

GTAAAC NEWSLETTER

Greater Tulsa African American Affairs Commission

January 2025

EVENTS

3: First Friday, Downtown Tulsa - 6 p.m.

3: Let's Get Funky Live Show, The Colony - 8 p.m.

Multiple Dates: MLK Dream Mobile, Suburban Acres - 9 a.m.

Mondays: Monday Night Jazz, Vintage Wine Bar - 8 p.m.

Tuesdays: All Ages Karaoke, Mother Road Market - 6 p.m.

Tuesdays: Adult Karaoke, Retro Grill & Bar - 8 p.m.

10-12: Aries Spears Comedy Shows, Bricktown Comedy Club - 9 p.m.

11: Baddies That Brunch, My Momma's House - 1 p.m.

15: Travels with Tulsans - Africa, Rudisill Library - 12:10 p.m.

17-18: Marlon Wayans Comedy Shows, Bricktown Comedy Club - Multiple Times

18: A Voice of Hope Author Reading, Rudisill Library - 2 p.m.

20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade, Downtown Tulsa - 11 a.m.

COMMISSION GOALS

General Commission: Increased visibility is a large goal for the commission overall. Attending events, tabling with other organizations, and the continued creation of this newsletter are just a few ways the commission hopes to be more visible within the community.

Education: The education committee is working to create quarterly op-eds to showcase significant issues impacting African American students across the Greater Tulsa area.

Policy: The policy committee is focused on their transportation initiative this year. Additionally, they have a goal to work with the Beyond Apology Commission to begin to make real policy changes.

Culture & Engagement: The culture committee is preparing their first large-scale event in conjunction with Tulsa Juneteenth. The goal is to make this an annual event.



EARLY 2025 MEETING DATES

January 14
February 11
March 11
April 8
May 13
June 10

All meetings are open to the public and held at City Hall in the 10 North Meeting Room. Meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Dickens, Chair of GTAAAC, served as an Elder at the Rudisill Library's annual Kwanzaa celebration in late December 2024.

GTAAAC NEWSLETTER

Greater Tulsa African American Affairs Commission



EVENTS

Thursdays: The Duke Show Open Mic Night - My Momma's House, 6:30 p.m.

1: Afro Fest - Greenwood Cultural Center, 5 p.m.

4: African Americans & Labor Exhibit - Rudisill Library, 6 p.m.

7: First Friday Art Crawl - Downtown Tulsa, 5 p.m.

8: Oklahoma Invitational Black Rodeo - Expo Center, 1 p.m. or 7 p.m.

11: Board of Education Election Primaries - Local Polls

11: Black Wall Street Mixer hosted by BWS Chamber - Meta Horizon Worlds, 6:30 p.m.

13: "The Killing Floor" Free Film Screening - Circle Cinema, 7 p.m.

15, 16, 22, 23: Theatre North presents Trouble in Mind - Tulsa Performing Arts Center, Various Times

18: Lecture: African Presence in Early America II - Rudisill Library, 6:30 p.m.

18: "Bike Vessel" Free Film Screening - Circle Cinema, 7 p.m.

22: Black Futures Hackathon - Atlas School, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.

26: African American Heritage Bowl - Rudisill Library, 6:30 p.m. (Registration Open)

Black History Month 2025 "African Americans & Labor"

Information gathered from the Association for the Study of African American Life & History webpage linked here.

Every year, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the organization started by the "Father of Black History" Carter G. Woodson, determines a theme. Each theme focuses on a different facet of African American life and culture. This year's theme is African Americans and Labor.

According to the ASALH webpage, "the 2025 Black History Month theme, African Americans and Labor, focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds - free and unfree, skilled, and unskilled, vocational and voluntary - intersect with the collective experiences of Black people. Indeed, work is at the very center of much of Black history and culture. Be it the traditional agricultural labor of enslaved Africans that fed Low Country colonies, debates among Black educators on the importance of vocational training, self-help strategies and entrepreneurship in Black communities, or organized labor's role in fighting both economic and social injustice, Black people's work has been transformational throughout the U.S., Africa, and the Diaspora. The 2025 Black History Month theme, "African Americans and Labor," sets out to highlight and celebrate the potent impact of this work."

Take the time to learn more history this month. Happy Black History Month!

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The education committee is working to determine ways to tackle some of the problems facing African American students in our schools. Among these are literacy, chronic absenteeism, and family engagement.

As a way to ensure that students all across Tulsa are getting the necessary supports, the education committee is collaborating with the other Title V commission's (Asian Affairs, Indian Affairs, Hispanic / Latinx Affairs, and Tulsa Women's Commission) education committees to do this work. They had their first meeting in January. Updates forthcoming.

POLICY COMMITTEE

The policy committee is focusing on two areas in the beginning part of this year: introducing a policy on transportation and working with the Beyond Apology Commission. As stated in a previous newsletter, the policy committee has noticed how lack of adequate transportation has affected the livelihood of African Americans. The committee will introduce policy that provides suggestions on ways that community members will be able to access transportation to "need-to-get-to" places, such as places of employment, doctors' offices, interviews, etc. The purpose of the Beyond Apology Commission shall be to reconcile, restore, and unite Tulsa in a goal of shared prosperity for all Tulsans by advancing and restoring economic mobility, prosperity, and intergenerational wealth for the 1921 Race Massacre survivors, their descendants, and residents of North Tulsa, in particular the historic Greenwood District and surrounding neighborhoods.

CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The culture and engagement committee have begun the process of working with the Tulsa Juneteenth committee to have their inaugural Spoken Word contest.

The contest will focus on the Juneteenth theme: "Family Reunion." A theme like this has great social and cultural implications for the African American community and is a perfect beginning theme for young people to explore family, heritage, and community.

More information on the contest forthcoming.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Human Rights Commission presented the Lifetime of Compassion Award to Mike Brose, a social worker who has committed his career to ensuring that mental health issues get addressed with compassion and integrity.

The commission has been steadily hosting presentations about issues that plague the Greater Tulsa area, such as voter turnout, student literacy rates, and mental health. These presentations address the problems so that the commission can determine ways to actively support the work the community is doing to combat these issues.



Kristi Williams, a founding commissioner of GTAAAC, has been recently nominated for the Maxine Horner Lifetime Achievement Award by the Greenwood Business Center for her work with Black History Saturdays and the National Geographic.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

COMMISSIONER BURLINDA RADNEY announced the end of her term with GTAAAC. Chair Dickens and the rest of the commission expresses extreme gratitude for her service.

ERRAN PERSLEY, the Chief Economic Development Director for the City of Tulsa spoke at GTAAAC's February meeting. He announced several economic projects the city is engaged in, including: Tulsa Space Testing Center, Crusoe, NorSun, Tulsa Hills Marketplace, Kirkpatrick Heights, Convention Center Hotel, Education Begins with Home Initiative, and Zinc Lake opening.

The **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** met recently to discuss their 2025 goals. These goals will likely focus on previously discussed issues plaguing TPS's African American students, including literacy, chronic absenteeism, and family engagement. They have also met with other commissions' education committees and will meet again to solidify actionable ways to collaborate. Additionally, they are working on a resource guide for families.

The **POLICY COMMITTEE** has new leadership with Commissioner Radney's departure. Commissioner Marquess Dennis will serve as Chair, and Commissioner Jon Paul Ray will serve as Co-Chair

The **CULTURE COMMITTEE** shared the dates of Theatre North's most recent play, "Trouble in Mind." The culture committee is also committed to continuing to provide this monthly newsletter to keep the community updated on GTAAAC's work.

GTAAAC NEWSLETTER

Tuesdays: Yoga for Every Body; Central Library, 6:00 p.m.

3: A Night of Literacy for Teens & Young Adults; The Gathering Place, 5:30 p.m.

5: Travels with Tulsans - A Journey from Tulsa to Ghana; Rudisill Library; 12:10 p.m.

7: First Friday; Living Arts District, 6:00 p.m.

8: Auditions for Theatre North - Chicken & Biscuits; Rudisill Library, 10 a.m.

8: Black Barbie: A Documentary screening; Circle Cinema, 2:00 p.m.

14: Building Intergenerational Connections Lunch & Learn; Rudisill Library, 12:00 p.m.

14: CeCe Winans Concert - More Than This Tour; Victory Church, 7 p.m.

15-17: St. Patrick's Day Block Party; McNellie's Downtown, 12 p.m.

17-21: Tulsa Public Schools Spring Break

21: Bingo Night Benefiting Be Heard Movement; 732 W New Orleans St. Suite 160, Broken Arrow, 5:30 p.m.

21-22: Afro Flavourz Grand Opening; 8242 E 71st Unit 8242, 4:00 p.m.

25: Connection & Inspiration - Learning at the Dinner Table; Rudisill Library, 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 2025

GREATER TULSA AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION NEWSLETTER



Jameelah Stuckey, Co-Chair of the Education Committee, will be speaking at the 2025 Women's Leadership Summit hosted by Leadership Tulsa on April 30 to share her insights on "Neurodiversity in Leadership."

CHAIR REPORT

Chairman Dickens shared his priorities for his service at the March meeting. Those priorities include:

- *Filling seats with active commissioners.* Dr. Dickens notes that the commissioner seats should be filled with active servers who represents industries of both community challenges and successes.
- *Reviewing committees.* Dr. Dickens will support committees as they identify their priorities and realistic achievable goals for the year. 2025 will be Chair Dickens's last year as Chair.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

POLICY COMMITTEE

A group of committee members met with D.R. Horton, the largest housing development company in the U.S, which has begun work in Greenwood. They are focusing on issues of feasibility, affordability, and community impact. They are looking to build nearly 200 homes, with an average price of \$290,000. They are also seeking subsidies to make costs more affordable. This is an opportunity for GTAAAC to align with Mayor Nichols's housing priority.

CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

The committee is hard at work planning the inaugural Spoken Word contest. After speaking with Tulsa Juneteenth planners, the contest will be included in the Tulsa Juneteenth promotional materials.

The committee is also working to prepare a calendar of local events that GTAAAC might be able to attend to share the work that the commission is doing.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The committee met with Lori Long from Junior Achievement Oklahoma during their March meeting. They are also discussing parameters for the 2025 Black Educator Excellence Awards. In addition, they are compiling a resource guide supporting literacy that contains existing resources for families.

The committee shares that Tulsa Public Schools and Tulsa Regional Chamber are collaborating on a program to support students who are college-bound.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The HRC invited Nathan Pickard, the Auditor for the City of Tulsa, to speak at the March meeting. Mr. Pickard shared his duties as the city auditor, which include annual risk assessments, department surveys, and pushing for accountability for the outcomes of Tulsans.

In addition, HRC Chair Walker and Vice-Chair Robinson are working together to streamline processes to make meetings more efficient and effective.

EVENTS

Tuesdays Yoga for Every Body, Central Library - 6 p.m.

Wednesdays: Build-A-Reader Storytime, Rudisill Library - 10:30 a.m.

3: History in Plain Sight Exhibit and Gallery Talk, Living Arts of Tulsa - 7 p.m.

4: Greenwood Live, Greenwood Ave. - 6 p.m.

8: Brown Bag Book Discussion: "James" by Percival Everett, Rudisill Library - 11:30 a.m.

11: Art Crawl on 66, Art Emporium 66 - 6 p.m.

17: Movie in the Park "Inside Out 2", Guthrie Green - 7:30 p.m.

19: The Muscogee Creek Freedmen Saga, Rudisill Library - 1:30 p.m.

25: In Their Own Words: Jermaine Stone & Jabee, Philbrook Museum - 6 p.m.

25: Wine and Hip Hop, Philbrook Museum - 7 p.m.

26: Orbits Arts Festival, Tulsa Performing Arts Center - 10 a.m.

26: Birthright Living Legacy Park Crawl, Whiteside Park - 1:00 p.m.

April 8, 2025
City Hall - 6 p.m

African American Black History
Resource Center Saturdays

Events

1: Old School Sip & Skate; Skates Roller Skating Center - 8 p.m.

2: First Friday Festivities; Greenwood, Downtown - 6 p.m.

2-5: Germanfest 2025; GAST Event Center

9-11: MayFest; Downtown Tulsa

MAY 2025

NEWSLETTER

GREATER TULSA AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION



11: MOTHER'S DAY

15: Third Thursday Jazz; Tulsa Club Hotel - 6:30 p.m.

16: SoulBody Cyphers presents Clash for the Crown; Circle Cinema - 7 p.m.

17, 18, 24, 25: Theatre North Presents "Chicken & Biscuits;" TPAC - Various Times

17: The Live Breathe Fight Gospel Tour; BOK Center - 8 p.m.

18: Leon Bridges Tour; Tulsa Theater - 8 p.m.

24: 2025 Tulsa Whiskey Fest; WOMPA - 4 p.m.

27: African Presence in Early America Lecture; Rudisill Library - 6 p.m.

Saturdays: Tulsa Farmer's Market; Kendall Whittie Neighborhood - 7 a.m.

Commemorating 104 years.

On May 31 and June 1, 1921, the neighborhood of Greenwood in Tulsa was burned to the ground in an act of intentional, racist violence. For two days, houses and businesses were burned and looted, hundreds of people were killed, and thousands more lost their homes and livelihoods.

This month, the commission acknowledges the devastation of that event and honors the community that built and continues to build such a legacy.

Commemoration Events

Black Wall Street Legacy Festival

The Legacy Fest, hosted by 1921 Race Massacre descendants, seeks to spread truth and inspire hope while engaging community. Festivities will be held all day on May 31.

Go GREEN for Greenwood

From May 31-June 1, companies across Tulsa will light their buildings green in honor of Greenwood. Tulsans are also asked to share their support by wearing green.

Official Day of Observance

Tulsa Mayor Monroe Nichols has declared June 1 the Day of Observance for the 1921 Race Massacre through executive order.

Committee Reports

CHAIR REPORT

Chair Dickens found that six of the nine districts in Tulsa County have 5,000+ African Americans residing in those districts. He emailed those counselors to learn in what ways they are engaging their African American constituents. Dr. Dickens hopes that this is a touchpoint for commissioners to further engage with city councilors and other organizations to represent African American voices.

POLICY COMMITTEE

The policy committee is continuing to focus on housing and infrastructure. Committee members will appear at a number of events to support education of housing policy to community members. The committee is also planning to write at least two op-eds this year and aim to pitch to three different publications. These op-eds will also likely appear on committee members' social media accounts for further engagement.

EDUCATION & SKILL BUILDING COMMITTEE

The committee is shifting focus in light of Tulsa Public School's recent decision to end their partnership with Reading Partners. The committee encouraged all commission members to become more familiar with Oklahoma Senate Bill 245. The committee also reported that chronic absenteeism is being removed from the state report card but reminded commissioners how vital school attendance is to education attainment.

CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The committee has sent out correspondence for the the Spoken Word Contest to all area middle schools and high schools. They are continuing to work on planning this contest.

GREATER TULSA AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

CHAIR REPORT

Chairman Dickens has been visiting with City Councilors with the intention of understanding their engagement with their African American constituents.

Dr. Dickens is also working on adding commissioners so that there will be a full commission by the end of the year. In that regard, two new commissioners joined just last month:

- **Donald Rose**, with the Black Wall Street Chamber, and
- **Mikeal Vaughn**, with Urban Coders Guild.



Members of GTAAAC tabled at this year's Black Wall Street Legacy Festival to share information about the commission.

EVENTS

May 31- June 1: Black Wall Street Legacy Festival - Greenwood Tulsa

1: Tulsa Race Massacre Observance Day

All June: Summer Reading Program - Tulsa City County Libraries (Activities all month!)

4: Appetizers Community Conversations (One Book, One Tulsa) - King's Way Wings, 1 p.m.

7: Keepin' It Reel Fishing Derby - Mohawk Park, 11 a.m.

8: Purple Rain Film Screening - Circle Cinema, 2 p.m.

9: Appetizers Community Conversations (One Book, One Tulsa) - Mack's Wings, 2 p.m.

9-13: Keepin' It Reel Youth Film Camp - Circle Cinema, 9 - 3 p.m.

12: The Horse and the Wof: A ThunderWof Comedy Special - Circle Cinema, 6:30 p.m.

12: Juneteenth Movie Night - Guthrie Green, 6 p.m.

14: All-Black Towns Tour - Rudisill Library, Bus leaves at 8 a.m.

14: Intimate Night of Jazz - Courtyard Marriott Tulsa Downtown, 7 p.m.

19: JUNETEENTH

20: Appetizers Community Conversations (One Book, One Tulsa) - Central Library, 2 p.m.

20-21: Juneteenth Festivities - Greenwood Tulsa

20-21: Black Economic Expo - Greenwood Cultural Center

20-22: Community Engaged Genealogy Workshops - 36th St Event Center

28: Appetizers Community Conversations (One Book, One Tulsa) - Suburban Acres Lib, 1 p.m.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

The **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE** is interested in hosting events. The op-eds they are writing will hopefully inform these programming needs.

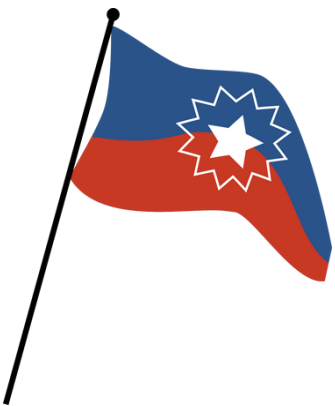
The **CULTURE & ENAGEMENT COMMITTEE**, unfortunately, is cancelling the Spoken Word Contest due to lack of student participation. With school just ending, the committee will pivot to see how they can redesign an impactful program.

The **EDUCATION & SKILL BUILDING COMMITTEE** has set a date for the 2nd annual Dr. LaVerne Ford Wimberly Black Educator Excellence Awards! It will be on October 28, 2025 at 6 p.m. Mayor Nichols will speak at the awards.

The **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION** will be focusing on two goals in the next year. They are:

- Improve Tulsa residents' access to the City of Tulsa Department of Resilience and Equity's resources by modernizing, streamlining, and removing barriers to the City of Tulsa's human rights complaint filing process.
- Increase diverse representation and equitable recruitment practices across all City of Tulsa authorities, boards, and commissions.

JUNETEENTH



From "The First Juneteenth," as written by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History: "On June 19, 1865, nearly two years after President Abraham Lincoln emancipated enslaved Africans in America, Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas with news of freedom. More than 250,000 African Americans embraced freedom by executive decree in what became known as Juneteenth or Freedom Day. With the principles of self-determination, citizenship, and democracy magnifying their hopes and dreams, those Texans held fast to the promise of true liberty for all."

We celebrate Juneteenth this month and continue to fight for the liberation of *all* Black Americans.

GREATER TULSA AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

August 2025

Next Meeting
8/12/25

6 p.m.

City Hall

Room 10 North

TITLE V COMMISSIONS RETREAT

On July 25, members of GTAAAC, along with commissioners of all of the Title V Commissions (Asian Affairs, Hispanic / Latinx Affairs, Human Rights, Indian Affairs, & Tulsa Women's) gathered for the first ever Title V Commissions Retreat. Commissioners attended sessions about different organizations doing civic work in Tulsa. They also determined ways to collaborate to continue the work of making Tulsa a great city.

Pictured left to right: Commissioners Juddie Williams, Tracye Love Chandler (bottom), Margaret Love, Tamecca Rogers (Human Rights), Maybelle Wallace, Dion'trae Hayes (top, Chief Resilience Officer), Donald Rose (below), and Larissa McNeil (far right).



COMMITTEE UPDATES - A RECAP

In the past year, but especially in the last seven months, members of GTAAAC have worked diligently to grow the goals and purpose of the commission. Here's a recap of committee accomplishments so far and what's next on the horizon.

CHAIR

Current Chair, Dr. Dickens, created a five year plan for the commission, the purpose of which is to offer some guidance over the next few years. Some of those Year 1 action items that have been accomplished are:

- Hard name badges for commissioners
- "Go Green for Greenwood" proclamation, spearheaded by Commissioner Tony Williams
- Informative guest speakers at meetings each month
- **Create committees to drive the work of this commission**

This last achievement - creating committees to drive the work of the commission - is the greatest accomplishment thus far, providing members with targeted spheres to work within to drive change and provide resources for the community. For the remainder of his tenure, Chair Dickens will ensure the commission is on track to accomplish year 2 goals.

POLICY

The policy committee determined their current focus - housing and infrastructure.

After a meeting with D.R. Horton earlier this year, the committee determined that this was an area in which they could align with Mayor Nichols' housing goals. Additionally, the committee has begun writing op-eds to share information with the community.

EDUCATION

The education committee hit the ground running. They have partnered with other education committees from Title V commissions to find greater ways to collaborate. Their goals focus on working with Tulsa Public Schools to understand and provide support for issues concerning literacy, chronic absenteeism, and family engagement.

Perhaps their greatest achievement is creating the Dr. LaVerne F. Wimberly Black Educators Excellence Awards, an award to celebrate Black teachers doing excellent work with schools and students.

CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

The culture and engagement committee has worked to create this monthly newsletter consistently to share what the committee is doing as well as events that are marketed towards members of the community.

Coming up, the committee is working to create a shared calendar that features local/community events and then use that as a guide to attend in order to table and share more information about the commission (outreach).

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The human rights commission has officially determined their goals for the foreseeable future and the committees that will support reaching those goals. The goals (and committees of similar names) include: 1) Improve access to the Department of Resilience and Equity's resources for community members and 2) Improve representation on authorities, board, and commissions.

AUGUST EVENTS

- 1: August First Friday - 6 p.m., Greenwood Ave., Living Arts District
- 2: Denim and Boots Event - 9:00 p.m., Greenwood Cultural Center
- 5: Community Back to School Bash - 5-7 p.m., OSU-Tulsa
- 8: Black Wall Street Bodega - 12-5 p.m., 108 N Greenwood Ave
- 9: Back to School Splash - 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Tulsa Dream Center West Campus
- 9: Back to School Lacy Park Block Party - 11 a.m.-2 p.m. - Lacy Park
- 9: Coffee, Cocoa, Cookies and Coloring - 1-2:30 p.m., Suburban Acres Library
- 9: Jazz on the Green - 6 p.m., Guthrie Green
- 11-14: Greenwood Film Festival
- 16: Bikers, Book Bags, & Back 2 School Supply Drive - 10 a.m. - Under I-244 Bridge on Greenwood
- 18: Back to School Hair - 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 7226 E 41st. S (Free hairstyles for kids)
- 22: Ego Tripping Performance - 8 p.m., Living Arts
- 23: End-of-Summer Sista' Chat Book Club - 1-2:30 p.m., Suburban Acres Library
- 31: Kids Cooking Master Class - 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mother Road Market



HISTORY CORNER

BLACK AUGUST



photo from Detroit Justice Center

From the *National Equity Project* article, written by Joseph Edelin:

"The birth of Black August was both intentional and organic, brought to life by incarcerated members of the Black power organization, the Black Guerilla Family, in San Quentin State Prison in August of 1979, following the killing of their founder and leader, George Jackson. Originally, Black August was used as time to reflect on, and honor the lives of incarcerated Black activists. Practitioners would celebrate during the month by studying revolutionary texts, fasting, exercising, and abstaining from drugs, alcohol, and mainstream media. Over time, the celebration has expanded to not only studying and bringing awareness to works by revolutionary authors, but to also engage in activism on behalf of incarcerated Black political prisoners and oppressed Black people around the world."

To read more about the history of Black August, read the entire article [here](#).

NEWSLETTER

GREATER TULSA AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

September 2025

Next Meeting: 9/9/25

EVENTS

- 1: Step Up to the Grill on Greenwood - Deep Greenwood, 11 a.m.
- 1: Jazz Night - Vintage Wine Bar
- 5: First Friday Art Crawl - Arts District, 6 p.m.
- 5: Spirits Art Exhibit - Vast Bank, 6 p.m.
- 6: It's An 80s Thang Cookout - O'Brien Park, 4 p.m.
- 13: Wompa Bazaar Indoor Night Market - Wompa, 5 p.m.
- 18: 918 Day Panel: I Love North Tulsa! - Rudisill Library, 4 p.m.
- 18: Mural Your Story - Martin Library, 4:30 p.m.
- 18: 918 Day Festival - Chapman Green, 5 p.m.
Drop by the GTAAAC table!
- 18: Entrepreneurship Panel - Central Library, 5:30 p.m.
- 18: 918 Day Fashion Show - Boxyard Rooftop, 6 p.m.
- 18: 918 Speakeasy: Tulsa's Hidden History - Hardesty Library, 6 p.m.
- 24: FACTivities Fun with Planets - Suburban Acres Library, 4 p.m.
- 25: Adult Book Fair - NEFF Brewing, 3 p.m.
- 25: Cooking for a Cause - Iron Gate, 6:30 p.m.
- 27: Verses Literacy Fundraiser - Central Library, 6 p.m.

CHAIR REPORT

Dr. Dickens, chair, led the commissioners through an initial step of networking action plan at the August commission meeting. The next step includes ongoing monthly follow ups with identified networks as commissioners begin to develop a Network Engagement Protocol that can help commissioners be better advocates for the community as liaisons with the mayor and City Councilors.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Black Educator Excellence Award will be on October 28th at 6 p.m. Nominations are now open!
Nominate your favorite educator [here](#).
Nominations close 9/7/2025.

CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The culture committee is scheduling outreach events! The group is working to determine which events the commission will attend to spread more information about GTAAAC. Be on the lookout for them - starting on 9/18 at the 918 Day Festival!

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The HRC created a letter to deliver to the city councilors in support of a human rights ordinance. This ordinance would unify the nondiscrimination protections in public accommodations and housing, specifically in regard to individuals that are veterans and/or members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. The ordinance was up for discussion at the City Council Urban and Economic Development committee meeting. Unfortunately, the ordinance will not be moving to vote at this time because of the lack of votes to pass the ordinance. The HRC will regroup to determine how to advance these human rights.



Commissioner Marquess Dennis, executive director of Birthright Living Legacy, is featured on the cover of this month's The Best Life - South Tulsa edition with his son. The article captures his story, his legacy, and the mission of Birthright.

POLICY COMMITTEE

At the August meeting, District 1 Councilwoman Vanessa Hall-Harper spoke about concerns involving the Greenwood Leadership Development Corporation (GLCDC) and the development of the Kirkpatrick Heights and Evans Fintube areas. Her cited concerns included lack of transparency and seating on GLCDC's board without community input - when the corporation had promised for consistent transparency and community collaboration. Councilor Hall-Harper has garnered support from local faith leaders and other community members, with the wish to have the land ownership transferred to Mayor Nichols' newly created Greenwood Trust. She has also asked for GTAAAC's support. The policy committee's priorities have shifted temporarily to learn more about this issue.

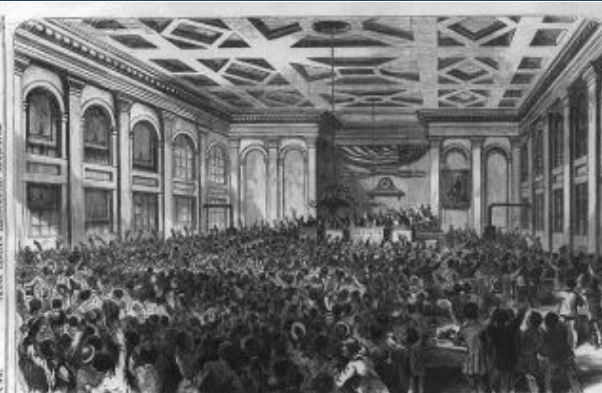


Photo: The 1872 National Convention of Colored Citizens, held during Reconstruction in New Orleans, La. Source: Library of Congress

HISTORY CORNER: National Negro Conventions Movement

On September 20, 1830, the first meeting of the "Colored Conventions Movement" was held, so named after a series of national meetings that were hosted from 1830 to the 1890s. These meetings were created after the Cincinnati Riots in 1829 pushed a free 16 year old from Baltimore named Hezekiel Grice to act. He reached out to Black organizations and other prominent Black leaders such as Bishop Richard Allen in Pennsylvania, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, to organize a convention to speak about issues plaguing the Black community. These organizations selected 40 representatives to meet in Philadelphia to address topics such as emancipation, education, and Black rights. After the Civil War, these numbers grew to continue the conversations on safety and Jim Crow, voting rights, derogatory representations, and other concerns. To learn more, check out the Zinn Education Project's website or click [here](#).

GREATER TULSA AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

HISTORY CORNER



The [Black Panther Party](#) was founded in October 1966 in Oakland, California, by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. It emerged as a revolutionary socialist organization aimed at combating police brutality and systemic racism in African American communities. Inspired by Malcolm X and the civil rights movement, the party quickly grew, advocating for self-defense, community empowerment, and social programs like free breakfast for children and health clinics.

Learn more about the Black Panther Party [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 3:** First Friday Art Crawl – Downtown Tulsa, 6 p.m.
- 3:** Lupe Fiasco Show – Tulsa State Fair, 7:30 p.m.
- 3:** Katt Williams Stand Up – BOK Center, 8 p.m.
- 4:** Harvest Feast Festival – Black Wall Street Market, 1 p.m.
- 11:** Black Moth Art Market – Black Moth, 9 a.m.
- 11:** OU/TX Day Party – Retro Grill & Bar, 1:30 p.m.
- 11-12:** Tulsa Pride – Dennis R Neill Equality Center
- 11:** Rapper's Delight Battle – Living Arts, 8 p.m.
- 14:** Brown Bag Book Discussion – Rudisill Library, 11 a.m.
- 18:** BooHaHa – Brookside Neighborhood, 9 a.m.
- 18, 19, 25, 26:** Theatre North Presents *Othello* – TPAC, Various Times
- 25:** Bowls Beats & Bingo Chilli Cookoff – Deep Greenwood, 2 p.m.
- 28:** North Tulsa Job Fair – 36th St. N Event Center, 11 a.m.
- 28:** GTAAAC Educator Awards – City Hall, 6 p.m.

CHAIR REPORT

Chair Dickens highlighted the Educator Awards, which will be held later this month.

He shared that the United Nigerian Association of Tulsa wants to contribute to GTAAAC and share Nigerian culture; he invited them to join the Culture and Engagement Committee.

He also allowed DJ Mercer, the Community Outreach and Engagement Manager with Justice for Greenwood, to share about an upcoming three-part genealogy workshop hosted at Rudisill Library. Dates are 9/25, 10/23, and 11/20 at 6 p.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Committee

The education committee received 10 nominations for the Educator Awards. The committee has already selected the Elementary and High School awardees. Middle School teacher nominations were still needed so the committee opened up the nominations for another two weeks. The Educator Awards will be hosted October 28 at 6 p.m. at City Hall.

Culture & Engagement Committee

The culture and engagement committee has created an email account. This email can be used for inquiries to the club, for a shared calendar featuring upcoming events with other commissioners, and to send out the newsletter to a larger audience.

The email is gtaaacculturecommittee@gmail.com.

Policy Committee

The policy committee shared their findings on the concerns raised by Councilor Hall-Harper about the Greenwood Legacy CDC. They interviewed individuals who would have knowledge of this issue to inform whether GTAAAC would sign the Councilor's letter.



Commissioner J. P. Ray was recently awarded the Outstanding Young Lawyer Award from the Oklahoma Bar Association.

Chairman Dickens wrote a letter and clarified that his proposed letter differs from Councilor Hall-Harper's and aims to support collaboration between the CDC and a trust.

A motion to approve Chairman Dickens's letter was made and seconded. The vote passed with 7 in favor, though some commissioners expressed reservations and a desire for further discussion.

(The committee's findings and Chair Dickens' letter can be found on the City of Tulsa website under "Commission Meeting Minutes".)

Human Rights Commission

The HRC welcomed new commissioner, Whitney Cipolla.

Chair Walker posed the question of whether adding a third goal – focused on educating councilors and Tulsans about human rights ordinances – would be beneficial. Many commissioners thought it could be added to existing goals. Chair Walker will come back with an action plan for the commission to review.

The question of how to truly support Tulsa's unhoused is still prevalent, especially with Governor Stitt's plans to move people from their encampments in what some feel is an overly-aggressive plan. The commission is actively having conversations about it.

CHAIR REPORT

The commission is made up of members from all parts of Tulsa, with experience in a number of sectors and skills in a number of areas. From educators and librarians, to lawyers and policy makers, to social workers and artists, there is great knowledge within the group. **Chair Dickens has asked commissioners to determine ways to leverage that expertise to strengthen the committee's work and impact.** He encouraged commissioners to actively seek out community partnerships to support the commission's work.



Meet the newest GTAAAC member, Ray'chel Wilson, a financial educator and consultant.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

As the years begins to close, GTAAAC is working on new ways to meet their goals. Leadership changes are forthcoming as the Chair and Vice-Chair's tenures are soon over.

- The **POLICY** committee is discussing action plans to be better positioned to respond to future community issues and bridge information gaps. One idea to support this is host a community engagement forum.
- The **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** committee is determining more ways to share this newsletter with the broader Tulsa community. Email the committee here to have your name added to the email list.
- The **EDUCATION** committee hosted their second annual Black Educator Excellence Awards on 10/28. They are currently working on an op-ed discussing TPS's issues with chronic absenteeism.
- The **HUMAN RIGHTS** commission will host their Annual Humanitarian of the Year Award on 12/11 at 6 p.m. This year's recipients include GTAAAC commissioner Maybelle Wallace and Indian Affairs commissioner Winnie Guess Perdue.

HISTORY CORNER: AFRICAN FREE SCHOOL

The New York African Free School was created in 1787 as part of the mission of the New York Manumission Society. It began as a single room schoolhouse with around forty students, children of both the free and enslaved. The children were taught reading, writing, math, and geography. The boys also studied subjects like astronomy, while the girls learned to sew and knit. It was one of, if not the first, school for Africans in the U.S.

- For more information, check the NY Historical Society [webpage](#).

EVENTS

11/1: Dia de los Muertos Arts Festival - Living Arts, 11 a.m.

11/1: African Market Oklahoma - Historic Big 10 Ballroom, 12 p.m.

11/5: Midweek Market Karaoke Night w/Mr. Greenwood - Chapman Green, 5:30 p.m.

11/5: Annual Eddie Faye Gates Program feat. Stephen Towns - TU Lorton Performance Center, 7 p.m.

11/7-8: Genealogy Workshop - Virtual, 10 a.m.

11/8: Oklahoma Fatherhood Summit - NSU Broken Arrow, 8:30 a.m.

11/8: College Bound Workshop - Parent Resource Center, 10 a.m. (Register by 11/1 to be entered for prizes)

11/15: The Magic of Motown - TPAC, 7:30 p.m.

11/20: JHF Dinner for Reconciliation - Greenwood Cultural Center, 7 p.m.

11/22: Native Christmas Market - Jenks Riverwalk Terrace, 1 p.m.

11/27: HAPPY THANKSGIVING

11/29: Park Pop Out - Cheyenne Park, 4 p.m. 11/8:

