

### \*\*\*SPAM\*\*\* Latest Updates from the NCGA



**From** Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>  
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**Date** 2022-03-04 16:29



## NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

March 4, 2022

### Governor Cooper Comes to Charlotte to Encourage Electric Vehicle Expansion



On February 24, I joined with other local leaders to welcome Governor Cooper to Charlotte at the dedication of the first PoleVolt Electric Vehicle charging station in Charlotte along Beatties Ford Rd. This new technology allows EV charging stations to be

available in more locations, including underserved areas of the county. I am proud to have supported various electric vehicle initiatives at the General Assembly, including co-sponsoring [Senate Bill 592, Plug-In Electric Vehicle Tax Credit](#), and [Senate Bill 670, Electric & Zero Emission Vehicle Consumer Education](#) Read more about the initiative to build NC's EV corridors [here](#).

## New UNC Charlotte Research Center to Drive Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention



Building upon the University's **largest-ever research appropriation from the NC General Assembly -- \$9 million to support COVID-19 research and testing -- UNC Charlotte has launched a center for predicting and mitigating infectious diseases.** The [Center for Computational Intelligence to Predict Health and Environmental Risks](#) (CIPHER) will incorporate and elevate the work of the University's Bioinformatics Research Center. This investment in new equipment, labs, shared spaces and faculty is critical to improving the speed, accuracy, and cost-effectiveness of our research and making predictions we can test and validate.

## RAMP CLT Begins Accepting Applications Again



Ramp CLT, a Mecklenburg County emergency housing assistance program, has begun accepting new applications from those who need financial assistance paying rent/mortgage and utilities. The portal reopened earlier this week after receiving additional money from the state and reallocated treasury funds. You can learn more about the program [here](#) and apply for rental, mortgage and utilities assistance [here](#).

## Food Science & Innovation in NC



Sen. Marcus with other Caucus members with Eli Lilly Company's Director of Public Affairs Dan Wahby



Left Photo: Example of Machinery Used in Facility. Right Photo: Some of the Products Developed at the Lab

On February 23rd, I attended a tour and information session at the **North Carolina Food Innovation Laboratory (NCFIL)** at the **North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis** as a member of the **Art and Life Sciences Caucus**. It was organized by the **NC Biosciences Organization**. Other legislators and I learned about how much science, research and technology is involved in the plant-based food industry -- innovation, improvement, safety, nutrition, etc. -- and how **NC is a leader in this industry**. The state of the art Research Campus brings numerous universities, innovative companies and public health experts together, allowing them to work collaboratively to improve health, create new food products, and add to our state's economy. We heard from doctors, scientists, public officials, and innovators. Did you know that NC farmers grow more than 90 crop varieties – making NC a top 10 producer in 19 commodities? You can learn more about the Food Innovation Lab and take a virtual tour at [this link](#).

## Black History Month Celebration and Dedication of Potts Barbershop in Cornelius





**Black History  
Month Celebration**

**Saturday, February 26, 2022  
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

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**Welcome & Introductions**  
*Ms. Lisa Mayhew-Jones & Mr. Ron Potts*  
*Smithville CommUNITY Coalition*

**Lift Every Voice and Sing: Verse 1**

**Opening Prayer**  
*Led by Reverend Ellison Bowman Sr., Torrence Chapel AME Zion*

**Lift Every Voice and Sing: Verse 3**

**"Smithville History Tour" Video**  
*Produced by the Smithville CommUNITY Coalition (SCC)*

**Musical Performance**  
*Stroller Singers of Torrence Chapel AME Zion*

**HEARTS Park Vision**  
*Reunion Project & George Moses Horton Reading*  
*Presented by Abigail Jennings with Ron Potts & Michael D. Connor*




**Musical Performance**  
*Stroller Singers of Torrence Chapel AME Zion*

**Featured Artist - Gil Horne Jr.**  
*Provided artwork for Black History Month*

**Musical Performance**  
*Stroller Singers of Torrence Chapel AME Zion*

**Potts Designation Presentation**  
*SCC & Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission*

**Closing Remarks**  
*Mayor Woody Washam*

On Saturday, February 26, I attended the **Black History Month Celebration at Cornelius Town Hall**. The presentation included a video about Smithville, the singers of Torrence Chapel AME Zion, a children's book reading, a presentation by artist Gil Horne Jr., and a presentation by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission to the Potts Barbershop. Kudos to the Town for this engaging and lively celebration of our area's diversity.

## Peace Rally for Ukraine



Last week I joined students at Davidson College who organized a peace rally for Ukraine. Students of various faiths spoke of our **collective concern, grief and empathy for the Ukrainian people**. One person in attendance has relatives there now and she brought the flag that was held up at the rally.

## JM Alexander Middle School Needs Your Help To Attain Even More Success!



After placing first in the North Carolina Future City regional competition in January, JM Alexander Middle School from Huntersville is currently **one of 41 teams from around the United States and the world competing in the 2022 Future City Competition.**

Future City is an engineering competition in which participants imagine, research, design and build cities of the future that answer a question—how can we make the world a better place? This year's topic is a waste-free city using the principles of a circular economy.

To win the North Carolina regional competition, the 8th grade Future City team at JM Alexander IB Middle School created **"Terra Limpa, Mozambique", a waste-free, sustainable, nature centered city.**

**As a part of the international finals, Terra Limpa team is competing for the People's Choice Award.** They would love to have your support as they represent NC in this competition. You can click [this link](#) to cast your vote today! Let's show the world what NC students can do! **The deadline to vote is March 18.**

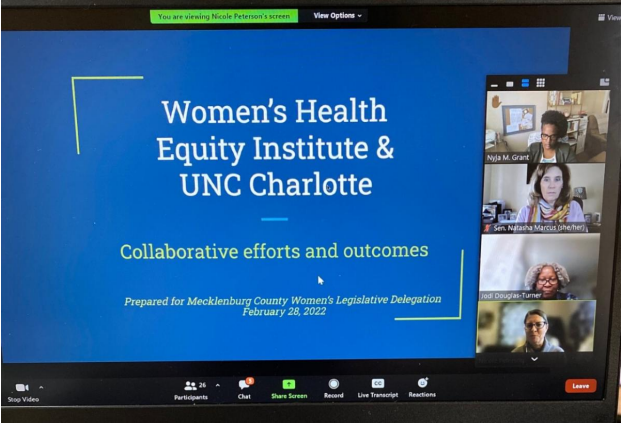
## Public Comments Request from the House Committee on Future of Education in NC





The House has established a new Select Committee called the “**Committee on an Education System for North Carolina’s Future**”. It has met a couple of times in Raleigh to address the central question: “If today there was no education system in North Carolina, and we were charged with establishing one, what would you like to see in a new education system, or not see in a new education system?” Topics of discussion so far have included learning loss during COVID-19, teacher pay, mental health resources, and more. I am disappointed that there has not been a substantive discussion about *Leandro* yet. The committee is holding a **public hearing in Asheboro this Monday, March 7 at 5pm**. We don’t know whether the Committee will come to Mecklenburg County to hear from our residents or not. Thus, if you are interested in education in our state, please submit your written public comments [here](#). If you’d like to attend the meeting in Asheboro, sign up and get the details about the location [here](#).

### Meeting with Women's Health Equity Institute



On February 28, I met with the **Women’s Health Equity Institute to discuss their concerns about health disparities for African-American women in the community**. Five other members of the Mecklenburg Delegation and I attended the meeting of this group that has been working to improve the quality of health for women, in partnership with professors and students at Johnson C. Smith University, UNC Chapel Hill and UNC Charlotte, the American Heart Association, the Council on Black Health, Village HeartBEAT, My Daughter’s Keeper, the County Health Department, the faith-based community, and neighborhood leaders. Some of the projects they are working on:

- A comprehensive directory of women’s health care resources
- Listening sessions to learn what services Black women and women who are incarcerated need
- Identifying the gaps on women’s healthcare in Mecklenburg County

### Mark Your Calendar: Virtual Listening Session

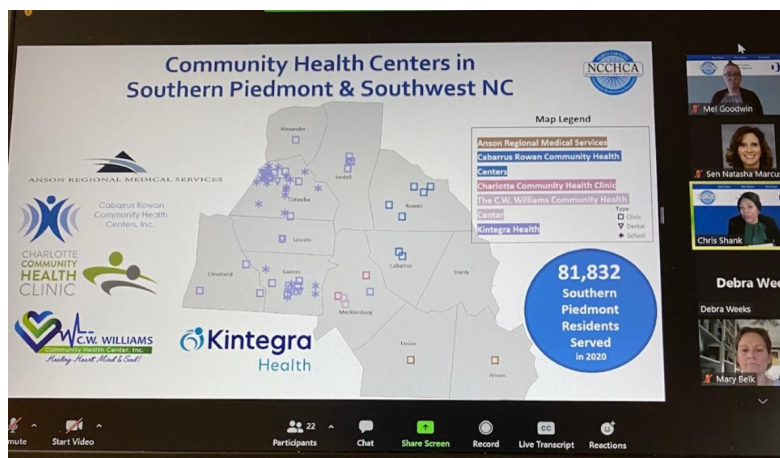
**THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY DELEGATION TO THE NC GENERAL ASSEMBLY**



The Mecklenburg County Delegation to the NC General Assembly is hosting our first virtual listening session of the year on **Thursday, April 21st from 7-8pm**. The 17-member Delegation wants to hear from you about what is on your mind, what you would like us to know about your community, and what you would like us to work on. **This is your opportunity to talk to us and for us to listen.** Attendees must sign up in advance to join the Listening Session. I hope you will join us.

**Sign Up for the Listening Session Here**

## North Carolina Community Health Center Association Regional Meeting



This afternoon I joined a bipartisan group of legislators for the **NC Community Health Association's** regional meeting for the Southern Piedmont and Southwest NC. It was great to hear about the incredible work these health centers are doing across the region, including the CW Williams Community Health Center, which serves low-income, uninsured Mecklenburg County residents. If you need care, you can reach them at [this link](#). CHCs are so important, especially since NC remains one of the few states that has still not expanded Medicaid to close the healthcare coverage gap.

## Update on "Free the Smiles" Bill



Last month, the NCGA passed **Senate Bill 173**, **Free the Smiles Act**, which would give parents sole authority on whether their child must wear a mask at school, instead of school officials or public health professionals, and no matter how bad the situation at any given school might get. On February 24, Governor Cooper **vetoed the bill** due to concerns about passing laws for political purposes that encourage people to pick and choose which public health rules they want to follow. The NCGA may be called to Raleigh next week to vote on whether to override the veto.

## Davidson College Social Justice Theatre Troupe



On February 25, I attended a live performance of *This Special Place* by the Davidson College Social Justice Theatre Troupe. The play was written by a recent Davidson graduate, in collaboration with the students, and **addressed issues about how to create an inclusive community for students of color and students with disabilities**. Kudos to the writers and performers.

## Nominations for the 2022 North Carolina Awards





The North Carolina Awards Committee and the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources are accepting nominations for the 2022 North Carolina Awards. Created in 1961 by the General Assembly, the **North Carolina Awards recognize outstanding contributions in the areas of Fine Arts, Literature, Public Service, and Science.**

This award represents the highest honor the State of North Carolina can bestow upon a citizen. Awards are presented annually to individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to artistic and literary expression, scientific achievement, and civic leadership. **If you wish to nominate someone, the deadline is April 15.** Learn more [here](#).

## Free Tax Assistance Services



Get help this tax season! There are resources available in 2022 to help you and your family save money on your taxes.

- **VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)** – Individuals and families who earn less than \$57,000 per year can receive FREE income tax preparation assistance by an IRS-certified volunteer. VITA sites are free, reliable, and available in communities across North Carolina.
  - Schedule an appointment at the **Ada Jenkins Center** (in Davidson or Huntersville) [here](#).
  - Schedule an appointment at the **Beatties Ford Library** in Charlotte [here](#).
- **Earned Income Tax Credit** – Low-to-moderate-income workers and their families can get a tax break, ranging from \$1,502 to \$6,728 depending on income level, marital status, and number of children.
- **Child Tax Credit** – Nearly all working families with children under age 18 at the end of 2021 can receive \$3,000 to \$3,600 per child. The CTC expanded in 2021, offering more credit per child and the option for advance monthly payments instead of one

lump sum when filing taxes. Learn more [here](#).

## Update on Tax Forms for Unemployment



NC DEPARTMENT  
of COMMERCE  
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

All individuals who received unemployment benefits from North Carolina in 2021 have now been issued an IRS Form 1099-G by the N.C. Division of Employment Security. This form shows the total amount of benefits paid to the claimant during the previous calendar year for tax purposes. **Unemployment benefits are subject to state and federal income tax and should be reported on claimants' tax returns.**

All claimants will be able to access their 1099-G through their DES online account. For those who chose mail as their preferred contact method, 1099-Gs were postmarked by Jan. 31 for mail delivery. Learn more [here](#).

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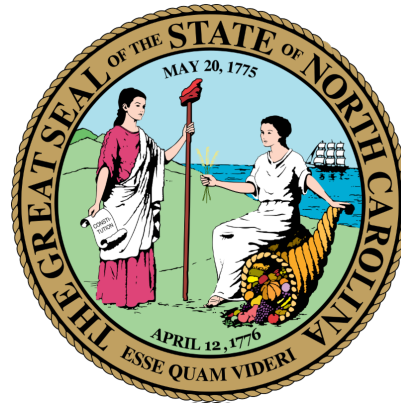
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How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

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