

PRESS RELEASE

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WeGOJA Foundation and SCAAHC launch South Carolina Family Reunion Toolkit

Columbia -- With support from the [WeGOJA Foundation](http://www.WeGOJA.org), the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission launched the South Carolina Family Reunion Toolkit today at www.FamilyReunionSC.com. The website encourages planners to reconnect with family and rediscover heritage by incorporating visits to African American historic sites in their next reunion.

On the site, browsers will find suggestions for [destinations](#) in which to host their next reunion, and state and local [parks](#) in which to host family picnics. They'll also find [sample day-trip itineraries](#) to dozens of sites outlined in the [GreenBookofSC.com](http://www.GreenBookofSC.com) – hidden gems, districts and markers that interpret compelling stories about African Americans in the Palmetto State.

“We believe families are always seeking new and unique ways to host this special weekend every year,” said Dawn Dawson-House, executive director of the WeGOJA Foundation, which supports SCAAHC projects. “The toolkit is a one-stop shop of ideas, suggestions and references to help planners build an exceptional and enriching experience for their next get-together.”

The toolkit also suggests ways to establish a reunion steering committee, build an itinerary and personalize the reunion.

Family reunions are distinctive aspects of African American culture. They are rooted in the Emancipation era of the mid 19th century when formerly enslaved people placed “Information Wanted” advertisements in newspapers in search of family who were separated under the cruel practice of slavery.

By the turn of the 20th century, family reunions became more joyful gatherings. African Americans who fled the Jim Crow South for better education and job opportunities created the nation’s first African American middle class. With their discretionary income, they traveled back down South to reunite with family they left behind. And they used the Negro Motorist Green Book to identify welcoming establishments on their journey.

For more information, contact Dawn Dawson-House at ddawsonhouse@gmail.com.

About the SC African American Heritage Commission

The mission of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission (SCAAHC) is to identify and promote the preservation of historic sites, structures, buildings, and culture of the African American experience in South Carolina, and to assist and enhance the efforts of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. The 15-member commission includes representatives from all regions of the state. It was established as a council in 1993 by joint legislative resolution, and became a commission in 2001 by executive order of Governor Jim Hodges. More info [here](#).

About the WeGOJA Foundation

The WeGOJA Foundation supports the efforts of the SCAAHC by finding resources to carry out its work. More about that work can be found [here](#).

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