

### **CLAIRE EDWARDS, FARMVILLE | CHAIR**

With a background in design and a license in general contracting, Claire has a passion for historic preservation and excels in adaptive re-use tax credit restorations. Influenced by the beautiful urban landscape and historic architecture of her alma mater, The Savannah College of Art and Design, Claire is a passionate believer of downtown revitalization and economic development. Her design skills paired with programming, project management, and on-site commitment, yield cohesive, detailed, and beautiful restorations. Her process is well-illustrated on her social media platform (ig: [j\\_claire\\_edwards](#)) as she is an active voice for preservation and tells the story of the projects she works on- generating influence and understanding that new life can exist in historic structures. Claire helped lead the saving, redevelopment, and restoration of two important cornerstone buildings on Main Street in Farmville, NC that just a few years ago were slated for demolition. She now has worked on many upfits for new and existing businesses in her region and is eager to revitalize communities one storefront at a time. Claire loves being part of Preservation NC and looks forward to building more exciting relationships in the preservation industry and continues to learn from and play a role in preservation projects all over North Carolina.

### **MATT HOBBS | VICE CHAIR AND CHAIR-ELECT**

Matt Hobbs is a Director at Blue Heron Asset Management, LLC, a commercial real estate investment and development company based in Raleigh NC. Outside of this day job, Matt is a restoration carpenter and furniture maker. He has restored two Preservation North Carolina homes, including one in the Edenton Cotton Mill Village and his family's current home, the Crabtree Jones House in Raleigh. Matt serves as chairman of the board of the Self-Help Ventures Fund in Durham, NC, a leading non-profit community development financial organization. Matt received a BSE in Mechanical Engineering from Princeton University, an MA in Early American Culture from the University of Delaware/Winterthur Museum, and an MBA from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business.

### **LARKEN EGLESTON, CHARLOTTE | SECRETARY**

Larken Egleston is the Congressional District Director for U.S. Representative Jeff Jackson (NC-14). Egleston previously served two terms on the Charlotte City Council and represented Republic National Distributing Company as a brand ambassador for Western North Carolina. He has also written for local publications including the Charlotte Observer, Elevate Magazine and Creative Loafing. Egleston serves on the North Carolina advisory committee for the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, serves as an advisory board member for Central Piedmont Community College's Culinary Arts program, and serves on the board of directors for Preservation NC. He was previously the City of Charlotte's representative on the Centralina Regional Council as well as the NC League of Municipalities, was a volunteer firefighter for the Long Creek Volunteer Fire Department, a member of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Carolinas Chapter Board of Directors, and has served the local and state Democratic Party as President of the Mecklenburg County Young Democrats, a member of the State Executive Committee, and a local precinct chair. Egleston was also chair of the City Council's Charlotte International Cabinet and vice chair of the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. Egleston served as a delegate to the 2016 and 2020 Democratic National Conventions and has been named one of Charlotte's Top 30 Under 30 (2010) by Elevate Lifestyle, Top 40 Under 40 (2020) by the Charlotte Business Journal, and is a Hunt Institute State Policy Fellow as well as a Political Partner of the Truman Project. Larken received an associate degree from Johnson & Wales University and a bachelor's degree from Appalachian State University.

### **BILL SHERBERT, CHARLOTTE | TREASURER**

Bill Sherbert is the Managing Principal of Sherbert CPA, PC and is Chief Asset Manager for the Moxie Investment Funds. Mr. Sherbert has been providing tax, audit, and accounting services to real estate projects and contractors for over 20 years. In that timeframe, he has cost certified over \$3 billion of tax credit

transactions. In addition, Mr. Sherbert developed a best practices analysis technique to help clients to identify the most effective ways to finance and run their projects. This analysis has led to over \$10 million of cost and financial savings opportunities for his clients; his service and hard work has achieved numerous accolades from clients for superior service. Mr. Sherbert specializes in the audits of real estate projects, cost certifications, tax planning, and tax credit structuring. He performs extensive tax research for complex partnerships and tax credit tax issues. Moreover, he has performed hundreds of audits, tax returns, cost certifications, and compilations. Mr. Sherbert has also provided accounting advice for Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Historic Rehabilitation Real Estate projects. Prior to starting Sherbert CPA, PC, Mr. Sherbert was the Chief Financial Officer for a large contractor. The contractor was struggling when Mr. Sherbert took over the position; however, Mr. Sherbert was able to refinance the company's debt, streamline operations, and cut down on overhead, which took the company from annual losses to strong annual income. Mr. Sherbert passed the CPA exam in 1995, receiving an award for one of the 10 highest scores on the exam; he is licensed as a Certified Public Accountant in several states.

#### **TAMARA HOLMES BROTHERS, FAYETTEVILLE | AT-LARGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER**

Tamara Holmes Brothers, Ph.D. was appointed Deputy Director of the North Carolina Arts Council in April 2020. Dr. Brothers is charged with the design, development, and implementation of agency programs; recommends policies that realize the agency's mission of "arts for all people"; works with the staff and boards to create and implement strategic plans, and provides executive-level support to the agency's Director. Dr. Brothers leads the work of assessing the effectiveness of institutional equity, diversity goals, and outreach efforts. She works closely with the Department of Natural & Cultural Resources leadership and other state and national arts organizations to prioritize and define strategies that deliver resources to arts organizations and artists to encourage projects and programs of public value—including revitalizing downtowns, helping youth succeed through creative approaches to education in and beyond the classroom, healing the wounds of war for active military service members and veterans, and fueling a thriving non-profit creative sector. Dr. Brothers also organizes and assists in leading the infrastructure to facilitate internal and external community engagement, develop partnerships to bring about transformational change, identifying and supporting target areas to maximize the agency's impact locally, regionally, and nationally. Dr. Brothers has experience in the fine and performing arts industry, grassroots marketing, and governance in quantifying the value of brand and philanthropic outcomes. With a diverse background, she previously served as Director of Development & Major Gifts at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations as well as the Assistant Athletic Director for Development & Marketing at Fayetteville State University. Giving back to her community, Dr. Brothers has served in multiple capacities. She has served as the second African American female President of the West Fayetteville Rotary Club, Former Board Member for the Second Harvest Food Bank, and former Board Member of the NC Arts Council Foundation Board, Arts NC Board, the City of Fayetteville's (NC) Historic Resources Commission, the Partnership for Children of Cumberland County Board, Founding Steering Committee Member for the Friends of African & African American Art at the Fayetteville/Cumberland County Arts Council as well as the President of the Hampton University Museum Foundation Board. She currently serves as Vice-Chair of the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission, a member of the North Carolina National Register Advisory Council, the National Advisory Board for Museum Hue, the Advisory Council for the Fralin Museum of Art at the University of Virginia, and Preservation NC. Dr. Brothers is a native of Fayetteville, NC, and has earned a Bachelor's degree in Art from Hampton University, a Master's degree in Sport Management from West Virginia University, a certificate in Diversity & Inclusion from Cornell, a certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a certificate in Art as an Alternative Investment from Sotheby's Art Institute, a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Duke University, & a Ph.D. in Educational Management from Hampton University.

#### **VALERIE ANN JOHNSON, OXFORD | IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR**

Dr. Valerie Ann Johnson is the Director of Infrastructure and Development for the NC Environmental Justice Network. She was previously the Dean of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities and Professor of Sociology at Shaw

University in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she served as one of the Inaugural Co-Directors of Shaw University's Center for Racial and Social Justice. Previously, Dr. Johnson was the Mott Distinguished Professor of Women's Studies and Director of Africana Women's Studies at Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina. Dr. Johnson began her faculty career at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill as an Assistant Professor in African and Afro-American Studies and adjunct Assistant Professor in Anthropology. Dr. Johnson holds a Ph.D. in Medical Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley and San Francisco; M.A. in Sociology from Atlanta University (now Clark-Atlanta University); and B.A. in Sociology from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Her research, conducted in Costa Rica, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, the Seychelles Islands and the US, and publications, center on gender, bioethics, disability, the health of women and girls, environmental humanities, and environmental justice. In North Carolina, Dr. Johnson conducts research on both African American foodways and African American attitudes toward and experience with "nature spaces" with special emphasis on Black women's garden clubs. Her speaking engagements include this work as well as public commentary on the issue of confederate monuments on public lands. Dr. Johnson is co-editor with Dr. Lynn Harris on a published book about maritime archaeology and the slave-trade entitled, Excavating the Histories of Slave-Trade and Pirate Ships: Property, Plunder, and Loss. Dr. Johnson serves the state of North Carolina as chair of the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission and member of the North Carolina Historical Commission and National Register Advisory Committee. Other service includes membership on the boards of the Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville, Tennessee; NARAL Pro-Choice NC; North Carolina League of Conservation Voters, Preservation NC (as Vice-Chair), and planning committee for the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network Summit. In addition, Dr. Johnson has been appointed to the Executive Board for the North Carolina Maritime History Council. Dr. Johnson lives in Oxford, NC with her family.

#### **JASON ALLEN, RALEIGH**

Jason is a native of Greensboro and the owner of Allen Historic Restoration in Raleigh. He previously worked for 8 years as a civil engineer doing land development consulting. Jason earned his B.S. in civil engineering from NC State University and his associates degree in Historic Preservation Technology from Edgecombe Community College in Tarboro. He is a licensed engineer and contractor in North Carolina, with a particular interest in

preservation of rural areas and small towns. Jason lives in Raleigh with his wife and two kids. When he's not doing restoration work, he enjoys spending time outdoors hiking & camping.

#### **LESLIE BRIANS, SOUTHERN PINES**

Leslie Brians is board president and co-founder of The Pines Preservation Guild, a historic preservation non-profit in Moore County, NC. In this role, she works with municipalities, developers, the NC SHPO, and citizens on preservation legislation, tax credit programs, and property owner incentives. She presented on grassroots preservation advocacy at Preservation North Carolina's 2023 conference.

As a preservation and design professional, Leslie has conducted historic structures reports for public and private buildings in Moore County. In 2022, she co-led a team that helped Cameron, NC establish a preservation ordinance, Historic Preservation Commission, and Local Historic District. She has contributed to architectural inventories in Rocky Mount, NC and Wayne, Dublin, and Rutherford Counties.

Leslie has worked as a Preservation Planner for Richard Grubb and Associates since 2024. She holds a B.A. in Historic Preservation from the University of Mary Washington and a Master of Architecture from Texas A&M University. She received the 2025 Alexa Aycock Grassroots Leadership Award from Preservation North Carolina and was named 2016 Ft. Bragg Military Spouse of the Year.

She previously chaired the Southern Pines Historic District Commission and served as vice-chair of the Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission. A Virginia Beach, VA native and military spouse, Leslie spent 10 years in graphic design, branding, and web design while stationed worldwide. She and her husband are rehabilitating a 1951 Colonial Revival in Aberdeen, NC with their two daughters.

#### **AJ CASAVANT, WILMINGTON**

AJ Casavant, a North Carolina native, has been a leading figure in affordable housing development throughout the Southeast, currently managing a real estate portfolio of over \$80 million within his home state alone. His work with top firms such as Gilbane Development and the Related Companies has involved complex acquisitions and projects leveraging public-private financing tools like low-income housing tax credits, tax-exempt bonds, and project-based rental assistance—making quality, affordable housing a reality for these communities. In 2019, AJ founded The Federation Companies, a real estate development firm dedicated to preserving and creating affordable housing. Federation embodies AJ's commitment to building sustainable, community-centered developments. Before launching Federation, AJ played an integral role at Gilbane Development, supporting a \$1.1 billion development pipeline of affordable housing. AJ holds a Master's in Real Estate Finance from Georgetown University and a B.S. in Construction Management from East Carolina University's College of Engineering.

#### **JAMES GOODNIGHT, RALEIGH**

James Goodnight is a Raleigh native who graduated from UNC with a degree in history and psychology. In the past he has worked at SAS in various roles in finance and corporate real estate. Currently, he is a real estate developer with a focus on historical preservation and adaptive reuse. James has preserved numerous buildings in Raleigh, Wilmington and most recently Sanford, many utilizing tax credits. In Raleigh he renovated the Nehi Building and former Raleigh Industrial Bank, now known for Death and Taxes Restaurant. He has previously served six years on the board of Preservation NC. James lives in Raleigh with his wife Bernadette and children.

#### **LESTER LOWE, RALEIGH**

Lester Lowe has been working in the civil engineering consulting business for over 35 years. He is a lifelong North Carolinian having grown up in Wilson NC. He currently resides in Raleigh where he has lived since graduating from East Carolina with a MBA and NC State with a civil engineering degree. When not working, Lester enjoys spending most of his free time at the NC coast and watching his favorite college team play football and basketball and attending his favorite artists concerts. Having worked in many small communities across NC, Lester has seen firsthand the continued decline, demolition or abandonment of the older historic downtown buildings. This lead him to want to get involved with Preservation North Carolina. His hope is to get development projects that come to these communities to work with the local city governments to save these older structures that cannot ever be replaced.

#### **THOMAS MASSEY, CAROLINA BEACH**

Thomas Massey is the current board chair of the Bellamy Mansion Museum in Wilmington, a stewardship property of Preservation North Carolina. Thomas is Professor of History at Cape Fear Community College and served as the Department Chair of Social Sciences for five years before returning to the classroom last year. A native of Great Britain, Thomas earned a B.A. in History at the University of Wales, Swansea, and an M.A. in History at UNC-Wilmington. Thomas has served on the board of the Bellamy Mansion Museum for many years and prioritizes taking his students on field trips to the Mansion and the Slave Quarters each semester.

#### **JEFF MICHAEL, DAVIDSON**

Jeff Michael is Deputy Secretary for Natural Resources, managing the North Carolina Zoo, Division of State Parks and Recreation, NC Museum of Natural Sciences, North Carolina Aquariums, and Division of Land and

Water Stewardship. He was previously director of the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute since 2003. Prior to that, Michael was executive director of the Wildacres Leadership Initiative, a nonprofit focused on multiculturalism and collaborative leadership. He previously served as executive director of the Land Trust for Central North Carolina (now Three Rivers Land Trust) and the Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project (now Central Park NC). He has served on the boards of Morrow Mountain State Park Advisory Committee and Preservation North Carolina, among others. Jeff has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and master's in Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He also holds a J.D. from the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Law.

#### **NATALIE PASS MILLER, GREENSBORO**

Natalie Pass Miller is the owner of The Historic Magnolia House, a historic Green Book site that officially opened in January 2022 as a fully restored new boutique hotel and event space in Greensboro, NC. A cultural catalyst who has carried her skills and talent from the corporate world in change management and digital transformation to the nonprofit and hospitality sectors, Natalie founded The Historic Magnolia Foundation in 2018, which develops educational resources and programs dedicated to the preservation of Green Book history. Natalie oversaw the renovation and relaunch of The Historic Magnolia House while also serving as an advocate for public education about the history and impact of the Green Book and the African American Traveler. As a leader in preservation with a focus on historic African American sites, her priority is to reunite history with its communities through preservation, community engagement, the arts, and promoting S.T.E.A.M (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) fields. A Greensboro native and alumni of North Carolina A&T State University, her mission is fueled by her deeply rooted family heritage and the important contributions they have made in the history of the Triad.

#### **ANDRE' NABORS, RALEIGH**

Andre' Nabors has served as the Partner Relations Manager for the Visit North Carolina (formerly North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development) since 2010. Visit NC a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC), supporting sustainable efforts to market and promote the state's natural, historic and cultural resources for communities, non-profits, and tourism related entities to improve tourism product and visitation across North Carolina. In December of 2012, Tourism was charged to oversee the NC Certified Retirement Community Program to encourage retirees and those planning to retire to make their home in North Carolina. Andre manages that program Andre' formerly held a similar position with the West Virginia Division of Tourism 1999-2006, where he provided marketing, research, communications and other types of assistance to communities, attractions and CVBs throughout West Virginia. In that role, he worked to develop the state's first African-American Heritage Guide identifying cultural and historic attractions, as well as foster its Civil War Trail program. Andre' also worked on several projects such as Scenic Byways, Rail to Trails, National Coal Heritage Area, Freedom Trek II and III, Governor's Black History Month Kick-Off Program, and the Booker T. Washington Institute at WV State University. Before moving to North Carolina, Andre' was convention sales manager for the Charleston (W.V.) CVB, where he covered the markets of sports, military, group, fraternity and also managed the Charleston Sports Committee. He began his career in tourism in June 1992 with the West Virginia's Parkways Authority Welcome Centers as a travel counselor and manager. Andre' is a Tourism Marketing Professional (TMP) through the Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College program and has over 25 years of experience in the tourism industry. Andre' graduated from Concord University in Athens, WV and served on the Concord University Foundation Board of Directors for 12 years. Andre' also serves on the NC Folklife Institute Board of Directors, Civil War Trails Inc. Board and numerous advisory committees focused on heritage tourism and retiree attraction. He currently resides in Mebane, NC with wife Stacy, have 2 daughter's Malia (21), Morgan (26), son Deion (29) and now grandson Hendrix (14 months).

#### **PATRICK NERZ, CARRBORO**

Patrick Nerz joined DHIC in August 2021. DHIC is the Triangle's largest and most experienced non-profit affordable housing developer, having developed over 50 apartment communities and 4,000 units in North Carolina since its founding in 1974. In his role at DHIC, Patrick 1) identifies and evaluates potential opportunities for affordable housing communities, and 2) manages all aspects of development for secured projects, including building financial models, coordinating design and construction scopes, and facilitating debt and equity partnership. He currently leads projects in downtown Durham, Chapel

Hill, Holly Springs, and Southern Pines. Prior to joining DHIC, Patrick worked for Empire Properties, a Raleigh, NC historic tax credit development company. In his role at Empire Properties, he was responsible for analyzing development viability, leading historic tax credit projects from acquisition through historic rehabilitation, and leading financing efforts for new development and existing projects. Patrick holds a B.A. in history and political science from UNC-Chapel Hill and a Master of City and Regional Planning with a concentration in real estate development from UNC-Chapel Hill (where he was a teaching assistant for Myrick Howard).

#### **GRAY REED, HAMPSTEAD | VICE CHAIR**

Gray Reed retired in late 2021 after serving more than 38 years with Truist and predecessor BB&T. For the past 11 years, Gray led the small business, commercial, and middle market banking efforts for Truist as Triangle Region President, based out of Raleigh, NC. In retirement Gray and his wife Debbie are enjoying living an active lifestyle in coastal NC. They also enjoy travel and spending time with daughters Deborah, Caroline (Hunter), and grandson Reed, who all reside in the Triangle. Gray has been involved in leadership positions with numerous charitable organizations over many years and he and Debbie are very passionate Tarheels! Gray currently serves on the Board of the UNC Health Foundation and he is happy to be rejoining the Board of Preservation NC.

#### **DARIN WATERS, ROLEVILLE**

Dr. Darin Waters is Deputy Secretary for Office of Archives and History. He oversees the operations of the divisions of State History and Maritime Museums, State Historic Sites and Properties, Archives and Records, Historical Resources (including the State Historic Preservation Office, Office of Historical Research, and the Office of State Archaeology), and commissions (including Roanoke Island Festival Park and Tryon Palace), and Education and Outreach. He is also the secretary of the North Carolina Historical Commission and the State Historic Preservation Officer. Originally from Asheville, Waters was most recently an Associate Professor of History at UNC Asheville, and the Executive Director of UNCA's Office of Community Engagement. He previously held other teaching, research, and community engagement positions at UNCA, UNC-Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University. Early in his career he was an Adult Probation Parole Officer with the Department of Public Safety. Waters received a B.S. in Political Science and Government from Liberty University, a master's in History from North Carolina State University, and a PhD in History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has served on numerous non-profit and state boards, including the North Carolina Historical Commission and African American Heritage Commission.

#### **RAVEN WILLIAMS, CHARLOTTE**

A native of Virginia, Raven has lived in North Carolina for more than 20 years. Raven holds a Jenkins MBA from North Carolina State University, and a B.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her work in the financial and real estate industry includes portfolio management at Foss & Company where her primary focus was managing real estate investments held in proprietary Historic Tax Credit (HTC) equity funds. Raven has also worked in asset management for a leading tax credit syndicator, as well as with a development firm, both with a focus in Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). Before moving into asset management, she was a Senior Commercial Real Estate Underwriter.

#### **CHARLIE WILSON, DURHAM**

Charles T Wilson, III became the President of CT Wilson Construction Company in 2016. Charlie started in the field as a laborer early on in his life, spending summers working for the family business. Charlie received his Engineer in Training Certification after finishing his undergraduate studies at North Carolina State University in 1993. The following year, he completed his master's degree at the University of Texas at Austin, where he worked for a General Contractor specializing in medical facilities. In 1999, Charlie formally joined CT Wilson Construction. His current responsibilities include new client acquisition and managing existing client relationships. Under his leadership, CT Wilson has completed numerous historic preservation projects across North Carolina, including Revolution Mill, Mock Judson Mill, and Rocky Mount Mill.