

- 4TH ANNUAL -

# JUNETEENTH ROYAL GALA



[JUNETEENTHGVL.ORG](http://JUNETEENTHGVL.ORG)

# JUNETEENTH

## THE HISTORICAL LEGACY



The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, was a monumental step in the fight for freedom, declaring that all enslaved people in the Confederate states were to be set free. However, the reach of this proclamation was limited by the realities of the Civil War, and the promise of liberation did not immediately extend to all those who were enslaved. It would take more than two years for the news to reach the furthest corners of the Confederacy. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, bringing with him the long-awaited news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were now free. This day, now known as Juneteenth, marks a pivotal moment in American history—a second Independence Day that symbolizes the end of slavery and the beginning of freedom for all.

Juneteenth is more than a commemoration of a

historical event; it is a celebration of resilience, unity, and the enduring spirit of the African American community. For over a century, Juneteenth has been a day of reflection and joy, marked by family gatherings, educational events, and community parades. The significance of this day was nationally recognized on June 17, 2021, when Juneteenth was declared a federal holiday, ensuring that the legacy of this momentous occasion is honored and preserved for future generations.

The recognition of Juneteenth as a national holiday stands as a testament to the tireless efforts of individuals like Lula Briggs Galloway, Opal Lee, and countless other dedicated community leaders. Their determination and advocacy have propelled the importance of Black liberty, unity, love, and tenacity into the national consciousness. As we reflect on Juneteenth, we express profound gratitude for the freedom and opportunities now available to all Americans. This day not only commemorates the end of a dark chapter in our history but also inspires us to continue striving for equality and justice in our present and future.

# Black History of Greenville

## HIGHLIGHTS



**Pioneering Black Architect William Wilson Cooke (1819-1897)**  
Wilson Cooke who is key to Reconstruction era Greenville.



**Wilfred Junius Walker Sr. (1912-2017)**  
South Carolina's First Black Radio Announcer & Sportscaster. The Voice of Sterling High School Tigers & MC Variety Time



**A.J. Whittenberg (1918-2001)**  
President of NAACP in Greenville. In 1963, Whittenberg and his attorneys filed a lawsuit that enabled his daughter, Elaine, to transfer schools, leading her to become one of the first African American students to desegregate Greenville schools in 1964.



**Joseph Vaughn (1946-1991)**  
On January 29, 1965 Joseph Vaughn walked across Furman's campus as the university's first African American undergraduate student, with each step representing a significant stride toward racial equality.



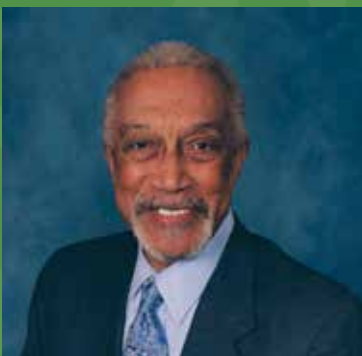
**Dr. Levi S. Kirkland Sr. (1926-1920)**  
Dr. Levi S. Kirkland Sr. became the first African American surgeon in Greenville, SC in 1961



**SC Senator Ralph Anderson (1927-2019)**  
The first African American postmaster in Upstate South Carolina in 1973.



**Sterling High School (1896 - 1970)**  
The first Black high school in Greenville



**Theo Mitchell (1938 - Present)**  
He is, to date, the first and only Black South Carolinian to be nominated by a major political party to the office of Governor.



**The Greenville Eight**  
On July 16, 1960, seven Black high school students and a college student entered the Greenville County Public Library. As they quietly read books and magazines, the librarian called the police, who arrived and arrested the students.



**Dr. Edward E. McClaren (1902-1985)**  
In 1949, Dr. McClaren used his own funding to build the McClaren Medical Shelter to serve Greenville's Black community during segregation.

# ROYAL GALA

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# Greetings From the Founder

**Rueben J. Hays Jr.**



## **Dear Gala Attendees and Beloved Black Community,**

With immense joy and deep gratitude, I welcome you to this year's Juneteenth GVL Royal Gala and a week of transformative celebration. It's been a true honor to witness this gathering grow into a powerful reflection of our unity, resilience, and cultural pride.

This is more than a series of events—it is a living expression of who we are. A time to reconnect with ourselves and each other. This year, we center the individual experience, creating space for you to release the weight of the past, refresh your spirit in the joy of the present, and replenish your soul for the journey ahead.

Our goal is to cultivate peace, healing, and continuous support in a safe, affirming environment. As we honor the legacy of Juneteenth—a history once ignored and now nationally recognized—we are reminded to reflect on what freedom truly means, not just collectively, but personally.

I am deeply proud of what we've built together. This week has exceeded my hopes, breathing life into a vision rooted in healing, community advancement, and unity—one that stretches beyond Greenville and echoes across generations.

Thank you for your presence, your support, and your spirit. May this year's Gala inspire, restore, and remind you of the strength we share. Enjoy every moment—and carry its light with you.

With heartfelt gratitude,

**Rueben Hays**  
Founder & Chairman  
Juneteenth GVL

# Greetings From the Co-Founder

Vandavid Vernon



## Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is with deep gratitude and pride that I welcome you to the Juneteenth GVL Royal Gala. As Co-Founder of Juneteenth GVL and Founder of Vernon Veteran Services, it is both a joy and an honor to share this moment with you.

Juneteenth is a celebration of freedom—but it's also a reminder of the courage and sacrifice it has taken to get here. Tonight, we pay special tribute to the Black veterans who have long stood on the front lines in defense of liberty—often without receiving the full measure of justice or recognition they so greatly deserve.

From the Revolutionary War to today, Black service members have helped shape the foundation of this nation. Their unwavering commitment to freedom and justice is a legacy we are proud to uplift—and a responsibility we carry forward.

As we celebrate, let us also recommit to action. Supporting Black veterans must be more than a moment; it must be a movement. As Dr. King powerfully stated, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." May we all be found standing with those who have fought for us.

Thank you for joining us tonight. May the stories you hear, the people you meet, and the spirit of this evening inspire you to continue building a future worthy of our past.

With heartfelt appreciation,

**Vandavid Vernon**

Co-Founder, Juneteenth GVL  
Founder, Vernon Veteran Services

# Greetings From the Executive Director

## April Evans



### **What an incredible year.**

As I step into my first year as Executive Director of Juneteenth GVL, I do so with a heart full of gratitude, vision, and an unshakable belief in the power of Common Unity—our 2025 theme that speaks not only to shared values, but to our shared responsibility to honor, uplift, and invest in one another. This year, we especially center that commitment by honoring our veterans and Black men—those who continue to carry so much, often unseen and unthanked.

It's been a year of bold moves and bigger impact. We've expanded our programming to include the launch of Keys to Freedom, our homeownership empowerment initiative. Each effort is designed to educate, equip, and elevate—because freedom isn't just something we celebrate, it's something we live.

The shifts we're facing—social, economic, and beyond—are real. They show up in our homes, our workplaces, and our communities. And it's on us not just to navigate these changes, but to help shape what comes next. I'm deeply grateful for the growing network of creatives, professionals, community leaders, and neighbors who help us meet this moment with courage and clarity.

To our JGVL Event Directors, Working Group, and volunteers—you are the heartbeat of this mission. I see you. I thank you.

To our sponsors—your support is more than funding. It's belief in action.

To the Black Church—your role in this work is not just historical—it's still essential. You've always been a pillar of justice, progress, and empowerment. Juneteenth itself is a testament to that legacy.

And finally, to our Board of Directors—your trust, guidance, and covering mean more than words can express.

Here's to what we've built—and all that's still to come through our Common Unity.

With gratitude and purpose,

### **April Evans**

Keys to Freedom Director  
Executive Director, Juneteenth GVL

# Greetings From the Gala Director

**Renee Floyd**



## **Greetings Kings and Queens,**

Welcome to the 4th Annual Juneteenth GVL Royal Gala!

What began as a celebration has evolved into a powerful tradition—a reflection of Black excellence, joy, unity, and above all, resilience. This evening is more than an event; it's a testament to the strength and spirit of our community.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our partners, sponsors, and friends. You recognize the need—and rise to meet it—with a shared commitment to the progress and empowerment of our people.

As you take in the beauty of tonight's festivities, I encourage you to reflect on our rich legacy, build connections with those who celebrate and uplift you, and honor the next generation leading us toward a brighter future.

Thank you for standing with us. May tonight inspire, empower, and remind you of the greatness we hold—together.

With love and gratitude,

**Renee Floyd**

Royal Gala Director  
Secretary, Juneteenth GVL

# ROYAL GALA

## Run of Show

Friday, June 13th | Embassy Suites at Verdae

Cocktail Hour 6:00PM - 7:00PM

Gala 7:00PM - 12:00AM

**DJ - Afro-Centric Music**

DJ Kurious George

**Emcee Welcome**

Brandon Montgomery | Founder of Forward and Beyond

**Intro of Anthems: Co-Founder & Vice Chair**

Vandavid Vernon | Founder of Vernon Veteran Services Inc.

**National Anthem**

JL Mann High ROTC | Violinist - Dominique Hammons

**Black National Anthem**

Alphaeus Anderson | Pure N' Heart Choir

**Welcome**

Mayor Pro Tem Lillian Brock Flemming & Pastor Emanuel Flemming Sr. | President of Greenville NAACP

**Toast to the Evening**

Babette Bouvier-Jones | Founder & CEO of Six Nineteen 1865

**Invocation/Grace**

Pastor William Miller | Allen Temple AME Church

**Dinner Served** - Music Provided by TRAPJAZZ Band

**Call of Purpose: Founder & Chairman**

Rueben Hays | President & CEO of Crescent Surgical Supply LLC

**Dance Performance**

Vaughn Newman Dance

**Poet**

Theresa Tha SONGBIRD

**Community Legacy Award**

Tim Hall | President of 100 Black Men of the Upstate

**Heart of the Community Award**

Dejr and Jil Bostick

**Dance Performance**

T-Motion Dance Studio

**Speaker**

SC House of Rep. Wendell Jones District 25

**Remarks + Film Trailer**

Brittney Brackett | Founder of Outstanding Youth Awards

**Crowning of  
Mr. and Miss Juneteenth + Scholarships**

Carlo & Nika White Foundation  
& Prisma Health

**"Honoring Our Past, Shaping Our Future" Video +  
Donation Appeal**

Pastor Tracy Fleming | Juneteenth GVL Treasurer

**Juneteenth Build**

Latonya Phillips: President & CEO; Joseph Fields: VP of Equity | Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County

**Closing Remarks**

Founders Rueben J. Hays Jr. & Vandavid Vernon | April Evans | Juneteenth GVL Executive

Director

# Lift Every Voice & Sing

James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing  
Till earth and heaven ring  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the listening skies  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea  
... Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun  
Let us march on till victory is won  
... Stony the road we trod  
Bitter the chastening rod  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died  
Yet with a steady beat  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
... We have come over a way that with tears has been watered  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered  
Out from the gloomy past  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast  
... God of our weary years  
God of our silent tears  
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way  
Thou who has by Thy might Led us into the light  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee  
... Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand  
May we forever stand  
True to our God  
True to our native land  
Our native land

"Lift Every Voice and Sing" holds significant historical and cultural importance in the African American community. Originally written as a poem by James Weldon Johnson in 1900, it was later set to music by his brother J. Rosamond Johnson. The song was first performed by 500 schoolchildren in Jacksonville, Florida, at a segregated school where James Weldon Johnson was the principal.

Over time, the song became known as the Black national anthem due to its powerful lyrics that resonate with the struggles and aspirations of Black Americans. It was embraced by the NAACP and used as a rallying cry during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s, symbolizing hope, resilience, and unity in the face of adversity.

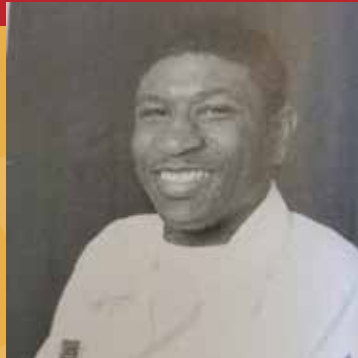
"Lift Every Voice and Sing" continues to be performed at various events, including Black History Month celebrations, church services, and social justice gatherings, serving as a reminder of the ongoing fight for equality and justice.

# Veterans Honor Roll

As we gather to celebrate Juneteenth, we honor not only the resilience and triumph of our ancestors but also the brave men and women who have served our nation. This honor roll pays tribute to our veterans, whose ultimate sacrifices have paved the way for the freedoms we cherish today. Thank you for your service and for being present with us today. Your courage and commitment inspire us to continue the fight for equality and justice. Together, let us remember, uplift, and honor those who have served, as we work towards a brighter future for all. Happy Juneteenth!



**Rueben J. Hays Jr.**  
Navy, Corman  
4 Years of Service



**Vandavid Vernon**  
Navy, Operations Specialist  
17 Years of Service



**Donald Benjamin**  
Army Drill Sgt  
20 Years of Service



**Jessica N. Jenkins**  
US Army & SC Army National Guard  
11 Years of Service



**Ellen Cohen**  
Navy  
2 Years of Service



**S. Richard Hagins**  
Navy, Commander  
22 Years of Service



**Tim Hall**  
Army, SSG (Staff Sergeant)  
Promotable  
19 Years of Service



**Emanuel R. Flemming Sr.**  
US Army & SC Army National Guard  
First Lieutenant  
17 Years of Service



**Dejr Bostick**  
United States Marine Corps  
E-4  
5 Years of Service

# Entertainment & Special Guests



## Brandon Montgomery

Master of Ceremony

Brandon Montgomery is a nationally recognized speaker, educator, and youth advocate who empowers students, educators, and communities through authenticity, connection, and purpose-driven engagement. Drawing from his own life experiences and passion for service, Brandon delivers inspiring messages that help students build resilience and help educators lead with empathy and impact.

He is the founder of Forward and Beyond, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting under-served youth with SEL-driven programs, mentorship, and school-based initiatives that promote personal growth and academic success.

Through his company, Forward with Brandon LLC, he travels the globe inspiring youth, school staff, athletic teams, and organizations with transformative keynotes, engaging workshops, and SEL-aligned experiences that create lasting impact. His work centers on building meaningful connections that drive real change.

Brandon's personal mission is simple yet profound:

"To continuously grow, spread love, and impact the lives of others."

To learn more, visit:

[BrandonMontgomery.org](http://BrandonMontgomery.org) | [ForwardandBeyond.org](http://ForwardandBeyond.org)

Follow on Instagram: [@\\_BrandonMontgomery](https://www.instagram.com/_BrandonMontgomery)



## Dominique Hammons

Contemporary Jazz Violinist

Dominique Hammons is a Houston-born violinist known for blending classical training with jazz, gospel, R&B, and hip-hop. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma in Music Performance, Dominique has performed with the Houston Youth Symphony, Virtuosi of Houston, and won the Houston Symphony's "Young Artist Competition."

Since then, he's headlined festivals, opened for Jonathan Butler, played the National Anthem for the Houston Rockets, and continues to wow audiences nationwide with his soulful, genre-bending sound. Passionate about inspiring others, he also teaches youth violin and shares his gift with the next generation.

# Entertainment & Special Guests



## TRAPJAZZ

Chris Moten created what he calls, TRAPJAZZ, during the summer of 2015. Since their first show in 2016, the group under the direction of Moten, has been able to perform for or alongside the likes of Terrace Martin,

Christian Scott, Jacob Collier, Shelea, GhostNotes, JammCard, Greg Philliganes, & last but certainly not least, Quincy Jones! TrapJazz has even released a new single entitled "Go Get It" featuring, Jeezy & Cheif Keef on all music streaming platforms. These opportunities serve as evidence of foresight and genius of not only Chris Moten, but the Unique & Distinctive musicians/producers he chooses to unite with to generate such a rare sound!

However, few of the most erudite Atlanta music historians are aware of the breadth of Moten's résumé, for he is perhaps one of his hometown's most worldly artistic gems, hidden in plain sight. Be sure to check out their DocuFilm on Hulu entitled "TrapJazz".



**BAILEY ENT**

## Bailey ENT

Bailey ENT is a boutique entertainment company located out of Atlanta, GA. We specialize in fashion forward high-end costuming with elite performers. Let's create magic!

Whether you are looking for wow factor entertainment for an intimate upscale social event or corporate event for thousands BE has you covered! Dancers, acrobats, mirror options, and musical acts we do it all. From full party bands, deconstructed bands to solo musicians and DJs we have a full roster ready to entertain. Creating custom costuming to match any theme is our favorite, but we have a warehouse full of in-house bespoke options ready to wear. Our southern charm mixed with an international flair is what our full service entertainment company is all about. BE is a woman owned company with an all female staff.

# Entertainment & Special Guests



## Alphaeus Anderson & Pure N Heart

Alphaeus Anderson is the author of *Youth Magnet* and *No Youth No Church SOULutions*, and the founder of *Gain Maintain*, now called *No Youth No Church*, a platform that provides coaching and training for leaders to attract and empower youth. He holds a BA in Christian Ministries from Anderson University and is an inductee into its Distinguished Alumni.

A staff member at the University of South Carolina Upstate, Alphaeus teaches the Gospel Choir class for over 10 years. He has built a youth choir, Pure N Heart, A that now attracts over 350 students annually, growing from just one member 14 years ago. His choir has received seven Stellar Award nominations and won "Best Youth Project of the Year" in 2012 and 2019.

Known for his innovative techniques in youth empowerment, Alphaeus speaks to thousands of students across schools, churches, and community centers. He regularly leads workshops at major conferences, including the Gospel Heritage International Worship Conference.

His music is featured nationally in ministries, radio, and conferences. Alphaeus is also a recipient of the 2016 President Barack Obama Volunteer Service Award.



## Vaughn Newman

Vaughn Newman is a choreographer, professional dancer, and founder of Vaughn Newman Dance, committed to advancing the art of dance in Upstate South Carolina and abroad. His journey began at William Penn Arts Charter in Philadelphia, PA, and continued through extensive training with Freedom Theater, PHILADANCO, and New World School of the Arts in Miami, FL. During his time in Miami, he performed with Momentum Dance Company and Brazz Dance Theater, expanding his artistic repertoire.

Since relocating to Upstate South Carolina in 2009, Vaughn has collaborated with local studios and theaters, enriching the region's arts scene. In recognition of his dedication, South Arts honored him as one of the "Emerging Leaders of Color" in January 2022. His artistic exploration extends beyond borders, with annual visits to Accra, Ghana, Havana, Cuba, and London, where he examines how culture, tradition, and spirituality shape social dance forms. During its 10th Anniversary season next April, Vaughn will be a featured artist sharing his experience, creativity, and love for dance. Vaughn continues to weave compelling narratives through movement, integrating spirituality, life experiences, human connection, and spoken word to elevate consciousness through the arts.

# Entertainment & Special Guests



## T-Motion Dance Studio & After-school

Established in February 2007, T-Motion Dance Studio has been a cornerstone of the community for over 18 years. Founded by co-owners Teresa and Victor Mattison, Sr., the studio was born from a vision to create a “new kind of studio”—one that offers a personal touch and consistently exceeds expectations.

T-Motion is far more than a place to learn dance—it is a vibrant, inclusive space that nurtures physical fitness, personal growth, and self-esteem. With a mission rooted in movement and mentorship, the studio provides a safe and supportive environment where dancers of all ages can thrive.

T-Motion offers a comprehensive after-school program that blends academic support with physical activity, creating a holistic approach to student development. From the very first visit, students are welcomed into a non-intimidating, family-friendly atmosphere where they are seen, heard, and encouraged to grow—both on and off the dance floor.

Our wide-ranging curriculum includes diverse styles such as praise dance, hip-hop, step, and more. With programs tailored for children as young as four, as well as offerings for adults of all skill levels, T-Motion truly has something for everyone—whether you’re just beginning or a seasoned performer. Private lessons for individuals and couples, along with group sessions, ensure that every dancer has the opportunity to shine.

At T-Motion, excellence is the bar for achievement. Our multifaceted programs are designed to empower each student with the tools to magnify their strengths and develop areas for improvement—while fostering discipline, confidence, and a love for the art of dance.

We proudly maintain an open class and open door policy, welcoming visitors to experience the energy of our studio through complimentary trial classes. No appointment is necessary—just stop by and feel the T-Motion difference for yourself.

Beyond dance, T-Motion Dance Studio is also a versatile event venue. Our facility is available for rent, making it the perfect setting for birthday parties, meetings, and community gatherings in a vibrant, welcoming environment. Join the T-Motion family and become part of a community where passion is celebrated, dreams take flight, and every dancer is given the space to grow, express, and excel.

# Mr and Miss Juneteenth 2024



**Miss Juneteenth 2024**

## Kristie Taylor

Kristie Taylor is the 2024–2025 Miss Juneteenth Upstate SC. A business management major with a marketing focus at North Carolina A&T State University.

She serves on the executive board for the Society of Women in Business as Social Media Chair and was recently selected as a COBE Trailblazer by North Carolina A&T State's College of Business and Economics—an honor that recognizes emerging leaders in mentorship and representation.

Dedicated to giving back, Kristie volunteers as a cabin counselor at Camp H-Town, a free camp at the Four Seasons Hotel for children impacted by cancer. She is also a mentor with Leaders in Training and a collegiate advisory board member for Camps by KT for All, where she empowers youth with heart and excellence.



**Mr Juneteenth 2024**

## Zachary Brewster

So far in college, Zachary has done very well, maintaining a 3.5 GPA through his freshman year. He has also joined many clubs such as Brother4Brother, a mentorship club that helps students navigate college life and prepare for finding jobs after graduation, as well as the Minority Student Union. He was also a member of the football team. He is now set to attend Morehouse College in the fall, where he will continue studying political science.

# Awards

## Heart of the Community Award

- Calvin "CC" Ivery**  
Founder / CEO The Unity Weekend
- Babette Bouvier-Jones, MHRD**  
CEO & Founder of Six Nineteen 1865
- Pastor Wendell Jones**  
SC House Representative District 25
- S. Richard Hagins**  
CEO/Owner US&S, Inc.
- Brandon Montgomery**  
Founder of Forward and Beyond
- Randy Jackson Sr.**  
Former Executive Director of Phillis Wheatley Community Center

- Tammy Moore**  
Founder / CEO Footprints in Africa
- Pastor Curtis Johnson**  
Valley Brook Outreach Baptist Church
- Pastor Sean Dogan**  
Long Branch Baptist Church
- Pastor Emanuel Flemming Sr.**  
REAL Church | President of Greenville SC NAACP Unit #5522
- Celeste Crocker**  
CEO & Founder of Motivate Magazine & Nothings Impossible
- Mary Duckett**  
President Southernside Neighborhood in Action Neighborhood Association

## Community Legacy Award

- Habitat for Humanity of Greenville**
- Mill Village Ministries**
- Greenville Chamber of Commerce**
- Greenville Technical College**
- Prisma Health**
- Bon Secours Health Systems**
- Urban League of the Upstate**
- BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC**
- NAACP Greenville, SC Branch**
- Carlo and Nika White Foundation**

# 2024 Gala Photos



# 2025 Exhibit Artists



## Josh Jackson

Josh Jackson 33yo African American visual artist based in SC. Josh considers himself a portrait artist, using subjects to captivate viewers with a unique use of vibrant color, detail, & even abstract elements. He feels that his paintings are a direct reflection of self expression. He often participates in gallery exhibitions & accepts commissions working from home studio.



## Andrea Breazeale

Andrea Breazeale is a multi-medium artist based out of Greer, South Carolina. As a diverse artist, she draws inspiration from art history and life experiences to create subjective renderings of objects and landscapes in order to evoke thought and emotion. Andrea has publications in the Blue Granite Review, as well as exhibitions at her alma mater Greenville Tech Art Gallery, The Abney House Art Gallery and Gallery One.



## Timothy Cunningham

Timothy Cunningham, a native of South Carolina, discovered his passion for art at an early age, which culminated in a defining moment at 16 when he was commissioned to paint a mural for a Wells Fargo Bank in El Paso. This project marked the beginning of his professional art career, driven by his deep love for fine arts and the encouragement of his mother. Timothy's dedication to his craft has seen him mastering various mediums, including oils, watercolors, acrylics, and charcoal, with his pieces now held in private collections both nationally and internationally.

A Marine Corps Veteran of the Iraq War, Timothy has carried his discipline and resilience into his artistic endeavors. His artistic style, rooted in the 2D realm, reflects a lifelong commitment to learning and growth, which he regards as a continuous journey.

At the heart of Timothy's work is The Cunningham Fine Arts Foundation, through which he spearheads the annual "Greenville Through A Lens" art showcase and hosts workshops throughout the year to further the local artists in their business efforts. This event celebrates the rich Black history of Greenville and surrounding areas, blending art with cultural heritage and community engagement. As he looks to the future, Timothy remains devoted to elevating the arts industry and contributing meaningfully to his community through his artistry and leadership.

# 2025 Exhibit Artists



**Mia Draper**

Mia Draper weaves textures, colors, and emotions into mixed media artworks that honor both the chaos and beauty of the unknown. Inspired by abstract visionaries like Jackson Pollock and Cy Twombly, she sees art as a living, therapeutic space – one she now shares with her awesome son. Originally from Orangeburg and now living in Greenville, South Carolina, Mia’s creative journey is a rediscovery of wonder, texture, and the playful spirit that often fades with age.



**Kiara Jones**

Kiara Jones, a realism artist rooted in Columbia, SC, navigates the canvas with a mastery of oil paints, her brush strokes imbued with depth and emotion. While oil remains her primary medium, her artistic repertoire extends to diverse mixed media, each offering a unique dimension to her creations.

With roots tracing back to the sun-kissed shores of Jamaica, Kiara draws inspiration from the turquoise seas that cradle her mother’s homeland. It’s within these azure depths that her muse resides, guiding her exploration of water’s ever-shifting forms and hues. Through her art, Kiara captures the essence of human growth and transformation, each composition a reflection of life’s intricate journey.



**Cloud Cruiser**

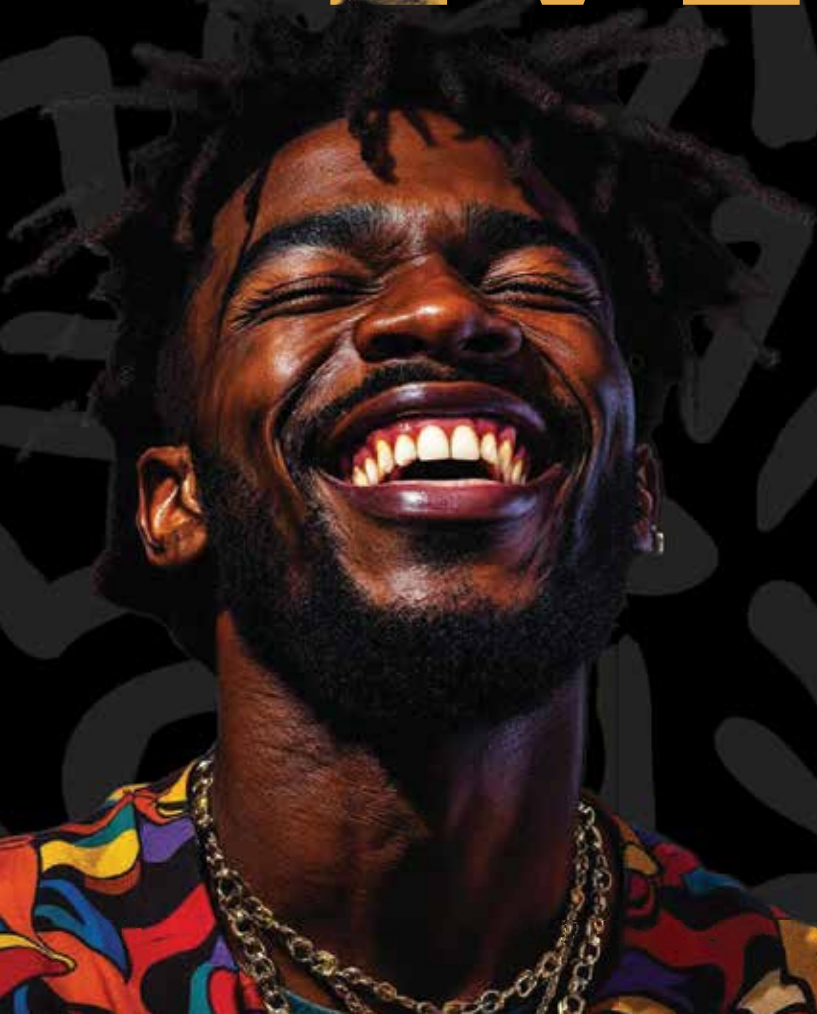
My name is Erbriyon Barrett my artistry name is Cloud Cruiser or Cloud I’m originally born and raised from Warner Robins Georgia but currently I’m based in Charlotte NC and other parts of the Carolinas mostly Greenville SC and Columbia SC I’m also heavily involved doing artwork in Atlanta GA as well with my time outside of the Carolinas. I have showcase and done projects in NYC DC and Miami and parts of Virginia also! My art style is mainly pop art and street art with the assistance of my signature abstract designs. I love to use loud bright bold colors to help bring out my artwork to be eye catchers to viewers. Besides murals and paintings I’m also a skilled dancer, film photographer, vr artist, digital art designer, sketcher, fashion influencer and animator as well. My goal is to have my art spread across the world as much as possible!



**JUNE 17TH**  
GVL INC.

**CELEBRATION**  
**WEEKEND**

# EVENTS



CELEBRATE  
WITH US THE  
ENTIRE  
WEEKEND

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## Royal Gala

**Friday, June 13, 2025**  
**Location: Embassy Suites at Verdae**  
**Reception: 6 PM**  
**Program Starts: 7 PM**



## Wellness Event

**Saturday, June 14, 2025**  
**Location: Downtown Greenville, SC**  
**Run/Walk Start: 7 AM**

**Sunday, June 15, 2025**  
**Location: Donaldson Center**  
**Ride Starts: 7 AM**



## Freedom Ride

**Sunday, June 15, 2025**  
**Kickstands Up 1 PM**  
**ESB Sports Bar**  
**7490 Augusta Rd, Piedmont, SC 29673**

**Gates Open 2PM**  
**Event Location: Lakeside Park**  
**1500 Piedmont Hwy**  
**Piedmont, SC 29673**



## Keys to Freedom

**Monday, June 16, 2025**  
**Location: Phillis Wheatley Community Center**  
**335 Greenacre Road, Greenville, SC 29607**  
**Event Starts: 4 PM**

## Other Events We're Supporting

We've expanded our programming to include two powerful initiatives: The United Crowns Mobile Museum of Black History and Culture, Truth & The Revelation of Freedom: Red, White, Blue, and Black (both in partnership with Upstate Circle of Friends).



FOR MORE INFO AND TO RSVP, PLEASE VISIT [JUNETEENTHGVL.ORG](http://JUNETEENTHGVL.ORG)



## Event Directors



**Renee Floyd**

Juneteenth GVL Secretary  
& Director of The Royal Gala



**Jabecca Banks**

Juneteenth GVL  
Wellness Event Director



**Dionne Washington**

Juneteenth GVL  
Freedom Ride Director



**April Evans**

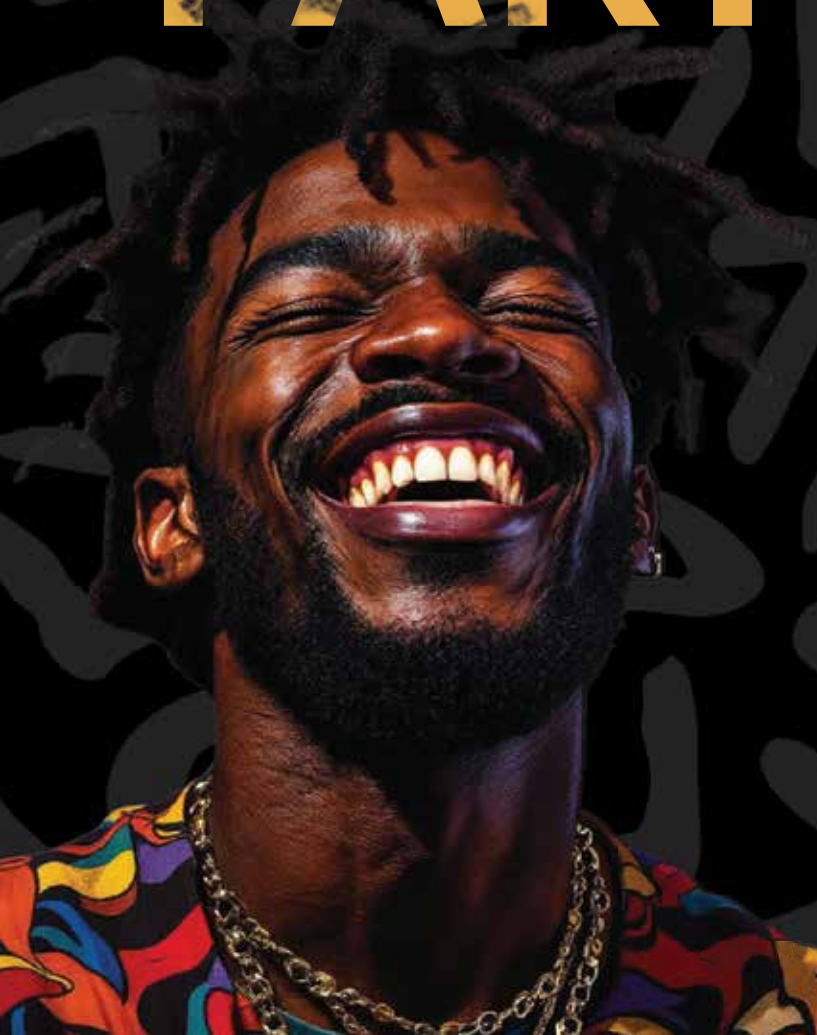
Juneteenth GVL Executive Director  
& Director of Keys to Freedom



**JUNETEENTH**  
GVL INC.

**CELEBRATION**  
**WEEKEND**

# PARTNERS



WE COULDN'T  
DO THIS  
WITHOUT YOU

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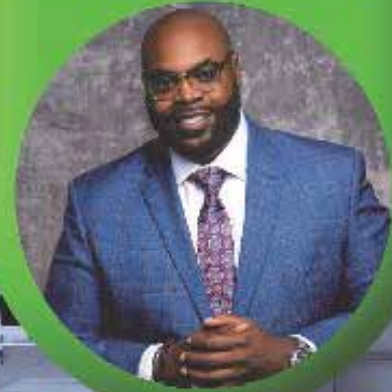
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**JUNETEENTH**  
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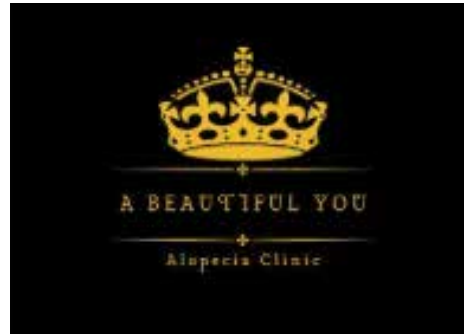
**CELEBRATION**  
**WEEKEND**

# VENDORS



**FREEDOM**  
**MARKETPLACE**

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**JUNE 17TH**  
GVL INC.

**CELEBRATION**  
**WEEKEND**

**CONTRACTORS**



HELPING HANDS  
TO MAKE  
THINGS HAPPEN

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Photography



Crowd Management

Phil Good Muzik

# Special Acknowledgments

The Juneteenth GVL Executive Board would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who made this weekend possible.

## FOUNDER / BOARD MEMBER

Rueben J. Hays Jr. - Founder - Crescent Surgical Supply LLC.

## BOARD MEMBERS

### Rueben J. Hays Jr.

Board Member | Founder & Chairman  
CEO & President, Crescent Surgical Supply  
LLC

### Vandavid Vernon

Board Member | Co-Founder & Vice-Chair  
Founder, Vernon Veteran Services Inc.

### Renee Floyd

Board Member | Secretary  
Executive Assistant, Crescent Surgical Supply

### Pastor Tracy Fleming

Board Member | Treasurer  
CEO & President, Business &  
Such Accounting & Tax Services

### April Evans

Board Member | Executive Director  
CEO & President, Event Flow Mastro

## JUNETEENTH GVL TEAM

### April Evans

Executive Director & Keys to Freedom Director

### Jabecca Banks

Wellness Event Director

### Dionne Washington

Director of Freedom Ride

### Renee Floyd

Secretary of JGVL & Director of Royal Gala

### Shere Smith

Admin Vice-Chair

### Nikki Williams

Director of Volunteers

### Megan Hannon

Director of Cultural Arts

### Heather Montgomery

Director of Marketing & PR

### Brandon Montgomery

Scholarship Program Director

### Dr. Erin Smith

Director of Freedom Marketplace (Royal Gala)

### Dr. Shalisa Lee

Director of Freedom Marketplace  
(Freedom Ride)

### Jabecca Banks

Director of Freedom Marketplace  
(Health & Wellness)

Rodney Neely - Security

# Honoring the Legacy of Mrs. Naomi Hays

## Continuing Her Vision of Compassion and Excellence



She was everyone's mom. Your favorite auntie. The friend you could always count on in a pinch. The spoiler of grandchildren. The hostess who made every gathering feel like a celebration. The one who saw to your entire well-being—body, mind, and soul—with a single touch or word.

Mrs. Naomi Hays was the living example of attentive care, both inside and outside the walls of a hospital. A devoted nurse by profession and a nurturer by nature, Naomi's wisdom, grace, and generosity extended far beyond healthcare. She was always on call—not just for patients, but for her family, friends, and community. Many of us never heard her speak an unkind word; instead, she built up those around her, offering encouragement, comfort, and unwavering support.

Her belief in honoring the past while investing in the future was evident in the pride she took in the inaugural Juneteenth GVL celebration. She understood that legacy is not just what you leave behind, but what you inspire in others.



## Continuing the Legacy: Naomi Hays Endowed Scholarship Fund

Naomi devoted her life to the care of others- through her hands, her heart, and her presence. Though she's no longer with us in person, her spirit of compassion lives on through the Naomi Hays Endowed Scholarship Fund at Greenville Technical College.

This scholarship is more than financial support. It is an extension of Naomi's life's work—a way to pour into future nurses who will carry the same heart for service that she so effortlessly modeled. It helps students overcome barriers, pursue their calling, and care for others with skill, grace, and compassion, just as Naomi did.

### Your gift helps:

- Equip students with tuition, books, and resources to thrive
- Strengthen the healthcare community with nurses who lead with both competence and care
- Keep Naomi's legacy alive by nurturing the next generation of caregivers and community builders

**How to Give:**  
Online: <https://greenvilletechfoundation.org/donate/>  
**SCAN HERE**



**By Mail:** 556 Perry Ave., Suite B110, Greenville, SC 29612  
**Payable to:** Greenville Tech Foundation | Memo: Naomi Hays Endowed Scholarship

Every contribution, no matter the size, helps continue the legacy of a woman who gave so much to so many. Together, we can ensure that Naomi's spirit of care and compassion continues to touch lives for years to come.

With love and gratitude,

**The Hays Family**



# Thank You For Your Continued Support



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