



■ 45th Annual Cross Cultural Conference

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Action Council Newsletter

■ APRIL 2024

■ ANNUAL EDITION

Message From the **THE PRESIDENT**



James Starnes, Action Council President

Thank you for reviewing the 2023 Annual Edition of our newsletter. I am honored to serve as President of The Action Council and lead our effort to advocate for diversity and inclusivity at this crucial time in our history. We are proud that we were able to return to Greenville, the site of the first conference and hold a successful conference this year. We appreciate the support of everyone who helped to make the conference a success and planning for the 2024 conference is being finalized as I greet you. Please join us.

As we bid farewell to 2023, we do so with mixed emotions. The COVID pandemic has subsided, but political and racial divisiveness continues to occupy center stage as multitudes of desperate peoples cross our border only to be further marginalized. Intentionally inflicted death and destruction is spreading around the globe. Against this backdrop we must continue to be

unmovable in our efforts to protect and enhance the dignity of all providers and consumers of human services.

With great sadness we note the passing of Mrs. Betty Corbitt, the lady behind the dreamer whose legacy we strive to preserve.



From the Editor's Desk **ERNEST SHAW, LMSW**

Thank you for reviewing the 2023 Annual Edition of our newsletter. I am honored to serve as editor, and I strive to make each edition informative and accurate. I appreciate the opportunity to continue indulging in my passion to document the rich history of the Action Council and the Cross-Cultural Conference. In this edition you will find summaries and highlights of the activities of our members and our organization as well as stories about topics relevant to our mission.

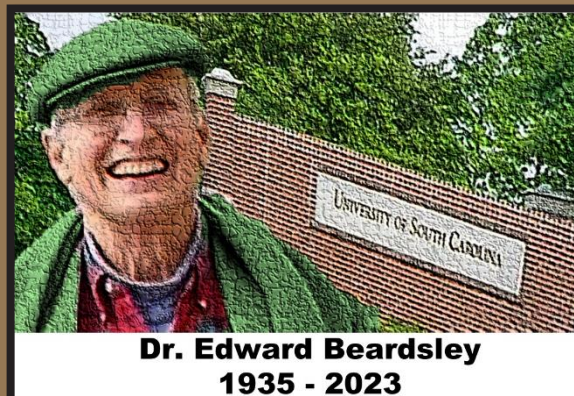
Please review what is written and help me improve the quality of the newsletter by sending stories of interest for future editions. Let us know about your lives, the triumphs, and the losses. Give me the name or an event and I will try to tell you a story.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of The Action Council.

The Professor Who Lived and Wrote the Story

Ernest Shaw, LMSW

Dr. Edward Beardsley died on August 13, 2023, in Virginia. Born in Florida, Beardsley earned a Ph. D at the University of Wisconsin. He taught history at USC from 1966 to 1998 but did so much more. After observing racial inequality around him he joined the struggle for equality. Beardsley served as president of the SC Council for Human Rights and taught classes at historically Black Benedict College and Allen University and created a stir among his neighbors by inviting Black students to his home in the late 1960s.

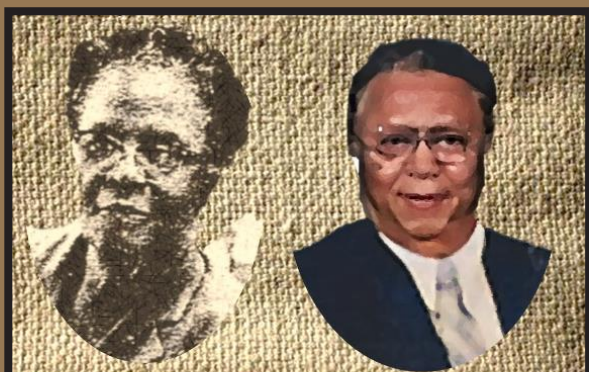


**Dr. Edward Beardsley
1935 - 2023**

During the “white flight” to private schools his children attended public schools and he was an active member and leader of PTAs and booster clubs. Flip through the pages of the AC Flora High School yearbook from 40 years ago and you will see photos of smiling Beardsleys.

Beardsley also wrote *A History of Neglect. Health Care of Blacks and Mill Workers in the 20th Century South*. President Starnes sent this editor an excerpt of his writing about Ranzy Stinson Weston, a Black doctor who had connections to the communities that produced our founder, Dr. Corbitt and President Starnes.

Weston attended Columbia’s public schools before moving to New York while his mother studied at New York University and graduated from DeWitt Clinton High School. His mother Annie Belle was born in 1893, in Calhoun County, SC where there were no high schools for Blacks. In 1912 she came to Columbia to Benedict to attend high school and eventually earned a bachelor’s degree. She married English Weston, a widower from Hopkins, SC who had three children. They added sons, Ranzy in 1921 and Paul in 1922. She earned a Master’s degree in New York and returned South and taught at Waverly Graded School in Columbia, Georgia State, and SC State College before returning to Benedict where she taught for 35 years before retiring in 1963.



**Dr. Annie Weston
1893 - 1968**

**Dr. Ranzy S. Weston
1921- 2008**

In 1944 South Carolina was a one-party state and Blacks excluded from the Democratic Party formed the Progressive Democratic Party. Dr. Annie Weston was elected State Secretary of the Progressive Democratic Party in 1946 and helped to register Black voter and advocated for women in politics. Like Dr. Beardsley, she was a member of the SC Council on Human Relations. She was the first Black female from SC to attend the Democratic National Convention. Dr. Weston traveled extensively lecturing on politics and race and President Truman appointed her to the National Committee for the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth. She died in 1968, in Columbia at the age of seventy-four.

The Weston’s younger son Paul was born in Columbia and grew up in Harlem, NY. He graduated from Dewitt Clinton High School and attended Morehouse College on a full academic scholarship earning a BS degree. Paul planned to become a dentist, but a white minister urged him to become a medical doctor instead. At that time Meharry in Nashville and Howard in Washington, DC were the only medical school options for aspiring black doctors. Weston chose Howard Medical School and studied under Dr. Charles Drew, the developer of methods to preserve blood plasma. After graduating, he opened a practice in Gaffney, SC. where he was forced to refer his patients to white surgeons who refused his offer to assist with his own patients.

He decided to become a surgeon and returned to Washington, DC to train and after graduating was recruited by Emory University Hospital but chose to work in Augusta, GA, closer to his family in Columbia. In 1952 and 1953 he became the first Black physician appointed to any public teaching hospital in Georgia and any private hospital in Augusta. Dr. Weston was the co-founder and former medical director and clinician at the Margaret J. Weston Health Center.

Dr. Weston was the first Black chairman of the Aiken County Democratic Party. He died in 2009, after practicing medicine for over 55 years. Funeral Services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Sam Davis, the Convocation Speaker at our 2014 Conference who presented a workshop titled “Addressing and Sustaining Resources for Faith-Based Organizations.” He also teamed up with Sue Berkowitz of the SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center and Lieutenant Governor Glenn McConnell as panelist for a plenary.

Meanwhile Ranzy Stinson Weston continued his education at SC State where he played basketball. He spent three years in the army during WWII and afterward returned to Orangeburg to earn a B.S. degree from SC State before completing his medical studies in 1952 at Howard. He married the former Frances Brown, and they had nine children. In 1953, he opened a family medicine practice in Aiken. As Beardsley wrote, Weston sought to join the Aiken County hospital staff fully expecting to be rejected because of his race. However, he was told to apply and that he would be appointed if qualified because the hospital received Hill-Burton funds and could not discriminate based on race. Pressure from funding agencies should not be underestimated as a force for change then and now. He practiced in Aiken for several years before moving to Augusta where he practiced until 1992.

Senator Ernest Hollings wrote of Dr. Beardsley’s work “His immediate focus is on health care practices, but his study illuminates the entire social and political landscape...”

Dr. Ranzy Stinson Weston died in 2008, in Augusta. He was survived by seven of his children including, Dr. Andolyn B. Harrison of Grambling, LA, Dr. Denise W. Smith Kennedy of Augusta, Georgia, and Dr. Danly P. Weston who is a dentist in Oxen Hill, MD.

South Carolina Courts Mental Health Summit

In 1971 the “War on Drugs” was initiated dramatically increasing the number of drug offenders behind bars. In 1972 the term “criminalization of the mentally ill” was coined to describe the increasing rate of incarceration of mentally ill individuals. The National Alliance on Mental Illness estimates that between 25% and 40% of all mentally ill Americans will be incarcerated at some point in their lives compared to about 6.6% of the general population. Despite these alarming conditions the correctional system has often failed to provide even minimally appropriate mental health services for many inmates.

We did learn of one ray of hope amid this gloomy news. On October 30, 2023, judges, law enforcement, advocates and others met in Columbia to discuss mental health and the criminal justice system when The SC Judicial Department hosted the SC Courts Mental Health Summit. The goal of the summit was to improve the way we respond to individuals with mental illness before they end up in prison and while they are incarcerated. This has long been a goal for our organization, and we have addressed this issue in conferences.

This is What the 2023 Conference Looked Like!

The 45th Annual Cross-Cultural Conference was held from February 23 to 26, 2023 in Greenville, the site of the first conference. Our goal was to offer a positive experience to everyone in attendance by providing high quality training. The Planning Committee, led by Ms. Livingston, should be commended for their outstanding work in assembling a faculty of presenters representing great diversity in all its characteristics. We are indebted to the individual presenters and the agencies and organizations that they represent for generously providing us with a wealth of enlightening information.

THIS IS HOW WE DID!

45TH ANNUAL CROSS CULTURAL CONFERENCE

The 2023 Conference Faculty

2023 Overall Conference Evaluation

	2018	2019	2020	2023
Educational Value of Conference	3.96	3.8	3.9	3.8
General Sessions	3.88	3.75	3.83	3.75
Concurrent Sessions	3.91	3.83	3.84	3.74
Roundtable Discussions	3.82	3.5	3.73	3.74
Extent Workshops were as stated	3.88	3.75	3.68	3.65
Average:	3.89	3.72	3.8	3.74

	Yes	No	Maybe
Personal goals and objectives met during the conference?	68	1*	0
Plan to attend the conference next year	50	0	15**
Action Council Member	21	43***	

* (Somewhat)
 ** (1 person said they would attend if employer paid)
 *** (1 expressed interest and one promised to join)

Welcome Back to Greenville

The 2023 Conference Faculty

COMMITTEE OF ELITE PLANNERS

The content of the conference was divided into the usual categories including the Pre- Conference Workshops, Student Academy, Opening Address, Presidents Luncheon, Otis A Corbit Luncheon, Closing Address and Concurrent Workshops.



PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS
JESSICA BARNES
SAFE TALK

Did a great job presenting the information and engaging class. Very relevant. Loved it. Thanks!

Will help me approach suicide prevention very differently.



Preconference workshops were presented by JESSICA BARNES from SCDMH Office of Suicide Prevention. (See box for comments.)

The Student Academy featured Mary R. Rawls, PH. D, Lashia Bowers Ph.D., LPC, and Bodequia Simon, LMSW. Dr. Hollis and her planning committee should be commended for their work.



2023 CCC STUDENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Julisa Tindall Student, USC

Tiffany Hollis, Ph.D.

Barbara Ballard-Belton, MSW

2023 STUDENT ACADEMY
 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2023

BUILDING BRIDGES OF HOPE: HEALING, OPPORTUNITY, PROGRAMMING, AND EMPOWERMENT

Tiffany Hollis, Ph.D.

Bodequia Simon, LMSW

Mary Rawls, Ph.D.

Lashia Bowers, Ph.D.

Jamaya Binns

They presented workshops dealing with topics such as racial trauma, Black Girls in Social Work and Gender Dysphoria in Youth. The presentations were described as “engaging and insightful,” “real and a safe,” and “raw and relatable.” However, attendees most often noted the word “Passion.”

Domenico Ruggerio, Director of We Are Family moderated a spirited discussion featuring panelists Alandria Mustafa, Sarah Harbin-Coleman, Chris Buie, Chandler Massingale, and Eric Sullivan.

TRANSGENER HEALTH SERVICES: A HOLISTIC APPROACH



Demenico Ruggerio Moderator

Alandria Mustafa

Sarah Harvin-Coleman

Meg Goettsches

Chris Buie

Eric Sullivan


Chandler Massingale

Important discussion for all to hear. Good balance of conversations. Was afraid there were too many on panel.

Thanks for your vulnerability and shearing your experiences.


More of these please!

The Opening Plenary was presented by Dr. Stephen McLeod-Bryant of the Department: Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine while Kelley Holladay, Ph.D., LMHC, LPCC, MAC, NCC, CCC, QS. Of Holliday Counseling Services was the Otis A. Corbitt Luncheon Speaker. The President’s Luncheon Speaker was Mike Young, MA CHW PhD (ABD) of Everyday Life Consulting and the Closing Plenary Speaker was Dr. Jack Emmel of Waypoint Recovery Center. (See Box for Comments.)



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI


OPENING PLENARY
STEPHEN MCLEOD BRYANT, MD
 Steve is excellent as usual. What a way to open a conference remotely. Feel better soon. 😊




OTIS A. CORBITT LUNCHEON
KELLEY R. HOLLADAY, PHD.

Cyber Sexual Assault
 Very well done and much needed information. Appreciate your gentle approach to a serious subject. Need to discuss again next year...

JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY





PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON
MIKE YOUNG, MA, CHW
 The presentation itself was fantastic. I wish it could be provided at my school.


Arnold School of Public Health
UNIVERSITY OF South Carolina

Great job. Have him back. Best presentation of day.

CLOSING PLENARY

Informative and entertaining. Wish Dr. Emmel would present this to congress.

Superlative presenter and educates and entertain as well. Dr. Emmel needs to return.



JACK EMMEL, MD
Waypoint Recovery Center

The Clinical Track sessions were presented by Nakisha Randolph, LMFT; Edna Cogdell- Quick, Gina Duncan, MD; Megan Goettsches-LPC, and Michelle Evans, M.A. Trauma, unique mental health challenges currently facing African American women, resistance by clients, Miseducation of Anxiety in School Aged Children, and how different combinations of intersectional identities create barriers to substance use treatment were the topics covered. Ms. Randolph’s presentation was described as “Thought provoking! I could meet and discuss this MUCH MORE. Highly engaging and challenging to the mind.” Dr. Duncan’s offering was described as a very informative presentation that “touched a lot of issues that African American women face in society.” “This was an awesome presentation! Awesome speaker. Very engaging.” One attendee said of Ms. Quick’s presentation while another noted that Ms. Goettsches’ presentation was “Absolutely spot on. Need more of this.”

CLINICAL TRACK

MEG GOETTSCHES - LPC



MICHELLE EVANS, M.A.





NAKISHA RANDOLPH, LMFT



NICOLE QUICK, LPC



GINA DUNCAN, MD

The Policy Track presentations addressed Community Mental Health with Vulnerable People, Collaborative Approach to Transitioning Patients to the Community, provide best practices related to unique needs of LGBT clients in behavioral health services, Improving the Patient Service Experience through a Diversity Equity, and Inclusion, and Professional self-care.



Dr. Morgan was described as a Great presenter who gave an excellent presentation with Very helpful Excellent discussions! “Please bring her back. My favorite session so far!” another person added.

Dr. Hill’s presentation was described as “Very enjoyable. I loved all the discussion, interaction with the audience and sharing ideas. Fantastic presentation. Ms. Richardson, Ms. Evans & Ms. Baldwin combined to present a session described as “great.” One attendee noted “Learned a lot and was not aware of the program. This program needs to be shared” and another individual stated, “Amazing and should be brought to the state leaders and politicians!”

Dr. Nallo’s session was described as “fantastic.” One person noted “Really enjoyed the presentation, speaker, and the discussions.” Another wrote “Great information provided. Best engagement all conference! This was incredibly informative, and the discussion was helpful.”

Family/Community Track workshops were presented by Ms. Titman and McSloy, Dr. Cronyn, Mr. Wells, Ms. Wolford, Ms. Brock, and the editor of this newsletter.



Sarah Hopkins Titman, an instructor at Winthrop University School of Social Work along with Katie McSloy, a Winthrop student received high praise for their presentation on grief. Some of the comments included “Great presentation. Invite back next year.” “Excellent! This was helpful to me personally and professionally. Need more like this.” “Best presentation on grief! Engaging. Awesome presentation.” “Phenomenal session.” However, one attendee wrote “I just did not appreciate you saying “don’t you love students? Katie is more than just a “student.” She is way more than that!” This editor has seen Mrs. Titman, praise for Ms. McSloy’s work elsewhere.

Dr. Cronyn’s presentation was described as “Good information in a way that was easy to understand.” “Incredible presentation. Allowed great space for open conversations.”

Mr. Wells spoke about maintaining hope as a Helping Professional and his presentation was described as “Excellent and very helpful.” The editor of this publication earned a degree in history from Southern Connecticut State College before graduating from the University of Connecticut with a social work degree. Despite being described as a good social worker with a reputation of writing the “best social histories” during a 37-year career, “historian perpetrating as a social worker” might have been an apt description of this writer. In response to a presentation of “The Cross-Cultural Conference at 45” one attendee wrote “Lots of great information but took a long time to get to the history of the Action Council. Wonderful history lesson. Excellent!”

Charissa Wolford spoke about “Shame and Substance Use Disorders” and her effort was described as “Good information presented by a knowledgeable speaker. Charissa clearly cares about her work. Excellent presentation. Awesome presentation.” When the last words were spoken, cousins went their separate ways. All that was left was the task of examining each evaluation form to determine without a doubt how we did in 2023.

We believe the best indicator of the quality of our conference has always been the frank assessment of each presentation by the attendees who support us by paying the cost of registration and other expenses while taking time out of their busy schedules to attend and participate in our conference. In the words of Dr. Corbitt, “Our goal is to make each conference a mountaintop experience.”

Therefore, we ask each attendee to rate the quality of each presentation and presenter to arrive at a score on a 4.0 scale. We are then able to assign scores to each presentation as well as the entire conference. The overall score for the conference was 3.74 out of a possible 4.0 with several of the presentations achieving perfect scores. We commend all our presenters and the organizations that they represent.

Numerous comments were made regarding the presenters and their presentations, most being positive. Most of the negative comments were related to logistical areas such as scheduling, poor quality of food and the fact that many presenters used Power/point slides that could not be seen because of small print, and some did not provide handouts.

Justice O’Connor: Passing of a Legal Trailblazer

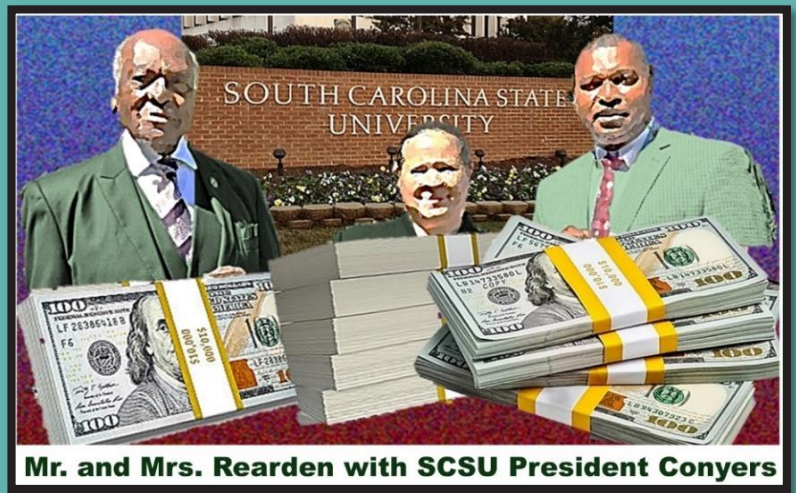


Trailblazer Sandra Day O’Connor of Arizona was the first female majority leader of any state legislature and the first appointed to the Arizona Court of Appeals. In 1981 President Reagan nominated O’Connor to the U.S. Supreme Court. She was confirmed unanimously becoming the first female justice and she served until 2006. In 2009 President Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Justice O’Connor died on December 1, 2023, at 93. She is recognized as a woman who opened doors for other women. Five other women: Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, Amy Coney Barrett and Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first African American have followed her to the court. We salute this trailblazer.

The Reardens: A Generous Couple

Mr. Harrison Rearden is the dean of our organization and board of directors with roots extending back to Edgefield County for many generations. He is a public servant who stood at the intersection of so much change for so long that his name is on his own interchange on a local highway. Harrison Rearden replaced civil rights leader I. Dequincy Newman as Executive Assistant to the Commissioner of the SC Department of Social Services in 1974. He served in several capacities before retiring as a Deputy Director in 2007. Leon Love, who once worked as a community organizer for Rev. Newman, was Rearden's colleague, and both were early supporters of our organization.

Recently this editor stumbled onto a bit of unsurprising news that Mr. Rearden and his wife Alethia had given one hundred thousand dollars to his alma mater, SC State University without announcing



Mr. and Mrs. Rearden with SCSU President Conyers

this news at one of our meetings or posting it on the big green Harrison Rearden Interchange sign on Highway 277 near Columbia. This gentleman was awarded the Order of the Palmetto, by Gov. Campbell, and the Order of the Silver Crescent by Gov. Hodges. Their generosity was appreciated by SC State's President Alexander Conyers and his students. We commend the Reardens for their selfless action that offers the hope that young people can make a journey such as the one taken by Mr. and Mrs. Rearden.

We Welcome Mandy and Amber to the Board



The board of directors of the Action Council is charged with directing the activities of our organization in accordance with our by-laws and all applicable laws. Throughout our history we have been fortunate to find talented and resolute individuals to serve on our board. Many of these individuals are employed and are responsible for the operations of agencies and programs. We are grateful to the board members and the organizations they represent. It is a challenge to serve on our board because board members perform many of the functions of our organization.

We welcome our newest members, Ms. Mandy Holloran and Ms. Amber Lange, who joined us before the 2023 conference and played integral roles in our success.

However, we would like to officially introduce them. Amber is a native of Illinois. She earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and came south to earn a Master's degree Public Administration and a PhD in Educational Leadership from Clemson University. Amber worked at American University in Washington, DC before returning to Clemson to run the Emerging Scholars Program. Amber presented details of her program at the 2013 conference.

The Emerging Scholars Program is working with rural students of color along South Carolina's I-95 Corridor to expose underrepresented students to higher education. Amber has been successful in raising millions of dollars of private funding for the program. She is currently the Executive Director of College Preparation and Outreach at Clemson.

Amanda (Mandy) Holloran graduated from Spring Valley High School in Columbia and the University of South Carolina with a degree in interdisciplinary studies. She is also a graduate of the SC Diversity

Leaders Institute from the Riley Institute at Furman University and a founding member of non-profit SC Women in Leadership. She is the former Director of Operations for National Alliance on Mental Illness Mid-Carolina.

Mandy is Director of Public Health and Disability at Able South Carolina, an organization established to be run and operated by people with disabilities. Mandy is responsible for evaluating, developing, & implementing public health programs in South Carolina to ensure that people with disabilities have equitable access. Former Columbia College President Dr. Linda Salane who served briefly on our board also served as a board member at Able SC.



Men Need Not Sign A Dollar

Examine that new five dollar bill or the new one dollar bill in your wallet. Look at the signatures of the Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Treasurer Chief Lynn Malerba. Released last year, these bills are the first in our country's long history to feature the signatures of two women. These new bills are the manifestation of the continued progress for women in our country. Anyone interested in diversity and inclusion should note the significance of this moment and the journey made by women.

Only reluctantly women were let into certain sectors of American life while the men were away fighting. The first women were hired by the Treasury at the start of the Revolutionary War to weigh coins and file down any that were too heavy. During the Civil War Jennie Douglas was hired to trim paper money reportedly because the Secretary of the Treasury felt that women were naturally good with scissors, and only needed to be paid half as much as men. Congress did not pass a law allowing women to be paid equal to men, until 1870 but few were. Sophia Holmes' husband, an ex-slave died early in the Civil War. Influential figures got her a cleaning job at the Treasury making her the first Black female US government employee. While cleaning she uncovered and reported a plot to steal a vast sum of the department's money. She received an official commendation from President Lincoln and a lifetime executive appointment as a messenger for the Department and she worked for 32 years under nine different administrations.

The first female director of the U.S. Mint Nellie Ross was appointed in 1933. In 1949, Georgia Clark became the first female treasurer and Romana Acosta Bañuelos became the first Hispanic treasurer in 1971. In 1977 Azie Morton became the only Black to hold the position. In 2021 Janet Yellen became the

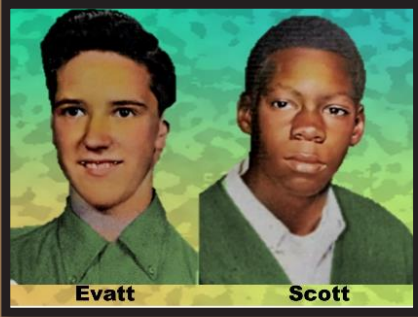


first female Secretary of the Treasury and the only person to have led the White House Council of Economic Advisers, the Federal Reserve, and the Treasury Department.

President Biden appointed Marilynn Roberge Malerba to serve as Treasurer and she was sworn in late in 2022. She is a registered nurse with degrees from St. Joseph's College, the University of Connecticut, and Yale University who served as the Director of Cardiology and Pulmonary Services at a Connecticut hospital. Marilynn is also a member of the tribal nation of the Mohegan people. Their reservation is in Uncasville, Connecticut. Her Mohegan name is Mutáwi Mutáhash (Many Hearts). In 2010 she became chief of her tribe, the first female in the modern history of the Mohegans. Therefore, with Janet Yellen as Secretary of the Treasury and Chief Malerba as Treasurer, the new bills issued in 2023 are signed by two women for the first time in our history. At the unveiling of the bills Secretary Yellen said "We've made progress in providing greater economic opportunity for women at Treasury and in the economics profession. But we know that much more needs to be done," "I hope that today is a reminder of the road we've traveled on equity and inclusion. And I hope it motivates us to continue to move forward."

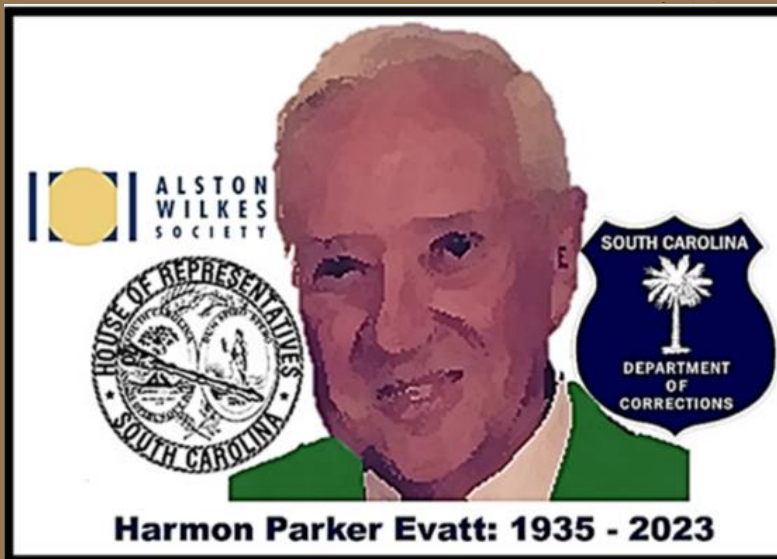
As we gather at the 46th Annual Cross-Cultural Conference to witness the excellence of our presenters and board members you are urged to look for signs of diversity and inclusivity in every facet of the conference.

The Passing of Public Servants



Harmon Parker Evatt was born in Greenville in 1935. He graduated from Greenville High School and the University of SC and became a leader in the United Methodist Church. Methodist ministers Eli Alston Wilkes, Jr., Eben Taylor, and others founded the SC Therapeutic Association in 1962 to help criminal offenders reintegrate back into society. When he died in 1963, Rev. Taylor, Rhett Jackson who served on the boards of SC Parole and Community Corrections and the Greater Columbia Community Relations Council, and Howard McClain who directed the SC Christian Action Council for 35 years ran the organization for a while and renamed it the Alston Wilkes Society.

The organization struggled so Evatt, a member of Rev. Taylor's church, took a pay cut to lead the Alston Wilkes Society. He explained his calling by saying that "Jesus cared about people who were sick and in prison and we should care too." Evatt served in the SC House of Representatives from 1975 to 1982, representing Richland County and continuing his work as an advocate. From 1987 to 1995, Evatt served as the director of the SC Department of Corrections. Some critics felt that an advocate for offenders could not be tough enough to run a prison system. Director Evatt was at the helm when this writer went to work for the agency. Prominent figures in our history such as Marjorie Hammock and others worked for Director Evatt. He died on December 15, 2023, at the age of eighty-eight.



John Lee Scott Jr. was born in 1953. He worked as a field representative for the Office of the Governor in 1975. Scott served on Richland County Council for several years. In 1990 he was elected to the SC House of Representative. In 2008, Kay Patterson who had served in the SC State Senate since 1985 retired and Representative Scott defeated Vince Ford in the Democratic primary and went on to win in the general election. Ford like Scott, was a friend of our organization. He died in December of 2022. Senator Scott served in the Senate until his death August 13, 2023. In 2018 he ran an unsuccessful race for Lieutenant governor and in 2019, Scott gave the Democratic response to the State of the State address.

Senator Scott led an effort that resulted in the SC General Assembly appropriating \$18 million in 2021 to develop educational institutes at the state's Historical Black Colleges and Universities, including SCSU where trumpeter Willie Bradley who performed at last year's conference has provided ample support.

We have lost two leaders who could be counted on to share their expertise when planners needed passionate individuals to serve on panels and directors forums.

Remembering Mrs. Carter: Mental Health Advocate



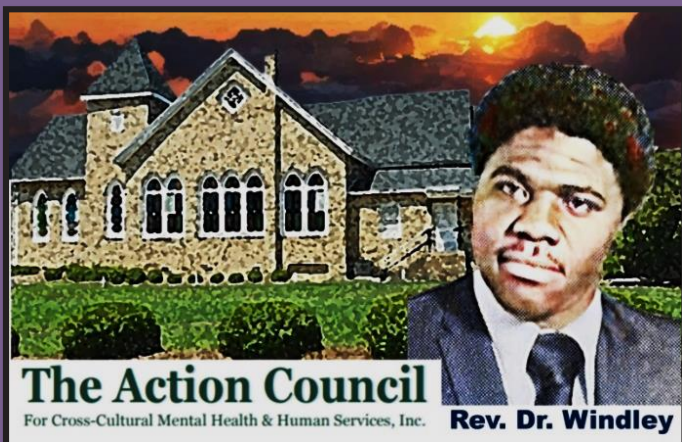
Eleanor Rosalynn Smith grew up in poverty in Plains, Georgia and graduated as valedictorian of Plains High School. She graduated from Georgia Southwestern College in 1946 and married Plains native Jimmy Carter who was serving in the US Naval Academy. He was elected Governor of Georgia in 1970 and Mrs. Carter decided to focus her attention on the field of mental health. Thirty years later her husband was elected President and Mrs. Carter served as

first Lady from 1977 to 1981 and she brought her passion to the White House.

Mrs. Carter brought her advocacy to our state. On September 20, 1979, she came to William S. Hall Psychiatric Institute to attend a meeting of the SC Mental Health Association. Years later a photo of Mrs. Carter could be seen prominently placed on a wall in The Community Cottage at William S. Hall Psychiatric Institute.

The Carter presidency is not highly regarded by many Americans because of the challenges he faced. Nevertheless, post-presidency, the Carters have been the most effective and faithful advocates of the causes that the Action Council has worked for throughout our history. For decades, the Carters continued their work with the homeless and the mentally ill. On November 19, 2023, Mrs. Carter died at the age of ninety-six. She is survived by her 99-year-old husband who left hospice care to attend her funeral. There can be no better examples of lives lived with purpose.

Rev. Dr. Windley Retires



George P. Windley was born in Conway and graduated from historic Whittemore High School. Whittemore was founded in 1870 as one of the first schools in Horry County for Black students and named for Benjamin Franklin Whittemore, a former Union army chaplain. After the Civil War he served as a Freedmen's Bureau educator, SC state senator, and U.S. Congressman. Whittemore merged with Conway High School and closed when the schools were desegregated in 1970. In last year's Conference Edition, we highlighted the lives of several of our board members with roots in Horry County.

Windley served in the navy during the Vietnam era. He returned home and prepared for the ministry by earning a

degree from Morris College in Sumter. He also did further studies at Colgate Divinity School in Rochester, NY. Rev. Windley served as a pastor for several churches and was the first Black Senior Chaplain at the S C Department of Corrections. In 1977 he was appointed Pastor of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in Manning. This church is steeped in history and had served as a meeting place for civil rights leaders plotting desegregation of Clarendon County schools. Rev. Lincoln Jenkins, father of Columbia attorney and civil rights leader Lincoln C. Jenkins was acting minister at Ebenezer in 1892-93. He died at the age of ninety-nine. Cohen Whitehead the last Reconstruction era postmaster in Kingstree was pastor of Nazareth Baptist Church on Lincoln Street in Columbia. In 1893 he became Pastor of Ebenezer.

In 1987 he and church and community leaders organized training for boys based on a manual designed by O'Neal Smalls, his childhood friend and fellow graduate of Whittemore High School. This training expanded over the years to include girls. For the past several years he has collaborated with Mr. Willie Bethune of the Action Council to sponsor annual summits for young people in his community. He and others at his church welcomed us with open arms. For his support of our organization and contributions to many community efforts he was presented the Grace Brooks Palmer Humanitarian Award at the 2016 Cross Cultural Conference. Rev. Dr. Windley retired as Pastor of Ebenezer at the beginning of 2023. We wish him a long and happy retirement with time out for his continued involvement with us.



**NO. 6 SOUTH CAROLINA 100,
NO. 10 NOTRE DAME 71**

A Couple of our old friends went to a ball game in Paris and did not tell the rest of us!



FACULTY FOR THE 2024 CONFERENCE



OPENING PLENARY
B. DaNino J. Fleming EdD

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