

30 years

South Carolina
Commission for Minority Affairs



ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION & SCHOLARSHIP GALA

Building Bridges
& Closing Gaps

Thursday
June 29, 2023
6 PM

COLUMBIA CONVENTION CENTER
1101 LINCOLN ST., COLUMBIA SC 29201







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Welcome

Dear friends,

Thank you for joining us for the 30th anniversary celebration for the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs (CMA) where our theme is “Building Bridges & Closing Gaps”. This theme was chosen because it best encapsulates the work of CMA, which is to seek to improve the state’s ethnically and racially diverse communities.

We were established in 1993 to study the causes and effects of socio-economic deprivation and other inequities impacting our communities of color throughout South Carolina. Over the past three decades, our unique approach to community advocacy has allowed us to collaborate with the federal, state, and local government, the business community, and faith-based and community organizations to provide economic resources. Moreover, we are the state’s official point of contact for information regarding its minority populations.

The agency’s work has been varied and covers work with institutions of higher education, formerly incarcerated individuals, our fellow citizens with disabilities, business and community leaders, and others. Ultimately, we work to achieve a vision whereby all ethnic minority citizens of South Carolina will be treated equitably and achieve economic prosperity.

It is for these and other reasons that we will celebrate our rich 30-year history of elevating the various cultures that make our state fantastic. Thank you for celebrating with us and we hope you enjoy tonight’s festivities.

Sincerely,



Dr. Delores Dacosta
Executive Director
South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs



Our Vision

All ethnic minority citizens of the State of South Carolina will be treated equitably and achieve economic prosperity through socio-cultural awareness, collaboration, policy change, and research.

Our Mission

To be a catalyst that identifies and examines emerging issues and trends by providing constructive solutions and approaches to support the policy and socio-economic development of ethnic minority communities through:

- Community engagement and awareness
- State recognition of Native Americans
- Collecting, diagnosing and analyzing collaborative data
- Acting as a liaison bridging the gap between communities, government agencies and other organizations
- Influencing public policy and state services

State of South Carolina

Governor's Proclamation

- WHEREAS, the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs was founded in 1993 to study the causes and effects of inequities impacting African Americans; and
- WHEREAS, the agency's scope expanded in 2003 to include Native Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, and Asian American/Pacific Islanders; and
- WHEREAS, the agency works to secure the vision whereby all ethnic minority citizens of South Carolina will be treated equitably and achieve economic prosperity through socio-cultural awareness, collaboration, policy change, and research; and
- WHEREAS, the agency serves as South Carolina's central point of contact on statistical data affecting its constituent communities and works with officials at the federal, state, county, and local levels of government; and
- WHEREAS, the agency currently comprises Multicultural Affairs, Outreach, Public Information, and Research and Planning Divisions to aid in identifying and examining emerging issues and trends affecting the state's minority communities; and
- WHEREAS, the agency offers technical assistance to small and minority businesses, community groups interested in civic education and engagement and works with the state's formerly incarcerated; and
- WHEREAS, South Carolina recognizes that the diverse cultures that call it home represent one of its greatest strengths and recognizing these cultures and their contributions and accomplishments enhances the state's charm and/or appeal across the nation and around the world; and
- WHEREAS, South Carolina is committed to providing comprehensive support to ensure that it is welcoming to all people and building a more diverse space for people to live, work, and raise a family.
- NOW, THEREFORE, I, Henry McMaster, Governor of the great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim June 29, 2023, as

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR MINORITY AFFAIRS DAY

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to recognize the many contributions made by the agency to the citizens of the Palmetto State.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Henry McMaster".

HENRY MCMASTER
GOVERNOR
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Board of Commissioners

GOVERNOR'S DESIGNEE

Chief Bill Harris, Catawba Nation

FIRST DISTRICT

Mr. Calvin Whitfield

SECOND DISTRICT

Mr. Nathaniel "Nate" A. Barber

FIFTH DISTRICT

Ms. Ame Fuss

SIXTH DISTRICT

Mr. Juwan Ayers, Interim Board Chair

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Rev. Michelle Law-Gordon

AT-LARGE

Kaala B. Maple

Biography

MR. BAKARI SELLERS

Keynote Speaker



Two-time NY Times best-selling Author, Civil Rights Activist, Attorney, Entrepreneur, Legislator, and overall Prolific voice of the Culture, Bakari Sellers continues to build upon the strong legacy he inherited as the son of Gwendolyn Sellers and civil rights leader Cleveland Sellars. While his dad helped shape movements working alongside Stokely Carmichael, Bayard Rustin, and Malcolm X, Bakari has come into his own helping to write the blueprint for today's movements with the likes of Rep. James Clyburn, Attorney Benjamin Crump, and President Barack Obama.

Bakari forged his own path very early on. He entered Morehouse College at the age of 16. He went on to become a graduate of the University of South Carolina Law School, and he became the youngest legislator in the South Carolina state legislature at 22. He carries this mantle of success with the right balance of gravitas, style, generosity, and humility—a nod to his humble beginnings in Denmark, SC, where “please and thank you” are the chief currency in town. In penning both his memoir *My Vanishing Country* and a children's book entitled “Who Are Your People?” Bakari pays homage to the working-class values that encouraged him to “dream with his eyes wide open” and that are the predicate for his persistent fight for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the US and abroad.

A CNN analyst, Bakari also brings an ability to elevate discourse such that people always feel one step closer to a solution or resolution after he speaks. He combines these and many other talents in his new podcast, *The Bakari Sellers Podcast*, which airs twice a week on the Ringer Podcast Network. Sellers has also been an attorney with the Strom Law Firm, L.L.C., in Columbia, South Carolina, since 2007, where he heads up the firm's Strategic Communication and Public Affairs team and the DEI Consulting practice.

He is married to Dr. Ellen Rucker-Sellers, and they are the proud parents of three children.

MS. WHITNEY SULLIVAN

Mistress of Ceremony



Whitney Sullivan is an anchor and multi-platform producer for WLTX-TV, creating content for and appearing on the station's daily morning newscast. Whitney attended grade school in Richland District Two and graduated with honors from Clemson University. During her time at the station, Whitney has been nominated for six Emmy awards for her work as a producer, reporter, and anchor. Last year, she received the Merit Award for Television Personality of the Year from the South Carolina Broadcasters Association.

In 2020, she was presented with the Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award by the Columbia Veteran Affairs Health Care System. Whitney is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and serves on multiple boards of nonprofit organizations in the Midlands. Whitney is a community-focused storyteller with a passion for uplifting, informing, and encouraging others.

7SUNDAY

Musical Performance



Launched in 2019 by Dean Generette, 7Sunday is a veteran-led production organization with a mission to provide performing artists with educational opportunities in branding, networking, and showcasing their talents to entertain a multitude of individuals through television, live events, and social media, while enhancing relationships between small businesses and communities.

Event Program

Networking Reception / Cultural Showcase

Opening Call

Edisto Natchez-Kusso Tribe

Mistress of Ceremony

Ms. Whitney Sullivan, WLTX Anchor

Welcome/Occasion

Catawba Nation Chief Bill Harris

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Ken Battle

Former Chair of the SC Commission
for Minority Affairs

Board of Commissioners

Invocation/Blessing of Food

Rep. Ivory Thigpen, District 79 Chair,
SC Legislative Black Caucus

Moment of Silence/Recognition of Sponsors

(In Memory of Rogie D. Nelson)

Mrs. Cynthia Haddad

Director of Outreach and Community Affairs

Governor's Proclamation

President & CEO Dr. Willie L. Todd, Jr.

Denmark Technical College

Dinner /Building Bridges & Closing Gaps

Video Presentation

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Mrs. Tanya Rodriguez-Hodges

Executive Director, Latino Communications

Keynote Speaker Presentation

Mr. Bakari Sellers

Two-time New York Times Best-Selling Author

A Celebration of Culture

"Song and dance"

Edisto Natchez-Kusso Tribe

"Sayaw sa Cuyo"

Filipino American Association
of Greater Columbia

Special Remarks

Executive Director Dr. Delores Dacosta
SC Commission for Minority Affairs

Musical Selection

Dr. Phyllis Mobley accompanied by 7Sunday

"A Change is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke

Musical Selection

7Sunday

DINNER MENU

- Salad -

Rolled House Salad
Worcestershire Vinaigrette Dressing
or Ranch Dressing

- Entrée -

Lemon Sage Chicken
with Herb Seared Salmon
Garlic Smashed Potatoes
and Bacon Laced Green Beans

- Dessert -

New York Cheesecake
and Triple Layer Chocolate Cake

Exhibitors

About the Eastern Cherokee, Southern Iroquois, and United Tribes of South Carolina, Inc.

The **Eastern Cherokee, Southern Iroquois, and United Tribes of South Carolina (ECSIUT)**, led by archeologist Chief Lamar Nelson, is a state recognized group dedicated to promoting and creating an awareness of Cherokee and other Native Americans' arts, history, culture, and its contributions to the development of America and South Carolina. For more information about ECSIUT, visit <https://cherokeeofsc.com/>.

About the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC (FAAGC)

The **Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC (FAAGC)** is a 501c3 organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the Philippines through cultural and educational presentations to the greater Columbia community. For more information about the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC, visit <https://filamsc.org/>.

About the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition

The **Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition** advocates for the rights of all Gullah/Geechee people around the world; promotes and participates in the preservation of Gullah/Geechee history, heritage, culture, and language; works toward Sea Island land re-acquisition and maintenance; and celebrates Gullah/Geechee culture through artistic and educational means electronically and via "grassroots scholarship." For more information, visit <https://www.gullahgeecheeland.com/>.

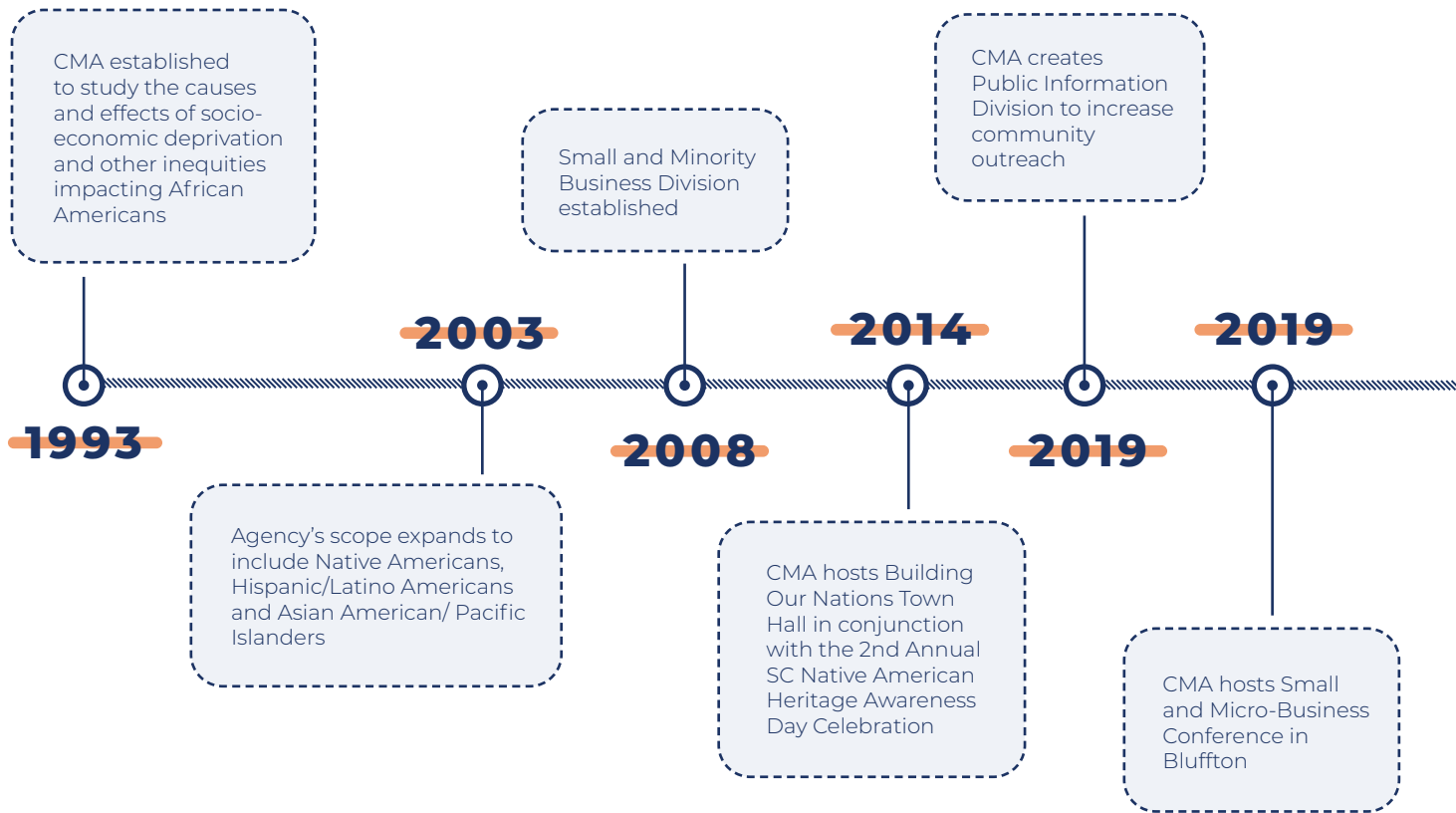
About Palmetto Luna Arts

Palmetto Luna's mission is to foster an understanding of the Hispanic/Latino culture by promoting artistic creation and providing opportunities for cultural expression for the community in South Carolina. To discover more about Palmetto Luna Arts, visit <https://paluna.org/>.

About Pele Inspire-Embracing Authentic Love

Faaapepele Hunkin, who was born in Nu'uuli, located on the beautiful island of American Samoa, is affectionately known as "Pele", which means "sweetheart" in her native Samoan language. After leaving her life in American Samoa, Pele enlisted in the United States Army, where she excelled. Throughout her life, this fearless woman of God faced numerous adversities, which inspired her to write "Heart of a Warrior". To learn more about Pele and her story, visit www.peleinspire.com.

CMA Timeline



**Saturday, May 6,
2023**

Eastern Cherokee,
Southern Iroquois
and United Tribe
POW WOW



Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Dr. Delores Dacosta, executive director of the SC Commission for Minority Affairs, was the keynote speaker at the 1st Latino Business Day celebration



Civic Engagement and Education Academy launched to encourage communities to become more civically engaged

Asian American and Pacific Islander Division hosts first Civic Engagement Conference for AA/PI youth

2nd Chance Reentry Resource Guide was launched in April during Second Chance Month

CMA creates an Outreach and Community Affairs Division

2021

2021

2022

2020

2021

2022

2023

CMA hosts Building Our Nations Town Hall in conjunction with the 2nd Annual SC Native American Heritage Awareness Day Celebration

CMA's Hispanic/Latino Affairs Division hosts inaugural South Carolina Latinx Student Summit in October at USC Upstate's South Carolina Centro Latino and launches CMA Sessions video series

Collaborated with Advanced Technology International to provide mentorship, internship, and hackathon experiences for HBCU students

"Over the past three decades, our unique approach to community advocacy has allowed us to educate various federal, state, and local agencies and community-based organizations on the importance of culture as it relates to connecting with communities."

- Dr. Delores Dacosta



ROGIE NELSON | 03/22/1967 - 12/02/2019

*In memory of a dear friend.
Your presence we miss, your memories we treasure.*

Rogie Nelson, a devoted public servant at the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs, served as the agency's Small & Minority Business program coordinator from 2008 to 2013. He was a very loyal and faithful person who tirelessly served his community.



Clifton Davis with staff and guests at the Hilton Charleston Hotel



SC Native American Heritage Awareness Day Celebration
"Building Our Nations"
Tuesday, November 18, 2014, at the South Carolina State House.
Sponsored by the SC Commission for Minority Affairs



Top: Mr. George Dennis, Mr. Benjamin Washington, Mrs. Lori Brock, Mrs. Marcy Hayden, Mr. Rogie Nelson, and Mr. Thomas Smith
Bottom: Mrs. Cynthia Haddad, Mrs. Phoebe Williams, Ms. Lauretha Whaley, and Ms. Lee McElveen



On March 22, 2023, the Multicultural Affairs Division met with five Korean religious leaders: Ms. Hanna Kim, Mr. Hyunghoon Kim, Mr. Jae Ho Oh, Ms. Beomgyu Seo, and Ms. Eunjo Song of the Columbia Council For Internationals to begin a conversation on interfaith tolerance and diversity

Current Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Dr. Delores Dacosta

CHIEF OF STAFF
Brenton Brown

PUBLIC INFORMATION DIRECTOR
Shireese M. Bell

RESEARCH AND PLANNING DIRECTOR
Dr. Robert P. Fenton

MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
Ivan Segura

**OUTREACH & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR**
Cynthia Haddad

ADMINISTRATION
Margaret Tillman, Procurement/Office
Tonya Roper, Administrative Coordinator

**AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS
PROGRAM COORDINATOR**
Ashley Owens

**ASIAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS AND
PACIFIC ISLANDER
PROGRAM COORDINATOR**
Christine Currie

**COMMUNITY & FAITH-BASED
SERVICES PROGRAM COORDINATOR**
Tim McCray

**HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS
PROGRAM MANAGER**
Alex Tovar

IT BUSINESS ANALYST
Mauricio Orozco

**NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS
PROGRAM MANAGER**
Jerry Francis

**NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS
PROGRAM COORDINATOR**
Patricia Gaillard

**SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESS
PROGRAM COORDINATOR**
Jazmin Goodwin

STATISTICIAN
Max Petushko

**STATISTICAL AND RESEARCH
ANALYST**
Ja'Curas McCloud

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Marcee Hudgens

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**Cecil Williams
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**Columbia
Fireflies**

**HEATHER
SMITH**

**Heather Smith
(Smith & Associates)**



**South Carolina
Department of Corrections**

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**SC Legal
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Acknowledgements

- South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs Board of Commissioners
- Mr. Bakari Sellers
- Ms. Whitney Sullivan
- Rep. Ivory Thigpen, District 79
- SC Legislative Black Caucus
- Dr. Wille L. Todd, Jr., President & CEO of Denmark Technical College
- 7Sunday
- Catawba Nation Chief Bill Harris
- Edisto-Natchez Kusso Tribe
- Eastern Cherokee, Southern Iroquois, and United Tribes of South Carolina
- Filipino American Association of Greater Columbia (FAAGC)
- Palmetto Luna Arts
- Tanya Rodriguez-Hodges
- Aldo Muzarelli
- Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition
- Pele Hunkin
- Dr. Phyllis Mobley
- Pressmark, LLC
- Columbia Convention Center/OVG Hospitality
- Timely Expressions Event Planning
- A special thank you to the current and former staff of the SC Commission for Minority Affairs, former commissioners, current and former advisory committee members, community partners, family, and friends.



FIREFLIES

The Fireflies will celebrate their annual Negro League Weekend to champion those who fought to make baseball a game that everyone can play.

FUN FOR
ALL

SCAN
FOR MORE
INFORMATION



To celebrate South Carolina's multi-ethnic LatinX population, Columbia adopted the universally beloved "Chicharrones" identity. The multi-faceted, translatable pork dish, traditionally featuring pork belly or rinds, reaches across cultural lines to create a universally sought-after dietary staple. Chicharrones promote community gathering and experience sharing, foundations upon which the Fireflies are built.



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South Carolina Association for
Community Economic Development



FAAGC'S 2023 GALA CELEBRATES

**MASSKARA
FESTIVAL**

For more information:
email us: filamsc@gmail.com





Saturday, September 23
at R2i2 Conference Center
763 Fashion Drive, Columbia
6:00 - 10:00 PM

Ticket: \$75
Student: \$70 (21 and below)
TICKETS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.

Buy ticket here:



Dinner includes:
Server - Attended Food Stations
featuring Vegetable and Shrimp Pasta,
Pulled Brisket Taco, and Hibachi
Chicken. Fruits and desserts will be
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Calvin Whitfield
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Congratulations

on your **30th** Anniversary

South Carolina Commission
for Minority Affairs



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THE POWER OF
SMALL BUSINESS

SCAN ME



Check out the
first episode of
CMA's new series!



SOUTH EASTERN
H. F. THOMAS JR. LIBRARY & LEARNING CENTER

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook paper. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.



<https://cma.sc.gov/>

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 [SCCommissionforMinorityAffairs](https://www.youtube.com/SCCommissionforMinorityAffairs)

30th Anniversary Program designed by:
CMA Visual Media Designer - Marcee Hudgens