. The agency also planned and oversaw the installation of free, unlimited wireless access at more than 400 locations mostly in underserved parts of the state. These sites include 75 state sites, such as state parks, historic sites, aquariums and museums. Previously, the department purchased hotspots and other equipment for libraries in 15 of the state's poorest 25 counties to improve connectivity. We also provided grants to build free downtown Wi-Fi systems in Bryson City, Halifax, Hot Springs, Marshall, Mars Hill and Whiteville. We provided an equipment grant to connect the Rosenwald School in Mars Hill to the internet; and successfully completed a pilot project with the Wilson County Library connecting senior citizens with cognitive challenges to arts programming provided by the NC Museum of Art and work is continuing this effort.

#### ***Department-wide America's 250th Anniversary Preparations***

As the country prepares to commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources is developing broad programming and resources to be made available throughout the commemorative period (April 12, 2024-2033). The period of focus for the majority of special events and programming will fall between April 12, 2025 and December 31, 2026. In addition, the department is supporting the officially recognized statewide committee to foster programming, commemorations and events across the entire state. Partners on the statewide committee include representatives from history and heritage groups, National Park Service, North Carolina Humanities Council, North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, Federation of NC Historical Societies, state historic commissions, the reenactor community, land preservation partners, NC Museums Council, Blue Ridge Natural Heritage Area, NC Literary and Historical Association Foundation, and the Department of Public Instruction. Organized around the themes "Revolutionary NC" and "When Are We Us?" the commemoration programming, events, and resources will seek to highlight the events and people of the Revolutionary era in North Carolina, as well as to explore a broad range of people and times when North Carolinians have sought to transform their lives and communities to live into the ideals and promises of the Revolution. Special emphasis will be placed on surfacing stories about people often left out of the narratives around the Revolutionary War, as well as North Carolinians who have championed the expansion of freedom and equality throughout history. Plans include the development of teacher resources and curriculum support around the commemoration themes, exhibits, special events, online educational resources, special archeological field schools at select Revolutionary War era locations, festivals, publications, and programs across DNCR locations and online sites. Working with the land trust community and Land and Water Stewardship, the commemoration period provides an opportunity for a focused effort on preserving

sites related to the Revolution in North Carolina. It also provides an opportunity to pursue a capital package for the acquisition of and upgrades to visitors' centers. A regrant program to support local programming during the commemorative period is also under development.

### ***African American Heritage Commission***

The North Carolina African American Heritage Commission (AAHC) was established by General Statute in 2008. In its foundational years, the AAHC existed as a program of the *North Carolina Office of Archives and History* and, most recently, the North Carolina Arts Council, both divisions of the North Carolina Department of Natural & Cultural Resources (DNCR). In 2017, the AAHC was elevated to division-level status within DNCR.

The AAHC consists of ten commissioners, appointed by the Governor and the North Carolina General Assembly, and three staff positions: a director, an associate director, and an arts and outreach coordinator.

It holds as its mission to preserve, promote, and protect North Carolina's African American history, arts, and culture for all people. Its vision, which was updated in 2020, is to cultivate and maintain sustainable statewide African American culture work by building meaningful connections between African American heritage practitioners, artists, institutions, and resources.

Notable highlights:

### **Nina Simone Childhood Home National Treasure Campaign**

In 2018, the AAHC was tapped by the *National Trust for Historic Preservation* to co-launch and build awareness for the campaign to raise funds to stabilize and shape a stewardship model for Nina Simone's childhood home: The Nina Simone Childhood Home National Treasure Campaign. The AAHC contributed to coordinating the campaign launch, arranging a series of musical performances featuring African American women singers from North Carolina, in partnership with the *North Carolina Arts Council (NCAC)*. The AAHC's awareness-building work reached its apex in 2019 with "Nina Simone Weekend at the North Carolina Museum of Art." Produced in partnership with *NCAC and the North Carolina Museum of Art*, the weekend featured a series of events designed to connect individuals across generations, geography, and demographics to the music, life, and legacy of Nina Simone, including a benefit concert featuring Grammy-nominated singer (and the only child of Nina Simone) Lisa Simone. The concert generated \$29,600 in net proceeds to preserve the home.

### **Africa to Carolina**

In 2018, the AAHC accepted a charge from the *Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture* to identify, acknowledge, and physically mark sites where enslaved people disembarked from the African Continent, resulting in the development of the Africa to Carolina initiative. Africa to Carolina has been executed in a series of thoughtful, collaborative, and community-informed phases. The initiative—which has been guided by a scholarly advisory board, as well as by constituents via community meetings—currently seeks to perform additional research on North Carolina disembarkation sites (Bath, Edenton, New Bern, Wilmington), to make information about North Carolina's role in and relationship to the global slave trade more widely available to the public, and to mark disembarkation sites with public art markers. Grant funding from the federal *Institute of Museum and Library Services* has enabled these first two goals to move forward.

## **Activating African American Heritage Trails**

The AAHC thinks expansively about the potential for African American heritage trails to shape North Carolina's tourism infrastructure, and to boost local economies. In 2020, the AAHC secured funding from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation to create and launch Phase I of the NC Civil Rights Trail in partnership with Visit NC. This will include a digital map of North Carolina civil rights sites; 50 physical markers for community-based civil rights sites, with an eye towards rural counties; and driving tours and travel itineraries.

The AAHC works with communities across the state to activate its Underground Railroad and Freedom Seeking trail system, Freedom Roads. We have seen success in activating the trail through digital tools, local programs, and educational resources, and will continue to explore the possibilities around physical trail elements.

## **Arts Council**

The arts sector in North Carolina has been severely impacted by COVID-19 since March of 2020. A year later, it remains difficult for arts organizations to predict when on-site programs and activities before live audiences will be feasible or for working artists to anticipate when their incomes may rebound. In addition, the death of George Floyd in May of 2020 revealed startling and unacceptable inequities in the allocation of resources to artists and arts organizations of color.

Given these profound events, the North Carolina Arts Council shifted its work to focus on two priorities; 1) assisting the arts sector to survive the pandemic and prepare to reemerge once it is safe to resume in-person programs; and 2) deepen its commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion by making recommendations for change and following up with action steps.

## **Aquariums**

### *Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card Reduced Admission*

The Aquarium's reduced admissions program for low-income families was not in effect during the public closure due to the pandemic. The program has resumed and families who present their EBT card can get admission at the reduced rate of \$3 for adults and \$2 for children. During FY19-20, 6,390 citizens benefited from this program. During the current fiscal year (to date), 1,414 citizens have benefited with over 27,000 citizens served since the program's inception.

### *Aquarium Scholars Program*

The *Aquarium Scholars* program continues to operate even after being impacted by the COVID pandemic. Under this program, the Aquarium Society raises private funds for which Title I schools can apply to 1) cover costs associated with classes visiting the Aquariums or Jennette's Pier, 2) receive an outreach educational program from the Aquariums or the Pier, or 3) receive a virtual learning program. While COVID-safety guidelines during most of this period made the first two options unavailable, the virtual learning option increased. During FY19-20, the program served 105 schools, 11,288 students, and reached 44 counties. During the current fiscal year, the program served 209 schools, 10,687 students, and reached 54 counties to date.

### ***Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion***

DNCR is committed to providing a climate and culture that fosters, promotes, and encourages social interactions that support, appreciate, and celebrate our differences. By supporting diversity and inclusion, the department strives to enhance cross-cultural understanding, break down racial and gender-based stereotypes, and create a diverse and productive workforce.

DNCR has expanded the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) office by transferring one full time position and a temporary position from the Human Resources (HR) office to the DEAI office to dedicate resources to the department's internship programs, including the Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions of Higher Education (HBCU/MIHE) internship program, and to expand diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion efforts.

The agency continues to provide employees with tools to support diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. In 2020, DNCR Human Resources released interview standards to include the requirement that interview panels be at a minimum diverse by both race and gender. Division Directors were provided concepts and tools to encourage open dialogue discussions with employees; as well as DEAI and HR staff supported staff-facilitated inclusion conversations. A diversity and inclusion training plan began in 2020 to include 14 unconscious bias modules provided by Cornerstone through the Office of State Human Resources, and the agency purchased a series of online diversity training courses, some targeted to all employees and others to supervisors, which began in November 2020 to be assigned over the course of a year.

Diversity and Inclusion is a performance value of all employees on the 2020-2021 performance plan. This value is to increase awareness of inclusion for staff and to ensure fair treatment of all employees.

DNCR has entered into a contract to conduct a thorough and comprehensive assessment of North Carolinians' experiences as visitors at six DNCR sites—one park, one museum, and four historic sites. The assessment will provide a powerful starting point for diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion efforts by providing a model for other DNCR sites of diverse and equitable practices. The contractor will conduct a thorough assessment, make realistic recommendations, and provide a toolkit for visitor experience and strategies to propel the DNCR forward in its goal of promoting equity and belonging among its employees, and programming to reflect and celebrate North Carolina's diverse population, communities, culture, and history.

Along with department-wide efforts, our divisions expanded their efforts in 2020 to include:

Partnering with the *Office of State Budget and Management* - a recruitment study was conducted within the State Parks and Recreation division to evaluate the demographics of the applicant pools, demographics of relevant college programs within North Carolina, and how to make job postings more attractive and non-restrictive to promote larger and more diverse applicant pools. Recommendations from that study are being implemented, and lessons learned from the study will be shared with other divisions.

The *Museum of Art* implemented an internal Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility task force, which is charged with reviewing policies, procedures, and practices with the goals of increasing the demographic representation and amplifying the voices of people of color, people with disabilities, and others both in the Museum and visitor engagement.

The *NC Symphony* implemented a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force which includes staff representation from each section (Executive, Philanthropy, Marketing, Administration/Finance and Artistic/Orchestra) and the Board of Trustees. The task force is comprised of colleagues representing

various ethnic backgrounds and life experiences. The *Symphony* is a Catalyst Grant recipient, sponsored by the *League of American Orchestras*. The program includes diversity analysis with an organization-wide assessment, capacity building, development of a diversity and inclusion statement, and creating goals and a roadmap to achievement.

The *State Library* required racial equity training for all staff. As a result of the training, a staff committee began the process of creating a Racial Equity Toolkit.

The *North Carolina Zoo* established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. They have had an autism summer camp for several years and have been certified by *Kulture City* as an autism friendly site. Currently, they are offering free or reduced-price programs to Tier I county schools to help underserved communities.

*Tryon Palace* hosted a diversity training for all staff. The training resulted in the creation of a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Committee.

Additionally, several divisions have enhanced their diversity training for employees, and many divisions have expanded their programming to provide a full range of our state's history. Our divisions have expanded recruitment efforts to share job opportunities with organizations that support diversity.

### ***Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR)***

State parks had 19.8 million visitors in 2020, up 7 percent from the previous year. Many parks were closed for nearly 6 weeks to adopt new protocols to keep state park staff and visitors as safe as possible during the pandemic. Parks and green spaces provided some much-needed relief mentally, physically, and emotionally and the outdoors became a safe space for exercise with closures of gyms, yoga studios and other places North Carolinians normally might go. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund awarded 17 local grants totaling \$5.2 million for park, trail, greenway, and land acquisition projects. In addition, the trust fund also distributed \$11.9 million to state parks for 18 land acquisition and capital improvement projects, plus numerous repairs and renovations.

### ***Environmental and Energy Performance***

DNCR is committed to reducing its environmental "footprint," and established an Environmental and Energy Performance committee. To comply with Climate Change Executive Order 80 general directives to Cabinet departments to assess and address climate change effects, support clean energy business, procure and use zero-emission vehicles, and reduce energy consumption, the committee will review current practices concerning both systemic issues (i.e., procurement, repair and renovation, capital projects) and factors under individual control in the workplace (i.e., recycling, turning off lights, commuting). The goals are to protect our air, water, land, and climate, and save the department significant money in the process. Several DNCR divisions are already implementing best practices to protect the environment and save energy, and the committee will share and promote all of the conservation, sustainability, and environmentally friendly efforts across the divisions. The committee will also help educate the public and increase awareness of the many successful programs the department has in place, and how individuals can do their part.

## ***Historical Resources***

**HPOWEB.** Launched in 2011, the State Historic Preservation Office's (HPO) GIS mapping service, called HPOWEB, displays the location of more than 125,000 historic resources and is acknowledged as one of the best preservation-data-based mapping services in the nation in terms of sophistication, comprehensiveness, and ease of use; it is viewable online as HPOWEB (<http://gis.ncdcr.gov/hpoweb>). Virtually all properties and districts with some sort of official historic designation (National Register, Study List, Determined Eligible, or Local Landmark/District designation) have been mapped. In addition, most of the state's rural surveys have been mapped. Mapping of urban surveys, including individual properties within National Register districts, is in progress. An internal layer for archaeological information is available to staff, and plans are underway to incorporate HPOWEB's historical architectural and archaeological data layers for NCDOT's Project Atlas project for transportation planning. The HPO engineered this service in-house and has saved the state at least \$500,000 in consulting costs. The site is widely used by environmental review consultants, NCDOT, investors in historic properties, researchers, genealogists, and scholars.

**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS FOR UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES.** The State Historic Preservation Office conducts a competitive grant program annually with 10% of its federal funding for the 50 plus certified local governments in North Carolina; these local governments have federally recognized local preservation commissions. Approximately 8 to 12 projects receive funding each year, and communities are now actively seeking these grants for historic preservation projects to aid previously underrepresented or underemphasized communities in their jurisdictions.

**MOSAIC.** Developed in 2019 to 2020 by the division's Historical Research Office, this online digital humanities presence showcases the now digital Colonial Records and Governors' papers project, affording greater public accessibility for scholars and laypersons alike rather than the traditional print versions, and collections from Royal Governor Dobbs and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Governor Bickett accompanied by transcriptions and annotations inaugurated its launch.

**ARCHAEOLOGY MONTH.** The Office of State Archaeology has sponsored a thematic Archaeology Month lecture series in the last three years, and in 2021, expanded it to Archaeology Year with the theme of Submerged North Carolina, focused on the underwater archaeological resources related from the state's maritime trade and military history, and has partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to connect to their stewardship of Civil War and Battle of the Atlantic shipwrecks in federal waters beyond the three-mile state waters limit. In person public lectures have gone online and captured a wider and larger audience.

## ***Historic Sites***

The Division of State Historic Sites and Properties has five priorities:

- 1) Safety (and we are adding wellness of self and all others)
- 2) True inclusion (a comprehensive, long-term approach to diversity, accessibility, equity, and inclusion at all levels)
- 3) Communication (with colleagues, stakeholders, and guests) that is clear, kind, and consistent
- 4) Streamlining and simplifying procedures
- 5) Protecting our buildings and structures, as well as our collections, land, water, flora and fauna.

With these priorities, staff have shown growth by participating in nationally-recognized professional development, engaging new audiences, fundraising, digital humanities innovations, community engagement, and environmental stewardship and conservation.

Historic Sites will embark on a yearlong, Division strategic planning process in early summer of 2021. Additionally, the Division has begun a diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) staff development process in the spring of 2021. In the summer of 2021, Historic Sites will join other divisions in an external evaluation process to offer important information for further growth.

### ***Land and Water Stewardship***

The *NC Land and Water Fund* continues a 25-year legacy of protecting and enhancing the state's natural and cultural resources of North Carolina. During that time, over \$1 billion has been awarded to state agencies, local governments, and nonprofit land conservation organizations, leveraging over \$1.7 billion and protecting nearly 750,000 acres and 2,500 miles of stream. In FY2019-20 the NCLWF board funded 50 projects totaling \$20.6 million. Administratively, NCLWF focuses on accountability and transparency, boasting one of the most open grant funding processes of any agency.

The *Natural Heritage Program* is nationally recognized, providing comprehensive biodiversity information and making it available in a variety of formats, tailored to both the economic development interests as well as land conservation groups. During the past year, the program has responded to requests for project support from the *Department of Defense, Duke Energy, NC Department of Transportation, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, US Forest Service*, and more than 3,150 online requests for natural heritage reports.

### ***Marketing***

In 2018, DNCR developed and launched an impressive digital production team with the expertise to create compelling and timely online content, including video, audio, and written content for web and social media platforms. In 2020, these efforts tuned toward *NCLearn*, uploading over 1500 pieces of educational content from across the agency. With this team, the Division of Marketing is developing educational content for distribution into schools across the state, especially in rural communities where complementary curriculum content is not as readily available as in larger markets. DNCR is developing integrated campaigns that can be effectively implemented and promoted across the division and has seen strong gains in website and social media reach. The number of visitors on the DNCR website has increased exponentially, reaching an average of 6 million users per month. Since Jan 2021, DNCR's online engagement has surpassed 18 million, with users watching 230,000 hours of video content on our YouTube channel.

### ***North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA)***

The Museum is expanding its digital-learning initiatives by using state-of-the-art mobile videoconferencing technology in the galleries and virtual reality (VR) tools. These resources allow Museum educators to provide interactive virtual experiences, including field trips, 360 tours, and VR headsets, to students in their own classrooms. Virtual field trips continue to grow exponentially and are scheduled to reach 9,000 students in the 2020-2021 academic year. In 2019, the Museum earned the *SEMC Southeastern Museum Conference Gold Award* for a 360 tour of the Conversation Lab, and

students across North Carolina continue to enjoy VR experiences as our headsets move from classroom to classroom.

The Museum has a partnership with *NC State University* to collect visitor data in the Museum Park; this partnership continues and thrives on student projects that are designed and completed with Park data collection at their core and showed over 1 million visitors to the Park in 2020.

The Museum has developed a formal process to collect visitor data in the galleries, in the Park, and in response to program participation. An evaluation team is now working to refine the processes with the development of a Museum-wide logic model and a public-facing dashboard that will show the Museum's performance and hopeful growth in a variety of areas.

The Museum has embraced the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion in its 2020-2025 strategic plan and made a commitment to staff, boards, community, and statewide stakeholders to combat racial inequities and injustice, to amplify the voices of people of color, and to hold itself accountable in working toward sustainable, meaningful changes. The adoption of NCMA's 2020-2025 strategic plan, the Museum has begun work in the following areas: Reconceiving the collection and exhibition gallery narratives to offer multiple perspectives and histories in a thematic context; prioritizing the educational and service mission of the Museum; forming strategic, collaborative partnerships to increase access to art, nature, and people; providing racial equity training for all Museum staff as well as volunteers, docents, and board members in 2020; and establishing a Community Advocacy Panel of arts and business leaders who represent audiences traditionally under-engaged by cultural institutions to gather input and guidance for change on the visitor experience and Museum programming. As we look ahead, we are also working with a diversity and inclusion consultant to host deeper conversations with stakeholders and community members and to develop and share a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan that identifies goals and trackable metrics.

### ***Museum of History***

Because of the COVID pandemic, the museum was closed to the public from mid-March until early September. While the Museum was closed to the public, the staff shifted their focus to creating on-line programs and activities for adults, families, and children, as well as adding virtual exhibit tours and digital programming for the public on our website. On the *History at Home* webpage, examples of offerings included virtual tours of exhibits, educational films produced by staff, podcasts, downloadable activities, including lesson plans, coloring pages, craft activities and even recipes!

During the pandemic, the museum has also focused on developing several new virtual lecture series to reach a wide range of audiences with a variety of speakers and topics. We have developed regular monthly series such as *History at High Noon*, *History and Highballs*, and *Coffee with a Curator*. The Museum of History's twice monthly on-line evening lectures, *History and High Balls*. begins with instructions on mixing that evening's featured cocktail and continues with an interesting lecture on various topics.

The Museum took it two traditional festivals, the American Indian Heritage Celebration, and the African American Cultural Celebration virtual this year. The *25<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Heritage Celebration* was held online November 20 and 21, 2020. Performances, panel discussions, and demonstrations were viewed by over 18,000 people.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual African American Cultural Celebration was held online January 30, 2020. The theme Health and Healing included a range of information about health disparities and about steps that African Americans can take to promote and preserve their health. Almost 5,000 people viewed the virtual program.

### ***Museum of Natural Sciences***

In 2020, NCMNS published a strategic plan for the years 2021-2023, outlining goals and key milestones for the next three years. The Museum distributed \$2.4M in FY 2020-21 to 56 local science museums and nature centers. It also launched the “Hundred Counties Project” to balance effort expended by the Museum across the state and celebrate its success in engaging North Carolinians with science and nature. NCMNS also launched “Love Nature: The Biophilia Podcast,” heard by thousands of listeners across more than 20 countries. The Museum now has an antenna on the International Space Station that will be used to track wildlife throughout the continent.

The Museum’s researchers published more than 90 peer-reviewed articles and were cited by others 4,500 times over the course of last year. They made discoveries, including the rare find of a new vertebrate, the Carolina Sandhills Salamander. NCMNS also made significant progress of securing and displaying the Dueling Dinosaurs fossils, one of the most significant paleontological finds of the last hundred years. Groundbreaking for the new exhibit and lab is scheduled for Fall of 2021 and the launch a year later. The Museum has also expanded the regional branches to include Greenville and Contentnea Creek.

### ***North Carolina Symphony***

Since last March over 172,000 people from North Carolina, many states and several foreign countries have viewed our programs on-line as well as accessed our website for educational films, podcasts, lesson plans and activities.

- Reached #1 on the *Billboard Traditional Classical* chart with the release of its new album.
- During the 2019/20 season, NCS reached over 43,000 learners at in-person programs and 50,000 virtual learners. During the 2020/21 school year so far, more than 91,000 children in 97 North Carolina counties have experienced North Carolina Symphony education programs.
- At the NCS’s first *Sensory-Friendly Concert*—designed for children and adults with autism, sensory sensitivities, and other disabilities— 1,400+ audience members were welcome to move about and express themselves as the music played. The concert provided many accommodations, including Braille programs, audio description, and American Sign Language interpretation.
- NCS introduced new music education residencies in rural Jones County and in Dare County’s Outer Banks. Residencies allow NCS musicians to deepen its impact, with numerous music education opportunities and performances for residents of all ages.
- The Symphony’s *Music Discovery* program—typically held in libraries and preschool classrooms—added visits to homeless shelters and service organizations such as Family Promise of Wake County, Durham Rescue Mission, and Book Harvest of Durham. After the pandemic, the Music Discovery program became completely virtual and continued to provide music education and literacy support for preschoolers at home.

- In October 2019, NCS made headlines with its *Pops Season* opener, starring Leslie Odom, Jr., of Hamilton fame.
- Ticketholders donated \$265,000 in ticket purchases for concerts that could not take place, and 33% of donors increased their gifts compared to last season, providing an extra boost of support during an especially challenging year. NCS achieved record-breaking sales numbers for subscription purchases and for holiday concert ticket purchases. As of March 1, 2020 (pre-pandemic), the number of new NCS ticket buyers had surpassed the 2018/29 season’s count of new ticket buyers.
- Over 67% of the students NCS serves through music education programming each year are economically disadvantaged, and nearly 36% come from racially diverse households.
- NCS is a member of the National Alliance for Audition Support and proactively seeks to engage with diverse orchestra candidates through the Sphinx Orchestra Partners Auditions. NCS is also an active participant in the *North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resource’s Historically Black Colleges/Universities (HBCU) & Minority Institutions of Higher Education (MIHE) Internship* program.
- NCS is the recipient of a Catalyst Fund grant from the *League of American Orchestras* made possible by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This grant supports NCS in building capacity to advance its understanding and encourage the practice of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- Through creativity and innovation, the music of the NCS has reached farther than ever, inspiring and enhancing lives across the state of North Carolina, in all 50 states, and in more than 100 countries around the world. Through virtual offerings have been viewed more than 143,000 times across North Carolina and, in fact, worldwide. NCS has also launched projects specifically designed for this unique time. For example, the new Adopt-a-School program pairs Symphony musicians with 80 different schools from the mountains to the coast to work with K-12 teachers on creative ways to engage students in learning through music.
- Viewership for the re-imagined 2020/21 streaming concert season has been strong—amongst the strongest for North American orchestras—with 3,478 average screen views per concert and total viewership of over 104,000 so far.

### **State Archives**

The State Archives created a division-wide working group charged with the evaluation of all descriptive information about collections, including collection finding aids, index terms, and metadata. The working group will create case studies and best practices for the creation of more inclusive and diverse descriptive language about collection contents. In addition, through the “Your Story is North Carolina’s Story” collecting initiative, the State Archives broadened the scope of collection acquisitions to include contemporary materials documenting the global pandemic and social justice movements. This initiative also includes the collection of oral histories detailing how government leaders pivoted agency operations and services during the pandemic.

### **State Library**

The State Library is partnering with *NC Department of Information Technology Broadband Infrastructure Office (BIO)* on a project to promote broadband adoption to address the “homework gap,” which occurs when students are assigned homework that requires internet access, but they do not have any access at home. A recent pilot study conducted by the *BIO* found that 10 percent of

surveyed K-12 households do not have internet access in their homes, but as of this year all textbooks in NC schools are now digital. The first two years of the federally funded project provided Wi-Fi hotspots for students and digital literacy training for students and their caregivers in a total of five tier 1 counties. With supplemental funding from *IMLS*, we were able to continue a third year of the project which shifts focus to remote learning in response to COVID-19, expands the project to 8 additional counties, and incorporates piloting of using library school students to assist participating libraries as “digital navigators.” Several libraries will be added in fall 2021. As the toolkit and curriculum are finalized, it is anticipated that additional libraries will independently deploy the curriculum starting in 2022.

The Government & Heritage Library continues to collaborate with the Office of Archives and History to expand content in *ANCHOR: A North Carolina History Online Resource*. Additionally, GHF staff are partnering with *UNC-Greensboro* in an effort to equip teachers with skills and tools to increase usage of *ANCHOR* by school students.

### **Zoo**

Attendance has increased from 694,907 in 2011 to 917,309 in 2019. The growth in attendance and revenue can be attributed to a new awareness of the Zoo across the state as the result of expanded and sustained marketing and outreach efforts. These efforts have emphasized both the diversity of recreational and educational opportunities provided by the 500+ acres of developed Zoo property and the links between visiting the Zoo and the conservation and welfare components of our mission. These connections help our guests to understand how a fun visit to the Zoo also helps to protect wildlife in North Carolina and around the world. The Zoo is also featured on *Secrets of the Zoo: North Carolina*, which airs nationally and internationally on the Nat Geo Wild channel. This eight-episode series unveils the work that goes on behind-the-scenes, following veterinary and keeper staff doing their extraordinary jobs caring for the 1,800 animals at the Zoo.

Of course, the highlight of any visit to the North Carolina Zoo is the opportunity to see a diverse array of animals in large, natural habitats. Guests can get underwater views of polar bears swimming, see a large troop of gorillas in a lush forest-like environment, observe African elephants dust bathing, or see dozens of antelope, ostriches and rhinos roam freely over the 40 acres of our Watani Grasslands habitat (bigger than many city zoos). The recent birth of four baby white rhinos after many years of effort as well as chimpanzee, gorilla, and multiple antelope births has certainly provided “aaaaah” moments and compelling experiences that have been widely shared by Zoo guests on social media and that have appeared in numerous stories in the press.

The Zoo visit has been enhanced in recent years by many added opportunities for guests to interact with nature through exciting and memorable experiences. These include Zoofari, an open bus experience through the heart of the Watani Grasslands habitat, an endangered species Carousel, the Air Hike ropes course that gives guests an adventure in the treetops, the Giraffe feeding deck, and the Butterfly Garden featuring exotic plants and butterflies. In 2020, the Zoo brought on Rydables, a fun and easy way to traverse the Zoo. These rented animal themed electric mobility carts allow guests to easily ride through the Zoo.

The Zoo has an award-winning field conservation program that engages staff and visitors in protecting animals and their habitats in the wild and supports the Zoo’s conservation mission. We are actively engaged in leadership roles in conservation projects across North Carolina and internationally. The Zoo’s portfolio of international projects includes work to protect African vultures (Tanzania), black

rhinos (Namibia), African elephants (Ivory Coast), Cross River gorillas (Nigeria), big cats (Zambia), and hornbills (multiple Asian countries). Here in North Carolina, we are involved with conservation projects focused on hellbenders (giant salamanders), gopher frogs, Pine Barrens tree frogs, and the American red wolf. The Zoo leads three of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) programs and participates in many more.

In addition to our species-focused programs, the Zoo conserves more than 2,600 acres of land in central North Carolina. These properties provide wildlife habitat, serve as sites for outdoor educational programs, and provide hiking opportunities for people from across the State.

The Zoo's comprehensive sustainability program continues to grow. The Zoo has added two charging stations for electric vehicles, it continues to be a Department of Environmental Quality "Environmental Steward" and maintains its Environmental Management System (EMS) certification – ISO14001, and it has worked with its food services partner to reduce the use of single-use plastics. The Zoo has maintained a "three dogwood" rating, or the highest level of environmental stewardship, with the NC GreenTravel Initiative.

The Zoo continues to provide outstanding animal care and welfare for our collection of over 1,800 animals which includes the development a new process of science-based welfare assessment that builds upon the strong wellness foundation that comes from our animal health, nutrition, natural habitats and science-based care management routines. In recent years we have expanded our animal welfare mission to include participation in international animal rescue operations (i.e., Rescue of confiscated Radiated Tortoise in Madagascar, Lesser Flamingos in South Africa) and well as working with regional associations to help train and build the staff capacity of partners abroad to enhance animal care and welfare, such as the development of a training MOU with the Zoological Parks Organization in South Africa.

The Zoo continues its partnership with the local public school hosting a Zoo School on site and offering free admission to all schools in North Carolina for field trips, hosting an average of 100,000 school children per year. The Zoo's Education program provides a range of educational opportunities, including school (including homeschool) program, library programs, camps, and adult education serving tens of thousands of children and adults each year. In 2020 we developed a far-reaching virtual education program that has reached millions of people in North Carolina and beyond.

The Zoo is currently working on dozens of significant repair and renovation projects to keep its good standing with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. In addition, the Zoo has completed the construction documents of the new Asia expansion of the Zoo through the Connect NC bond.

## Potential Initiatives

### ***Department-wide***

#### **Hometown Strong Initiative**

The State Library has been a strong partner in DNCR's rural initiative. The library is early on in working on three potential initiatives. One is aimed at improving broadband service at the state's more than 400 libraries, particularly those in rural communities. Working with the *NC Department of Information Technology (DIT)*, we have developed a series of online workshops for librarians interested in how to plan for, use and afford better broadband service. The State Librarian and Assistant Secretary have been discussing how to improve health offerings through the libraries with the state *Office of Rural Health* and the *NC Alzheimer's Association*. Lastly, the State Library is exploring how to improve opportunities for entrepreneurship in rural communities.

Warren County has asked that we help them build a stronger creative economy. We are early in those discussions and plan to incorporate all of the arts groups within DNCR.

Mars Hill is interested in building a museum near local landmark Bailey Mountain. The department arranged for a student folklorist to begin research on the area and hopes to continue supporting this project.

The state Hometown Strong office has identified 12 focus communities for 2021, including Warren County and Mars Hill. DNCR will provide resources to all of them after planned introductory meetings in the next few months.

#### **Science Trail**

North Carolina is unique among states in its abundance of science centers, children's museums, zoos, aquariums, planetariums, botanic gardens, nature centers, and natural spaces. Many, if not most, of these organizations and places share a common mission of educating the public in science or offer unique experiences with the natural world.

DNCR plans to develop and operate a "trail" of venues through North Carolina where its citizens can find science experiences for learning, entertainment, and wellbeing. Similar to trails for the arts, history, sports, and food and beverage destinations, the science trail will be web-based. Unlike many trails, the science trail will feature venues not only by region but throughout the entire state. This will allow citizens participate in learning experiences and grow in their understanding and appreciation of science and STEM.

#### ***Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion***

The *NC Arts Council* is in the process of developing a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) plan, which will focus on internal and external concerns, thoughts, and hopes for systemic change within the arts and how to break barriers in institutional practices within the agency and the field. Division teams will analyze and work with various sectors of the field (arts in education, individual artist services, arts organizational grants, arts council support, marketing, etc.) and create actionable goals within each team to create a comprehensive plan. Once the plan has been developed, it will be integrated into the NC Arts Council Strategic Plan. Another initiative is the Arts Equity Project Grants Program. As part of its efforts to advance diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion, the NC Arts Council will award grants to organizations across the state that are doing important work in communities of color, disability communities, and rural communities. The grant category is designed

to support specific projects that offer arts activities that benefit traditionally underserved communities.

The *NC Aquariums* division is currently implementing an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Committee (IDEA), which will focus on these areas. All division employees will be offered a Workplace Climate Survey to allow them to give input on the workplace environment towards inclusion.

The *African American Heritage Commission (AAHC)* has several ongoing projects that will enhance the interpretation of history in North Carolina. The research of La Concorde, the name of Blackbeard's ship Queen Anne's Revenge (QAR) when it was captured, is ongoing. Once completed, DNCR will tell an inclusive story of QAR. The Africa to Carolina research will mark disembarkation locations of ships carrying enslaved African directly to North Carolina Ports. The AAHC is currently working to enhance the NC Civil Rights Trail and Freedom Roads programs and begin the development of trail components for the NC Green Book Project.

*Marketing and Communications* has committed to spending 25% of their available funds with Minority media. In partnership with *State Parks*, they have contracted with Black Folks Camp Too to create a marketing campaign to encourage minority communities to visit State Parks. Marketing in partnership with the NC Museum of Art was a sponsor for the Lumbee Film Festival.

The *State Historic Sites* division introduced the concept of "True Inclusion," a philosophy of expansive, bold, and innovative practices with plans to build a True Inclusion Working Group around this concept. The group will include members from around the division and will work to build an internal network of professionals whose work reflects the values of True Inclusion.

### ***Parks and Recreation***

The Division will be implementing several new strategies to ensure workforce equity throughout the organization. The first of these initiatives will begin with a few hiring process changes. We have modified the format of postings to be more inclusive, postings will be extended for a minimum of 15 business days, entry level park ranger positions will be qualify based on an appropriate 4-year degree only, hiring managers will be interviewing all referred candidates and interview panels will be diverse. Parks hopes that these important strategies will result in a more diverse workforce to greater reflect the citizens of North Carolina.

One key element of the Division's "A Park for Every Child," is a parks educational program for students to provide every 4<sup>th</sup> grader and every 8<sup>th</sup> grader a meaningful experience in a park, to support North Carolina curriculum objectives and to foster lifelong appreciation for nature and history. The Division will be requesting additional educators to move forward in this effort to meet the long-term goals of the program.

### ***Historical Resources***

*Historic cemetery preservation and identification assistance* in collaboration with the NC African American Heritage Commission and local historic preservation commissions and non-profit preservation organizations, including staff development of a constituent primer for care and maintenance of historic cemeteries.

Building on the 2020 pandemic year virtual outreach approach, continuation of *online topical videos for local government preservation commission training*, especially for niche topics such as disaster

preparedness and recovery for historic buildings, comprehensive community preservation, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, and local commission enabling legislation.

We continue to work with DIT and state regulatory agencies to adopt an “E-106” *web-based environmental review submission system* for the State Historic Preservation Office and Office of State Archaeology. This step will aid in additional streamlining for constituent response and consultation with other agencies.

### ***Historic Sites***

Historic Sites has advanced an interpretive and programmatic concept called “True Inclusion.” True Inclusion supports telling an expansive and diverse narrative at all historic sites, reaching out to diverse audiences, growing accessibility with a particular focus on visitors who are living with disabilities, and broadening stakeholder communities for more feedback and advisement. The priority interpretive theme for the launch of “True Inclusion” has been African American historic stories and increasingly American Indian histories and communal relationships. From the “Singing on the Land” and “Healing on the Land” web series and the *#TrueInclusion* web portal, to the development of the True Inclusion Leadership Team, Sites has taken a comprehensive approach to growing a common ground of connection through history. Going forward, staff envision extending the “... On the Land” theme to include visual arts and historic ecosystems.

### ***Marketing***

The Marketing Division will continue to develop, launch, and support DNCR-wide campaigns that can be integrated and cross-promoted to drive efficiencies and effectiveness across all DNCR divisions, including *PATH*, *ComeHearNC*, *HelloNC* and support of *Hometown Strong*. The division will reach new audiences and diversify marketing programs and efforts for greater inclusion and representation of NC’s population across all 100 counties, to increase attendance and engagement with DNCR sites, programs, and online resources (website, social media and email lists).

The division will develop, implement, and measure social media policy across DNCR and lead efforts across state government. The social media policy will support each location within DNCR with training, editorial planning and publishing best practices. Within NC state government, DNCR has the most social media sites and managers, and DNCR aspires to be the policy leader for responsible and effective social media usage.

### ***Museum of History***

The Museum is designing a new website to make it easier for visitors to locate things such as teachers looking for educational information on a particular topic, including all podcasts, films and education plans. The museum is also updating its on-line Civil Rights exhibit to bring it up to date and include more information on Civil Rights in North Carolina.

#### ***New series of virtual classes and music programs***

The NCMH virtual jazz concert mini-series featured performances by several well-known artists, Nnenna Freelon, T.S. Monk III, son of jazz pianist legend Thelonious Monk and John V. Brown. The artists performed several numbers, as well as discussed the history of jazz. Over 2,000 people viewed these performances.

*NC Community Class* is a new virtual program series for the public to highlight the histories of underrepresented North Carolina communities. Its goal is to present information to the public about North Carolina history and the African-American community. The series features individual speakers or panels, including those that are high profile, such as historians, academics, and leaders who specialize in their various fields or subject areas. Programs have included:

*Ella Baker, Shaw, and SNCC*

A discussion on the legacy of civil rights icon Ella Baker & her role in forming the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee.

*Black Maternal Health and the History of Eugenics in NC*

The current Black maternal health crisis is not a new issue, but rather that it ties back to America's history with chattel slavery. Through the lens of North Carolina's eugenics movement—a state-led movement that provided for sterilization as birth control from 1933 to 1973—and medical segregation, this class examined reproductive justice in contemporary society.

*Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All*

The speaker is Dr. Martha S. Jones, Author; Historian; Professor, Johns Hopkins University

The *State Archives* and the *Museum of History* continue working on a joint project to collect stories and artifacts from people across the state regarding their experiences and memories of the Coronavirus Pandemic. In addition, the *Museum of History* is collecting artifacts from the Black Lives Matter movement, including gathering some of the plywood panels covering broken windows that were painted on with various slogans.

The Museum continues to open new exhibits, including *Answering the Call*, on North Carolina's veterans' experiences from the Spanish American War through World War II, *Beach Music, Making Waves in the Carolinas*, and *Are We There Yet*, all about North Carolina's Variety Vacationland program from the 1930's to the 1970's.

***MOH Capital Projects***

There are several capital projects going on at the various museums. The Museum of the Cape Fear has completed work on all three historic houses that were moved to a section of the property to be used for education programs, a digital media center and office space. The next step is to raise funding for a new museum that will be part of the Civil War and Reconstruction History Center, which will focus on North Carolina history during the antebellum, Civil War and Reconstruction periods.

The Governor's 2021 budget includes \$1.5 Million for site planning for a new Maritime Education Center and future new Maritime Museum on the state's Gallant's Channel property in Beaufort. The Maritime Heritage Foundation a 501© 3 organization is leading a campaign for private funding to aid this project.

Design work continues on the *NC Museum of History* expansion project. Design efforts are focused on the expansion and renovation of the currently building. Pending the availability of additional planning and construction funds, design work is expected to be complete by the end of 2022 with construction beginning in spring 2023. Completion of the interior design and installation of new exhibits would be completed by mid to late 2025.

### ***Museum of Natural Sciences***

The Museum continues to progress the update of the exhibition “Race: Are We So Different” and is exploring a series of popup satellite displays for touring throughout the state. NCMNS is also working on a new environmental education center at its Prairie Ridge facility in Wake County. This represents a potential of embedding the initiative in a future-facing story of science engagement, which will influence many aspects of that site and the Museum’s story overall.

### ***North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA)***

The Museum is committed to serving its stakeholders statewide and will be launching two new signature programs to work toward that mission. The first program engages youth served by the *Boys and Girls Clubs of North Carolina* in rural communities in Eastern North Carolina through authentic interactions with local, practicing artists. Artist mentors will provide classes to youth and generate art kits that can then be shared across North Carolina; all of this work will be grounded in both the People’s Collection and the process and practice of the individual artists.

The second program is an initiative to respond to the needs of communities across North Carolina and develop a biennial fellowship for continuous work and impact. With a focus on communities outside the Greater Triangle and in partnership with Mike Williams of the Black on Black Project, the NCMA will work to create space for dialogue and programming that examines racial and social injustices through the lens of Black Americans and other people of color and shape a lasting fellowship role that allows this work to continue beyond the initial partnership. Additionally, this program aims to embed this community work as an integrated component of NCMA programming and work culture.

### ***North Carolina Symphony***

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, NCS was well-positioned to pivot quickly to provide digital and online programs for parents and teachers in the new at-home school environment. NCS continues to adapt and develop new virtual and digital initiatives for NCS musicians to interact with North Carolina educators and students.

*Juneteenth* commemorates the June 19, 1865 abolition of slavery in Texas and the emancipation of enslaved African Americans throughout the former Confederate States of America. In partnership with the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission (AAHC), the North Carolina Symphony (NCS) will honor *Juneteenth* with a work commissioned by Composer-in-Residence Anthony M. Kelley. NCS will feature this piece in its full-orchestra Education Concerts for 4<sup>th</sup> graders across North Carolina beginning in September 2022, a public performance in June 2022 at its outdoor summer venue in Cary, NC, and in free statewide community outreach programs and concerts in the summer of 2022.

### ***State Library***

The State Library’s NC Cardinal project is a consortium of public libraries throughout the state that aims to make the combined resources of North Carolina’s public libraries available to all people of the state through a shared catalog. The effort is currently supported largely with federal Library Services and Technology Act federal (LSTA) funding. The State Library has begun the transition to a funding model where local library funding increases while we continue to seek state funding. A more sustainable financial model will enable more libraries to support the program and equalize access to resources across the state.

The State Library is collaborating with the *NC DIT Broadband Infrastructure Office* and the *NC Public Library Directors Association Broadband Task Force* on an effort to increase bandwidth available at local libraries. A survey and speed test will launch in April 2021 to gather data that will inform pilot projects and grant priorities for increasing capacity. Additional funding from the *Institute of Museum and Library Services* may support these grant projects and we will explore opportunities to promote telehealth and workforce development with these funds.

## **Zoo**

To improve the people-moving experience and reduce labor and equipment costs, the Zoo is exploring adding alternate means of transportation across our site, including chair lifts and trains. Neither are inexpensive, and each requires human resources, but these new transportation options would offer an exciting new way to get from point to point.

While the Zoo offers many educational opportunities for children who visit, we plan to expand current offerings to include experiences on Zoo property that create “living outdoor laboratories” that take advantage of the vast outdoor space we manage. This will give children who do not have opportunities to experience the great outdoors, a first-hand up-close adventure into the natural world. Activities will include citizen science projects, overnight camping, and potentially upscale “glamping” experiences, to provide memorable connections with nature that last a lifetime.

The Zoo is currently embarking on a new diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion (DEAI) initiative. Among the goals of this nascent program are improving the diversity of our staff, ensuring that all guests feel welcome when they visit the Zoo, and helping to build the next generation of Zoo professionals in a way that is fully representative of the population of North Carolina and the country as a whole.

In the long-term, the Zoo’s masterplan imagines a new central hub, which would replace the existing “Junction Plaza” as the center of the Zoo. This new “Conservation Central” area would integrate guest services and transportation facilities with new cutting-edge habitats communicating about our conservation work across the state and around the world. Through a variety of experiences, hands-on activities, animal habitats, and technologies, guests will better understand what the Zoo is doing to help preserve nature and wildlife and how they can be part of the solution.

## Collaborative Opportunities

### ***Department-wide***

#### **Hometown Strong Initiative**

DNCR works very closely with the Hometown Strong office and executive director. We also collaborate frequently with the *NC DIT* and *DHHS' Office of Rural Health*.

#### **Climate Change in NC**

DNCR is collaborating with PBS-NC by sponsorship of “A State of Change” a series on climate change in NC.

### ***African American Heritage***

#### **Activating African American Heritage Trails**

The next phase of the Green Book “Oasis Spaces” project—our successful effort to document, provide resources around, and advocate for 326 sites that were listed in the Negro Motorist Green Book—will likely include a trail element. Currently, AAHC staff and partners (including the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the William G. Pomeroy Foundation) are exploring possibilities around marking sites that are still standing, as well as multi-state driving tours. Opportunities exist to collaborate with SHPO around preservation efforts for extant Green Book sites, as well.

Ideally, the AAHC envisions working with other state initiatives and agencies, including Hometown Strong, to activate its trail systems. NC Parks and NC Historic Sites will be valuable partners in expanding Freedom Roads, as well.

#### **Expanding Access to Culture & Arts**

The AAHC has worked since 2014 to create pathways for African Americans to enter into, and thrive within, the cultural heritage field in North Carolina. This includes work in history museums, libraries, historic sites, and arts institutions.

In recent years, the AAHC has advanced the history and heritage element of this work with its primary partners: the graduate program in Museum Studies at UNC-Greensboro and the graduate program in Public History at North Carolina Central University, an HBCU. As the result of a recent, small grant award, we will collaborate to institutionalize efforts to help African American students and emerging professionals’ access and grow in North Carolina’s public cultural heritage field. This effort will include creating a coalition between graduate programs across the state and providing tools for this coalition to better support African American students; exposing African American high school students to the field; and creating professional development, training, and internship opportunities for African American graduate students and emerging professionals. We envision connecting *NC Community Colleges* to this effort in the future.

Similar initiatives are being advanced for the arts, as well. Currently, the AAHC is working to provide support and professional development opportunities to African American artists in North Carolina in close partnership with the *North Carolina Arts Council*. This work includes workshops and digital resources, like newsletters and webpages.

## ***Historical Resources***

The State Historic Preservation Office continues to partner with both the *Hometown Strong* program and the *Leverage NC* initiative with *NC Department of Commerce, NC Municipal League, and NC Downtown Development Association*, with educational offerings (including historic preservation related educational videos) and technical assistance designed to further local government economic development efforts, designed to provide cities and towns statewide the tools needed to strengthen local economies and support enhanced business opportunity back at home. (<https://www.leveragenc.org/>)

*Furthering resiliency efforts for constituents and state and local government.*

Engaging in bricks and mortar grants assistance and planning efforts for North Carolina communities, funded by the federal 2019 Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund program for Hurricanes Florence and Michael (“preservation hurricane grants”). Planning efforts getting underway between 2021 and 2023 include (1) a cooperative agreement with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill for a statewide historic preservation-focused resiliency project, which will yield model design standards for local preservation commissions for appropriate mitigation, repair, and preventative measures to ensure wide-ranging resiliency from flood, wind, and other storm-related damage; better linkage of local disaster planning to historic resource resiliency planning; staff training for state and local governments and non-profit entities for historic resources disaster preparedness and response; (2) historic architectural and archaeological surveys, including a coastal cemetery survey, to assess damage and set a new baseline post-hurricane, and inform resiliency measures.

## ***Historic Sites***

Historic Sites collaborates in new and/or expanded ways around the following concepts, commemorations, and/or initiatives:

- 1) Historic landscape conservation working with state and local land and water protection entities;
- 2) Commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution;
- 3) Parks And Trails for Health (PATH) has provided new opportunities for the Division to highlight its natural resources;
- 4) The Civil Rights Trails program of the NC African American Heritage Commission;
- 5) "Art on the Land" will provide an opportunity for Historic Sites to work with artists and arts agencies to continue to grow connections between art, history, and communities.

## ***Land and Water Stewardship***

An opportunity exists to work with the *Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ)* to evaluate ecosystems in floodplain areas most susceptible to disasters such as hurricanes and sea level rise. Identifying which floodplains provide the most benefits such as flood protection, wildlife habitat, protection of water quality, and climate resilience can help conservation groups and local governments strategically purchase and restore lands that will provide the most protection for human communities and economic assets into the future. Collaboration with private industry groups is partially supported by fees for access to *Natural Heritage Program* data and field surveys, including partnerships with

Conservation *Subdivisions* and voluntary participants in the *Sustainable Forestry Initiative*. Increased efficiency is gained from additional collaboration with extension staff and field biologists within state agencies, especially the *Wildlife Resources Commission, NC Forest Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service*.

### **Marketing**

Through our many initiatives and goals of expanding educational opportunities; improving public health; stimulating economic development; strengthening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and battling climate change and enhancing community resiliency, our continued coordinated efforts across the agency ensure we operate as one agency, representing all of the things people love about North Carolina.

### **Museum of History**

The *NC Museum of History* and the *NC Museum of Natural Sciences* are collaborating on children's summer programs for the summer of 2021. The museums are investigating other ways that we can collaborate on programs and exhibits.

The museum's education staff continues to collaborate with the *North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati* on developing lectures, educational materials and programs on the American Revolution and the founding of the United States. The museum's education staff is also collaborating with the state's *Department of Public Instruction* to make sure all the educational material we produce are meeting the state's requirements.

The Museum is collaborating with the *NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NCDMVA)* and the *State Archives* on a program on African American veterans. In addition, the museum will be home to the *NCDMVA Hall of Firsts* which will honor selected veterans who have honorably served in the US Armed Forces.

The *State Archives* and the *Museum of History* continue working on a joint project to collect stories and artifacts from people across the state regarding their experiences and memories of the Coronavirus Pandemic. In addition, the *Museum of History* is collecting artifacts from the Black Lives Matter movement, including gathering some of the plywood panels covering broken windows that were painted on with various slogans.

### **North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA)**

In 2020 and 2021, the Museum facilitated a successful partnership with *Come Hear NC* and PBS NC to launch *Music at the Museum*. A series of concerts streaming live from the Museum, Music at the Museum highlights North Carolina artists of diverse backgrounds and aims to introduce viewing audiences to new, less known music performers. The NCMA hopes to continue this programming in the years ahead.

The Museum has prioritized collaborative partnerships in the last two years, and these partnerships have been and will continue to be evidenced in exhibitions, programming, education, and community outreach. With a specific focus on North Carolina artists and youth, we have partnered with various NC artists, curators, and organizations, including *NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT)*, to host

exhibitions such as *Scott Avett: INVISIBLE*; *Christopher Holt: Contemporary Frescoes, Faith, and Community*; and the *North Carolina Aviation Art Contest*. Future partnerships include a Phil Freelon exhibition with UNC-Charlotte and an exhibition titled *Break the Mold* in partnership with the Mint Museum.

In the context of programs, education, and community outreach, the Museum has prioritized typically under-engaged and underrepresented audiences collaborating with *UNC-Pembroke*; artist *Sherrill Roland*; *VITAL Health*; *the Black on Black Project*; *the NC Asian, Latin American, and Lumbee Film Festivals*; *the Cardinal Libraries*; and more. To achieve this work, the Museum created the position of director of outreach and audience engagement, shifting the focus from onsite programming to a balance of onsite programming and community outreach and advocacy. This work will continue to grow and expand.

### **North Carolina Symphony**

NCS in collaboration with *Interfaith Food Shuttle*, holiday concertgoers donate food for families in need.

NCS staff and musicians donated over 150 meals for essential healthcare workers.

The Symphony extended free tickets to under-served members of the community through partner organizations such as *Helping Hands Mission*, *Southeast Raleigh Promise*, *TROSA*, *Family Promise of Moore County*, and others.

NCS has partnered with *PBS North Carolina* to distribute its *Meet the Instrument* program as part of *Classroom Connection*. This series airs twice a week throughout the state and features math and literacy lessons to support at-home learning for pre-K students through third grade.

Teachers, medical professionals, and business leaders are sharing that focusing on emotional health is more important than ever. In an effort to support the well-being of our fellow citizens, the North Carolina Symphony has partnered with *North Carolina State Parks and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences* to develop a meditation tool—a series of brief musical excerpts, combined with breathtaking visuals from North Carolina landscapes and guided meditation techniques. These videos aim to provide moments of calm and focus, supporting stress-management during the busy school or workday. *Musical Meditations* series are available free of charge via North Carolina Symphony's website and social media channels.

The Symphony's three-year residency in Sampson County has served the community with more music education opportunities than ever before. Programs have included free community concerts, a music and literacy initiative for pre-K students, professional development workshops for music educators, master classes through which young instrumentalists have one-on-one learning opportunities with NCS musicians, and more. In the spring, a woodwind quintet of NCS musicians presented a Spanish-language performance of *Peter and the Wolf* (*Pedro y el Lobo*) at the *Episcopal Farmworkers Ministry*. The Symphony expanded this residency to Jones County for 2019-2022 and is evaluating new locations for program expansion.

NCS plans to collaborate with the *NC Department of Commerce* for the 2024 US Open Championship.

### ***Parks and Recreation***

Parks will be partnering with *Black Folks Camp Too* to encourage participation and engagement with diverse communities through the department's new Parks and Trails for Health (PATH) initiative. PATH combines physical activity in parks, greenways, and other outdoor spaces in North Carolina with educational opportunities.

The Division will continue partnering with the "Park for Every Child" initiative and will focus on collaborations with the *NC Department of Health and Human Services, NC Department of Transportation, the NC Youth Conservation Corps, AmeriCorps, Friends of State Parks* and other support groups, the outdoor recreation industry, and land conservation organizations, among many others. In addition, the Division will be continuing their partnership with the UNC-Institute for the Environment into the 2021-2022 school year.

### ***State Library***

The State Library will collaborate with the *NC Museum of Natural Sciences* in support of sharing the Race 2.0 exhibit across the state and will look for opportunities to create additional local programming and staff development opportunities that incorporate this content.

The State Library is supporting the *NC African American Heritage Commission* in promoting their Freedmen's Bureau Transcription Project in collaboration with the *Smithsonian* and *National Museum of African American History and Culture*.

In addition, we are partnering with *State Archives* and *NC AAHC* on a project to identify local collections of NC African American history and determine opportunities for collaborating to increase awareness and improve accessibility of community resources.

The State Library will continue supporting the NC Student Connect initiative in partnership with *Hometown Strong* and the *NC Business Committee for Education*.

*The Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped* will participate in a pilot effort with *Library of Congress National Library Service* to implement the *Marrakesh Treaty* which provides for the exchange of accessible-format books across international borders by organizations that serve people who are blind, visually impaired, and print disabled.

### ***Zoo***

The Zoo will collaborative educational programs with other *DNCR* divisions. *Aquariums, the Museum of Natural Sciences, and State Parks* as the most obvious partners.

Our conservation and science programs are fertile ground for collaborations with other scientists across the department and in *North Carolina Universities*. Existing college-level internships in veterinary studies and animal behavior research could be expanded.

The 2,600 acres of wildlife habitat that the Zoo manages are available to other divisions for both research and educational programming.

The Zoo will explore opportunities with the *State Libraries* to reach underserved Tier 1 communities through a Zoo ticket disbursement program.

As a major tourist destination in the state, the Zoo will collaborate with other *DNCR* attractions on joint marketing efforts.