

Working together to advance our region

Aiken | Allendale | Bamberg | Barnwell | Calhoun | Orangeburg

Update from the Executive Director

Happy Summer 2022,

As our region's students head back to school, we hope that y'all took time to relax, spend time with family and experience some of the places and events that the Lower Savannah Region and South Carolina have to offer.

This summer we had our annual "changing of the guard" with our board officers. First, we want to thank Barnwell Councilman David Kenner for his year of service as Chairman of the Board. Mr. Kenner was a wonderful servant – leader for the organization, moving us from the tail-end of the pandemic to a more "normal" footing. His time, attention, and leadership were greatly appreciated by the board, administration, and staff.

Second, we welcome Calhoun County Chairman James Haigler as our new Council Chairman for 2022 – 2023. Mr. Haigler was an active Vice-Chairman and we know that he will use that experience to navigate the challenges ahead. Assisting Chairman Haigler will be Vice-Chairman (and Orangeburg Mayor) Michael Butler and newly elected Council Treasurer Dr. Gerald Wright, Mayor of the City of Denmark. Please thank these board members for their service as they support the organization and the work that the Council does throughout the six-county Lower Savannah Region.

Best wishes,

Bill Molnar
Executive Director

Upcoming Committee Events

Visit www.lscog.org/events for details.

- Sept 5** | Labor Day
- Sept 8** | WDB Youth Committee Meeting
- Sept 8** | LSCOG Executive Committee Meeting
- Sept 21** | TRC for the LSRHC
- Sept 27** | WDB Disability Committee
- Oct 4** | Workforce Development Board
- Oct 13** | LSCOG Board of Directors' Meeting
- Oct 26** | Transportation TAC Meeting

Administration

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) – Wednesday, June 15

Members of our LSCOG Staff wore purple to help shed light on the impact of elder abuse.

Elder abuse takes on many forms such as financial, emotional, physical, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation. It is estimated that approximately 1 in every 10 elderly Americans are suffering abuse.



We wear purple because we want to challenge ageist views and shed a light on the impact of elder abuse. #WEAAD

From left to right: Alanna Berrie, Christine Chandler, Dr. William Molnar, Mary Williams, Emory Langston, Veronica Williams, Valerie Carter, Susan Garen, Dorothy Faust, Mary Ann Keisler, Gwen Winkler, Brenda Holman, and Theresa Hipps

Donations for the Salvation Army

The LSCOG Staff came together to donate 25 cases of water and 10 fans to the Salvation Army. These items were helpful in assisting those less fortunate during our hot summer weather.



Human Services

Alanna Berrie Completes Certification

Alanna Berrie, LTC Ombudsman, recently completed all program requirements of the SC Department on Aging, State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program to earn the designation as a Certified Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Alanna successfully demonstrated the skills necessary to advocate for residents in long-term care facilities, independently conduct complaint investigations and work toward resolution to the resident's complaints. Alanna first joined the Human Services Division as an intern in 2018 before becoming the Information and Referral Specialist in January 2019 and then moving into the LTC Ombudsman Program in August 2019. Congratulations, Alanna!



Presenting the Certification Award to Alanna is Dale Watson, State LTC Ombudsman.



Meet the Staff

This is a new addition to our newsletter, meet the LSCOG staff that keeps everything running smoothly. This time we meet our **Planning, Community and Economic Development** team.



From left to right: Eric Carrier (Planner), Leslie Crawford (GIS Planner), Brooke Morris (Community and Economic Development Projects Manager), and Emory Langston (PCED Administrator)



Valerie Carter is our new **Family Caregiver Grant Specialist** in the Human Services Division.



Nelson Nwachukwu is our new **Business Services Representative** in our Workforce Division.



Veronica Williams is our new **Human Services Integrated Programs Specialist**.

Tourism



The Williston Disc Golf Course's first PDGA sanctioned tournament was July 16, 2022.

Williston Disc Golf Course Expands to 18 Holes

Ribbon was cut and discs were thrown at the newly expanded Williston Disc Golf Course on Saturday, June 4. What was once a nine-hole course has grown to a tournament sanctioned 18-hole course with the help of some dedicated players. Town council members, community members, and disc golf enthusiasts joined at the Williston Town Park to officially open the nine newly added holes to the public. Adding nine more holes expands the course to nearly 1,900 ft. and sanctions it as a Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) tournament ready course.

"The general idea is getting from the starting area to the finishing area in the fewest amount of throws or strokes," explains Dalton. "You start at a tee pad {starting area} and you throw a disc, a slightly modified disc when compared to a regular frisbee. With the goal of getting in a basket that has chains and then a bottom

basket cage that it lands in." Similarly, to what Dalton refers to as the traditional 'ball golf,' however many throws it takes a player to get a disc in the basket would be the player's score.

The Williston Disc Golf Club is already scheduling tournaments on this course. The first PDGA sanctioned tournament was July 16, 2022.

Reconstruction Era National Historic Network – The newest additions in our region

The National Park Service has recently added a few new additions that were important historical locations in our region of South Carolina

- Founded by Tuskegee graduate Elizabeth Evelyn Wright in 1897, as Denmark Industrial School, **Vorhees College** was initially a high school for Black citizens in Denmark, South Carolina. Today, it is a four-year college that seeks to blend the Reconstruction era educational visions of W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington.
- **Clafin University**, established in Orangeburg in 1869, was the first college in the state of South Carolina to admit students without regard to race or religion.
- **Redcliffe Plantation State Historic Site**, Aiken County, interprets the lives of the African American and white families who shaped the cultural history and landscape of this plantation from 1855 through Reconstruction, and up to 1975. Educational programs guide visitors through the extant slave quarters and mansion on site - home to South Carolina governor James Henry Hammond in 1859.
- **The Schofield Normal and Industrial School** in Aiken was founded in 1871 and was a center for Black education in South Carolina. Freed people received training at this site and went on to teach throughout rural areas of the state.



Pictured at Right: Redcliffe Plantation State



LOWER SAVANNAH
Council of Governments
PO Box 850 | Aiken, SC 29802

2748 Wagener Road | Aiken, SC 29801

P 803.649.7981 | F 803.649.2248



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Additional Resources

The **SRSRA Retiree Resource Center** sponsored by the Savannah River Site Retiree Association is continuing to assist SRS retirees and their families with Medicare enrollments, SRS stipend benefits, and SRS claims for reimbursement with WageWorks, now called Health Equity. You can call the Retiree Resource Center's telephone message line and leave a message at **803.508.7065**, email them at SRSRA@LSCOG.org or drop claims materials in the document collection box in front of the LSCOG building.



Medication Assistance Program

The Medication Assistance Program (MAP) is operating by phone two days per week with concentration on the current client's refills for medications. They can be reached at 803-508-7066.

Medicare Part D Open Enrollment 2022

From October 15 - December 7, 2021, State Health Insurance Program staff assisted 254 clients from the Lower Savannah Region to review their coverage for 2022. The assistance provided results for significant savings to our citizens. For the new plan year 2022, the total savings for all clients who made changes could be as much as \$81,224.00.

During Annual Open Enrollment, Medicare beneficiaries can review and change their Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage Plan coverage for the new year. Our SHIP staff are here to offer trusted, un-biased, one on one counseling and assistance so that the client can make the best decision for him or herself. If you have questions about your Medicare coverage at any time of the year, please contact the SHIP Counselor at (803) 508-7033.

Planning, Community and Economic Development (PCED)

LSCOG will be updating its Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan this year. Please take time to complete our survey by using the QR code or link below. Your response will be used to get a better understanding of the region's transportation needs.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P3LVM3C>

Economic Assessment of the LSCOG Region

Dr. Joey Von Nessen, Research Economist for the Moore School of Business at University of South Carolina, recently presented the results the Economic Assessment of the Six-County Region to the Lower Savannah Council of Council of Governments Board of Directors.



The study, that was funded through the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES Act Recovery Assistance, assesses the economic history of the region as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It delves into key categories that are impactful to each community and the region such as population, education, occupations, and employment to name a few.

Dr. Von Nessen concludes with a set of recommendations for the region to help strengthen the ability to capitalize on existing and future growth. To view the full report and executive summary, please visit www.lscog.org/economic-development.

Workforce Development and SC Works Centers

Workforce Development is on the Move in Lower Savannah

The Workforce Division of the Lower Savannah Council of Government (LSCOG) has rolled out a Mobile Unit – a Job Center on wheels; equipped with state-of-the-art technology to assist employers and job seekers (Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth) with unemployment and reemployment needs. "The SC Works Lower Savannah" core mission is to provide access to employers and employment opportunities to job seekers in both urban and rural communities and counties throughout our region: which includes the Counties of Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun and Orangeburg Counties respectively.

If you are looking for a job or seeking employment, looking for talent for your organization, interested in upgrading your skills sets or acquiring a skill or trade for the 21st century job marketplace, please visit any of the SC Works centers within the region, including the SC Works Lower Savannah mobile unit. SC Works Lower Savannah has been recently featured on WLTX, please click on the accompanying link to view: <https://www.wltx.com/video/news/local/sc-works-center-has-wheels-and-is-rolling-through-sc-counties/101-9ddfa32c-bdf2-46d2-a3e4-1b27cce10d1d>.

Look out for the SC Works Lower Savannah coming to a town near you. The Mobile Unit will be there on scheduled dates, days and time to be pre-announced. For more Information call: (803) 645-9011 or email: Wendy Mahuron at: wmahuron@lscog.org or Jerome Wallace at: jwallace@lscog.org or visit our website: www.lowersavannahwda.org.

