

Application to Form an ASALH Branch

A. Proposed Name of Branch

New Bern-James City Branch of ASALH

B. Area that the Branch will Serve

Define the geographic area and community that the branch will serve.

New Bern and James City are both located in Craven County. The branch will thus serve Craven County and surrounding areas, which include these counties: Pamlico, Jones, Lenoir, Pitt, Beaufort, and Carteret.

C. Population

1. What is the African American population of the proposed service area?

Craven, 20,493; Pitt, 59,813; Pamlico, 2,055; Jones, 2,564; Lenoir, 22,034; Beaufort, 10,195; and Carteret, 3,208.

The total African American population is 120,362.

2. What is the total population of the proposed service area?

Craven, 104,999; Pitt, 170,243; Pamlico, 12,276; Jones, 9,172; Lenoir, 55,122; Beaufort, 44,652; and Carteret, 67,686.

The total population is 464,150.

D. Members Interested in Forming a Branch

1. Fern Cotton fdcottonnc@gmail.com 252-671-3972 Retired HR Adm.
2. David Cecelski david.s.cecelske@gmail.com 919-270-3302 Historian
3. Barbara Lee barbiejean1813@gmail.com 252-229-9505 Former City Alderman
4. David C. Dennard dennarddavid@aol.com 252-414-0437 Retired Hist. Prof.

5. Rosanne Wilson rozedog1@verizon.net 301-922-1559 Retired Educator
6. Phyllis J. Coly pieffersoncoly@gmail.com 513-430-6004 HBCU Adm.
7. Victor Dove victordove620@icloud.com 252-670-1927 Mortuary Adm.
8. William Hollowell harijones1863@gmail.com 252-474-0038 Teacher
9. Craig Allen rodney.allen.rc@gmail.com 252-514-3408 Retired
10. Jon Burger director@cravenarts.org 703-851-1303 Artist
11. Bernard George beegeorge@suddenlink.net 252-349-6842 Ret. Cty. Planner
12. Johnny Williams jlwilliamsmd1@gmail.com Physician

E. Community Interest

Are there any community and/or institutional organizations interested in supporting and/or engaging with the proposed branch? Please explain.

1. James City Historical Society (1991)
2. African American Heritage and Culture Center (2019)
3. Juneteenth of New Bern (2021)
4. Craven Arts Council and Gallery (1974)
5. New Bern Historical Society (1923)
6. Vision Forward (2006)

All of these organizations have been working in their own limited and separate ways to highlight, celebrate, and promote the best aspects of life, culture, and history for all who live in New Bern, James City and surrounding areas. Under the large and nationally renowned ASALH tent, however, the collaborative focus of working together should allow all groups to cast the broadest possible net that will harness diverse strategies, aims, and objectives to work yet untold wonders on the common wheels of man's love and hope for his brother, sister and neighbor. As partners and supporters of an ASALH branch, moreover, the above named organizations can avoid and possibly eliminate many unknown and counterintuitive pitfalls of redundancy and duplication. Finally, each of the above six organizations has pledged to support the ASALH branch; and most of the leaders would actually be members of the proposed New Bern-James City Branch of ASALH.

F. Membership

Briefly describe how you will ensure that the membership level does not fall below 8 members as an Organizing Branch.

As shown above, the total number of persons interested in forming a branch already exceeds the required number of 8. Additionally, memberships will be renewed in 2026; and new members will also be recruited and added to our current number.

G. Leadership Roles

Are there at least three (3) of the interested members listed above who are committed to assuming leadership roles on an organizing committee to advance the branch to charter status?

Yes.

H. Additional Information

Provide any additional information you believe would be helpful to our initial review of your application.

Both New Bern and James City have deep and rich veins of African American history. As a port city founded in 1710, New Bern had a large antebellum Black population which included many artisans, both free and enslaved, who created a strong foundation for post-emancipation Blacks. See, for example, Catherine W. Bishir's, Crafting Lives: African American Artisans in New Bern, North Carolina, 1770-1900 (2013). Impressive slices of New Bern's Black life during the antebellum period are also found in David S. Cecelski's, The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina (2001). This same historian, moreover, has penned perhaps the best introduction available on the magnificent role that Blacks in New Bern and surrounding areas played in the Civil War as United States' Colored Troops (USCT). See Cecelski's, The Fire of Freedom: Abraham Galloway & the Slaves' Civil War (2012). James City, located in central Craven County, owes its existence to enslaved Blacks who fled neighboring plantations to form a major refugee community in Union-occupied New Bern. In fact, more than 10,000 Black refugees from slavery flocked to the lines of the Union army seeking freedom. And by the close of the Civil War in 1865, the Trent River Settlement, later named

James City in honor of Rev. Horace James, Superintendent of Negro Affairs for North Carolina, boasted a population of around 3,000 formerly enslaved African Americans. James City has attracted broad scholarly attention, but the most concise and detailed story of this area is found in Joe A. Mobley's, James City: A Black Community in North Carolina, 1863-1900 (1981).

Your Information

Name: David C. Dennard

Phone #: 252-414-0437

Address: 3110 Briarcliff Drive

Email address: dennarddavid@aol.com

Greenville, NC 27834

Signature: David C. Dennard