



**CULTURAL ARTS COALITION'S**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

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**2021/  
2022**



**AMBASSADORS AT GLEN SPRINGS!**

# CAC'S OFFICE HAS REOPENED!

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The office of Cultural Arts Coalition re-opened in February 2022, Monday through Thursday, with office hours from 1pm to 6pm. We welcome our new Office Manager, Blessing McKinney!



**Blessing McKinney**  
Office Manager, CAC

Blessing has been a part of CAC since her elementary days. She was a member of our first Science Club. While in high school, she was an Environmental Ambassador and worked as an intern in our Science club. She is presently attending Santa Fe College as she fulfills her responsibilities as CAC's Office Manager.

## THE SCIENCE BUS

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Science Bus visits were led by Marvin Wilson, our Science Program Director.



The Science bus visited Howard Bishop's STEM Night, Saint Barbara Leadership Institute, Caring and Sharing Learning School, Cone Park Branch Library, and Kids Count @ Duval.

In March 2022, CAC hosted a science event in Hawthorne, Florida. Special attendees who volunteered were Dr. Broadie, the President of Santa Fe College, Dr. Michael Bowie of UF's Veterinarian School, John Nix from SBAC, and Alberto Lopez from the Florida Museum of Natural History. They all joined the Science Bus at Hawthorne's Shell Elementary School.







## THE SCIENCE PROGRAM

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During 2021-2022, our Science clubs served 2nd through 5th graders at Caring and Sharing Learning School, Cone Park Branch Library, Greater Duval, Kids Count, Resilience Charter school, and George Washington Carver Science Club.

The garden at George Washington Carver Science club was, again, used to not only grow food and herbs but also utilized as a science laboratory. The kids measured the size of worms in their compost bin, harvested food they prepared, they used herbs grown to make teas and salves. They also visited UF's Field & Fork program as well as "Grow hub," where they were given plants to take home. They also visited local parks such as Sweetwater Wetlands, Devil's Millhopper, and Depot Park.

The kids of George Washington Carver went on a field trip to Jacksonville's Kingsley Plantation, they learned about the history of Butler Beach, then they enjoyed a few hours of playing in the ocean afterwards.



Organizations who volunteered were The Florida Museum of Natural History, Harns Museum, Working Food, UF's Natural Resources Diversity Initiative, UF's Biomedical Sciences, Dream Team Engineering, UF's Arctic Hydrology group, Solar Gators and more. A special thanks to the individual volunteers such as Mary Bahr, Jackie Davis and Mary Fukuyama, Amanda Hipps, Randi Cameon, Alishia McDonald, Chris Discenza, and Dr. Anthony Greene.

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## 5TH AVENUE ARTS FESTIVAL

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New Site Alert: The 42nd Annual 5th Ave Arts Festival had its debut at the Santa Fe College - Blount Hall. This was our first in-person festival since the pandemic and it was well attended. This year's theme was "Be the Light that Guides the Future." The Festival was kicked off by a reception at the A.

Quinn Jones Museum, hosted by Delta Sigma Theta Inc. and Omega Psi Phi Inc.

There were more than 75 vendors and the stage had performances each day. Carol Richardson joined our team this year and brought her energy and expertise in coordinating entertainment alongside Lynne Young who traveled from Atlanta serving as Stage Manager for more than three

decades. Sponsors included; Santa Fe College, Rastafarice, Abroncee Martin Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area, Delta Sigma Theta, Children's Trust of Alachua County, SPARC 352, Visit Gainesville, and Omega Psi Phi.





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## ENVIRONMENTAL AMBASSADORS

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The Environmental Ambassadors conducted its 32nd year of summer programming. Students looked closely into water, food and energy issues, and spoke with elected officials about these issues. While visiting the Supervisor of Elections, two of our Ambassadors registered to vote.

Field Trips included two springs: Silver Glen and Salt Springs, kayaking on the Matanzas River, a boat tour along the Silver River, a tour of Gainesville's local lakes and creeks leading to the aquifer sink at Payne's Prairie.

They toured three local farms: Siembra farm, John Nix's farm , and also Butler farm. They also toured and observed the abundance of grocery stores in West Gainesville and the food desert in East Gainesville. They attended a community meeting in historic Porter's Community concerning Housing.

On July 29th, the ambassadors hosted an Inter-generational discussion on Climate change. The event was held at the Thomas Center with Wendell Porter, Nancy Deren, Isaac Auspurg from Young Leaders of Wild Florida, and Evie Baxter who served as Panelists for this event discussion. The event ended with a fantastic dance routine by ambassadors, Evie Baxter and Antonio Brockington, and a climate-change "chant" delivered by ambassador, Cam'ron Reese.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

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I visited Ghana and talked about CAC programs. Kwanzaa, this year, was done over zoom. Participants were from North Carolina, Atlanta, Tanzania, Tampa, and Gainesville. Cultural Arts Coalition is a sponsor of "Green Jobs Pipeline," scheduled for October 31st at Santa Fe-Blount Hall at 10am to 2pm. In response of the increase in Teen violence, CAC convened a group from across Alachua County. These included youth and adult leaders. Judge Gloria Walker inducted students and adults into our Youth Activities Advisory Council.



We once again celebrated Earth Day at Caring and Sharing, Mayor Poe and Merrihelen Wheeler, County Commission Chair, read proclamations. Tom Kay brought trees from Alachua County Conservation Trust that students planted. Students danced, sung songs, and recited poetry.

Cultural Arts Coalition was one of the sponsors of the Celebration of Caring and Sharing earning an "A". Even though they are a charter school, they are the only school in East Gainesville/Alachua County to earn higher than a "C". We celebrated the students, staff, and all those who have supported and contributed to this school's success. Along with hosting 2 science Clubs at this school, CAC had the Science Bus out there three times during the school year.

# WILHELMINA JOHNSON CENTER EVENTS

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Activities at the Wilhelmina Johnson Center have included; dance classes, yoga, birthday parties, community meetings, retirement parties, repast, African celebration, and baby showers.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS

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Our new Board Members are: Keturah Acevedo, Yvette Clarke, and Latora DeSue. Dr Anthony Greene has resigned after serving the CAC organization for more than three decades as a volunteer and board member. Our New Chair is Alishia McDonald, a private attorney and a member of Gainesville's "Smooth Flava Dance."

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### PARTNERSHIPS

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- Children's Trust of Alachua County
- Lydia B. Stokes Foundation
- Mike & Leslie May
- Daffyd Jones fund
- Visit Gainesville
- Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area

### OUR TEAM

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Alishia McDonald | *President*  
Yvette Clarke | *Vice President*  
Roberta Gastmeyer | *Treasurer*  
Keturah Acevedo | *Board Member*  
Barbara Gordon | *Board Member*  
Latora DeSue | *Board Member*  
Nkwanda Jah | *Executive Director*  
Marvin Wilson Jr. | *Science Program Director*  
Carol Mosley | *Bookkeeping*  
Blessing McKinney | *Office Manager*  
Cynthia Gainey | *Transportation*