



N.C. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Office of HBCU Outreach**

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)

**MOVING FORWARD**

## *The Next Generation of Transportation*

### **Al Austin Director's Message**



#### **"Our New Normal"**

As we all continue to adjust to the impact of the global pandemic, a new phrase has emerged in our daily conversations: "our new normal." This phrase acknowledges that we as human beings existing on this earth must change the way we live, work and play to survive our current situation and the next.

"Our new normal" denotes that nothing will be the same again, and it should not be. This paradigm shift is unsettling for many. However, for me it inspires a time for creativity, courage and being intentional in planning for the future.

My team, along with the NCDOT Office of HBCU Outreach Advisory Committee, will continue to work diligently to make our five-year strategic plan a reality. However, in "our new normal" paradigm shift, we will need to think differently on the approach moving forward. We must. Please see [our plan here](#).

The NCDOT Office of HBCU Outreach is leading the country's state departments of transportation with our diversity workforce and research initiatives. This edition of *Moving Forward* features numerous articles in our continuing effort to live our mission. However, we cannot rest on our laurels or successes. If there are "new normal" ideas or initiatives that you would like to share, please feel free to email me at [ajaustin1@ncdot.gov](mailto:ajaustin1@ncdot.gov).

To your journey,

AI

## Meet Our Team: Ashley Houston



Ashley Houston, administrative specialist for the Office of HBCU Outreach, is a Raleigh native and 2008 graduate of North Carolina State University with a Bachelor of Arts in communication and a minor in parks, recreation and tourism. She also received a Master of Science in kinesiology from East Carolina University in 2013.

In 2005, Houston worked part-time for NCDOT in Human Resources while completing summer courses at N.C. State. In June 2018, she became a temporary, full-time employee at NCDOT, and by July 2019, she was a permanent employee.

Houston said she believes bringing people together to succeed and working with others with a clear vision and passion for their work makes every day more enjoyable. She said COVID-19 has created some challenges for her office, but fortunately they have been able to successfully work remotely, while keeping their vision in focus and taking this opportunity to be creative to find new ways to reach students, such as offering virtual summer professional development programs in lieu of regular internships.

Oprah Winfrey once said, “Helping others is the way we help ourselves”. Houston said she was raised by a single mother who embodied this quote and she lives by these words, believing our purpose in life is to live in service of others.

“I want to make a difference and I have always wanted to help people,” the Raleigh native said. “I am passionate about education and working with young people. It is great when you can help to create real positive change in an organization or for a group of people. However, when you speak with an individual and find out that something you did or said made a real impact on their life, that is the best feeling!”

On a more personal level, Houston herself became a new mother during the pandemic, and says she is learning every day how to balance her new role while working full-time. She says while the past six months have been challenging, she is trying to slow down, spend more time outside and appreciate the journey.

Houston is a member of the planning committee for the Alzheimer’s Association-Eastern NC Chapter. She volunteers with the V Foundation, the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation and the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina. In her free time, she enjoys running, traveling and reading.

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## HBCU Fellow Spotlight: Nathan Kemp



Meet Nathan Kemp, a HBCU Fellow who works with the Integrated Mobility Division. Kemp is a graduate of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University with a bachelor’s in history from Pinehurst, N.C.

The 28-year-old said he is grateful to a fraternity brother who recommended that he apply for the N.C. HBCU/MSI Fellowship Program. Kemp joined the N.C. Global TransPark team in Kinston as a strategic business associate in April 2019, but he was rotated to governance in Raleigh on recommendation and now serves in the Integrated Mobility Division.

He said there have been many moments since being a fellow that have made him a better person and professional. However, Kemp says being given the opportunity to move to a new unit via recommendation has been most impactful in that it speaks to his work ethic and character more than anything.

The Pinehurst native said his dream job is to work in marketing for a government agency. He said his time with the HBCU Fellowship has completely changed his ideas and outlook on careers, for the better.

For a long time, Kemp wanted to work in higher education, handling student affairs, but since joining the program that has shifted into something totally different.

Kemp said his current unit relies on human interaction and coordinating those interactions. Since COVID-19, the governance unit has had to reimagine what that looks like and have adjusted policies, requirements, and components of those interactions.

Kemp serves as a student member of the HBCU Outreach Advisory Committee. Since the pandemic he has started a podcast, launched an event/design planning firm with his sister, and most recently online tutoring sessions for the upcoming school year. He also serves as a volunteer social media manager for a nonprofit organization.

## **NCDOT Office of HBCU Outreach Advisory Committee**

After extensive work with over 40 HBCU stakeholders, the NCDOT Office of HBCU Outreach created its five-year strategic plan in 2018. One immediate result of developing the plan was to formulate a NCDOT HBCU Advisory Committee to work with NCDOT leaders and HBCU Outreach staff to implement the strategic plan.

The committee is structured in categories and many members were selected from the first stakeholder group that worked on the strategic plan. The purpose of this committee is to help staff create work plans from the goals and objectives in the strategic plan, provide insight into what is realistic and achievable and be an advocate and champion for the work.

We are happy to present these leaders who are helping us blaze new pathways between our North Carolina HBCUs/MSI and NCDOT.

### **Two representatives from N.C. private HBCUs:**

- Avery Staley, HR/External Affairs Director, Livingstone College
- Dr. Paulette Dillard, Ph.D., President, Shaw University

### **Two representatives from N.C. public HBCUs:**

- Dr. Bryle Henderson Hatch, Ph.D., Executive Director for Community Engagement, Office of External Affairs & Community Engagement, N.C. A&T State University
- Angie Wills, Student Affairs - Elizabeth City State University

**Three representatives from an elected body:**

- Phanalphie Rhue, District Director, Congresswoman Alma S. Adams Office
- Christina A. Piard, Director of Community Engagement, Congressman G. K. Butterfield
- Jeremy Collins, Engagement Director, Office of Governor Roy Cooper

**Three representatives from NCDOT:**

- Dana A. Magliola, Sr. Supply Chain Analyst, Logistics & Freight Division, NCDOT
- Heather J. Hildebrandt, Interim Director, Integrated Mobility Division, NCDOT
- Daphne Wright, LMS Analyst, Human Resources-Performance Management, NCDOT

**Three corporate representatives working in the HBCU space:**

- Lilyn Hester, Head of Southeast Public Affairs, Google
- Sidney Echevarria, Sr. HR Workforce Development, Duke Energy
- Open

**Two HBCU advocates:**

- Annette Taylor, Manager, Minority and Business/Community Affairs, NC Lottery
- Janae Moore, Director of Government Affairs, Apartment Association of North Carolina

**Student representative:**

- Nathan Kemp – NCDOT HBCU Fellow

**Other invited guests may include:** Chief Deputy Secretary Howard, Office of Civil Rights, and FHWA representatives

**NCDOT National Summer Transportation Institute  
Makes History**

During the summer months, state departments of transportation across the country oversee host sites for the National Summer Transportation Institute Program. This two- to four-week program educates thousands of middle and high school students on various transportation careers and exposes them to different modes of transportation to build a diverse workforce pipeline.

In the summer of 2020, North Carolina made history as one of only two states in the country to pilot and host a virtual NSTI Program.

NCDOT hosted five sites across the state whose program leaders chose to rise above the in-person challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic. They pivoted, twisted and turned their programs to offer a high-quality, free, and engaging STEM program to approximately 95 middle and high school students throughout the state. In addition to the global pandemic, some host sites were contented with glitchy wi-fi, tropical storm winds and trouble accessing materials...who knew Chrome books would sell out nationwide!

Through it all, the host sites listed below preserved and prevailed, making history in the process. During the debrief, program leaders shared their plan to incorporate more interactive field trips and remote guest speakers to maximize their budgets while visiting faraway places should they receive future awards.

The partners for the NCDOT 2020 Virtual NSTI program included: N.C. A&T State University (high school), Elizabeth City State University (middle and high school), Winston Salem State University (middle school) and Roanoke Chowan Community College (high school).

Please [visit our page](#) for more information.

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## NCDOT Summer STEM Program Goes Virtual

A collaboration between WakeEd Partnership, the Wake County Public School System and numerous STEM businesses and organizations in North Carolina, Summer STEM is a professional development program hosted in the summer that gives educators hands-on experiences to bring real-world lessons to the classroom. Educators are immersed in STEM organizations, including NCDOT, to experience industry practices. Throughout the year, mentors coach Summer STEM educators in lesson design and project-based learning.

The 2020 Summer STEM Program was hosted virtually on July 16. This year, NCDOT hosted a record number of 30 teachers for a half-day immersion. The group consisted of both primary and secondary educators. The goal of the day was to showcase the

many different departments that make up NCDOT and to provide the resources for the teachers to create a project-based learning experience for their students.

Some of the feedback we've received so far:

“Awesome hearing about how NCDOT visits local WCPSS schools and is working alongside students and teachers to tackle real world issues around their schools.”

“The math included in NCDOT field tests is precisely what is taught to middle schoolers. I've heard language from inequalities, geometry and decimal place values. Very cool!”

Thank you to the following people for making the 2020 Virtual Summer STEM Program a success.

Dan O'Connor Stormwater Operations Manager Roadside Environmental	Matt Hilderbran, PE, CPM State Field Operations Engineer Materials & Tests Unit
Nina Barrett Policy & Research Fellow Chief Deputy Secretary's Office	LaToya Caldwell Program Coordinator III Planning/Programming-Bike/Ped
Dana Magliola Senior Analyst Logistics & Freight	Tim McHugh Customer Service Agent Rail Division

## Where Are Our HBCU Summer Interns Now?



Genadius Blane Winston was an NCDOT HBCU intern in the Rail Division in 2017 and the Division of Aviation's Unmanned Aerial Systems Program in 2018 while attending graduate school at N.C. Central University.

During his time with NCDOT, Winston was given the opportunity to track, analyze and review all intermodal rail traffic, providing reports needed for the rail division to have a visual map of all types of commodities moved by rail throughout the state. He was also able to obtain his Lean Six Sigma White Belt Certification and learn in detail about Unmanned Aerial Systems.

Winston said his proudest moment was being able to participate at the inaugural NCDOT Unmanned Aerial Systems Drone Summit in Greensboro, N.C.

Before graduating, Winston also worked at Ravenscroft School in Raleigh as a data analytics/database manager in the business office for the advancement department. He later graduated cum laude with a master's degree in business administration and summa cum laude with a master's degree in information science from NCCU. Currently, he works as a consultant in cybersecurity for Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington, D.C.

"NCDOT, JoAna McCoy, and Al Austin have played a significant role in my professional development," Winston said. "Through this program I've learned many vital skills needed to be successful in my career endeavors. I'm so grateful to them and NCDOT for the opportunity to be a part of such a great organization, and I could not be prouder to be affiliated with the NCDOT HBCU Internship Program.

Congratulations, Genadius!



Kalesha Tyson is a former NCDOT HBCU intern with the Global TransPark division and a 2019 N.C. A&T State University graduate with a bachelor's in supply chain management.

"I am very thankful for the opportunity to learn from such great people," Tyson said. "It was a motivating experience that helped me see my way through finishing college so that I could start a successful career of my own."

Tyson said that after graduating, she started her first corporate job in July 2019 with Smithfield Foods as a career foundation supply chain associate based in Smithfield, VA. She worked in rotation in supply planning for eight months and transportation for about four months, before being offered a permanent role in supply planning as a seasonal ham planner.

“The workforce has been very challenging and exciting all at the same time so I am looking forward to my continued growth in the supply chain field!”

Congratulations, Kalesha!

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## **NCDOT HBCU Interns Participate in Governor Cooper’s NC Job Ready Program**

Unfortunately, this year we had to cancel our annual NCDOT HBCU Summer Intern Program. This program offers approximately 40 HBCU/MSI students a 10-week summer internship that is designed to provide students with hands-on, real-world experience, knowledge and expertise that they can use to apply for future positions at NCDOT or elsewhere.

However, an effort by Governor Roy Cooper’s administration matched approximately 14 of our NCDOT HBCU Summer Interns slated to work for us this summer with opportunities to help support the states’ COVID-19 response efforts.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many North Carolina students to lose summer jobs and internships lined up months ago. At the same time, many local governments and nonprofits found themselves in need of additional help as they grapple with the pandemic’s impact on their communities.

“COVID-19 is testing local governments and nonprofits as they work to meet the needs of people in their communities,” Governor Cooper said. “Through these public service internships, students gain valuable on-the-job experience and local governments and nonprofits gain extra help when they need it most.”

More than 80 North Carolina college students were matched to opportunities with local government agencies and nonprofits across the state. Nearly all projects were virtual and included opportunities for interns to assist with grant writing and research, marketing and communications, community engagement and volunteer coordination, data analysis, strategic planning and more. Interns worked with a variety of organizations, including county economic development departments, local chambers of commerce, nonprofit service providers, arts organizations and others.

The NC COVID-19 Student Response Corps initiative is part of Governor Cooper's [NC Job Ready](#) effort to make sure North Carolinians are prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The program helps strengthen the public service talent pipeline and prepares North Carolina's students for employment.

This initiative was led by the NC Strategic Partnerships team, an effort within the Office of State Budget and Management to build partnerships between government, universities, philanthropists and the private sector. Also involved are the UNC School of Government Lead for NC program, Hometown Strong, the NC Association of County Commissioners, the NC League of Municipalities, the NC Rural Center and several institutions of higher education.

"We were extremely excited that many of the HBCU students who had applied to our program were selected to participate in this virtual public service internship opportunity," said JoAna McCoy, Program Manager, Office of HBCU Outreach at NCDOT.

## **NCDOT HBCU Outreach Launches New Virtual Summer Professional Development Series Called "Summer Daze"**

With the cancellation of our NCDOT HBCU Summer Intern Program due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our program participants were unfortunately left without a summer internship experience; they also lost out on the numerous professional development sessions offered by our program. Our program offers, bi-weekly professional development sessions that include, but are not limited to, resume writing, intergenerational communications, managing social media and maximizing your LinkedIn account.

Our team was determined to deliver on our mission and promise to help our HBCU/MSI students even during a pandemic. We invited all applicants for our NCDOT HBCU Summer Intern Program to participate in our web-based professional development series called "Summer Daze."

These 30-minute, student-focused sessions allowed participants to ask questions from NCDOT subject matter experts. Topics of these sessions included how various majors relate to careers in transportation, how to secure a great summer internship, and managing your image on social media. One session featured NCDOT Chief Deputy Secretary David Howard, who presented on the future of transportation and its impact on our everyday lives.

You can view the [30-minute virtual sessions here](#).

## Summer Transportation Internship Program for Diverse Groups

Do not miss your chance to apply for the Summer Transportation Internship Program for Diverse Groups.

Whether you are an undergraduate, graduate or law school student, the STIPDG is your unique opportunity to get hands-on public service experience while discovering the challenges and advancements of U.S. transportation infrastructure. The 10-week program runs from June 7 – Aug. 13, 2021. The deadline to apply is Jan. 31, 2021.

All selected students will receive a stipend. Roundtrip airfare and furnished housing will be provided for students who are offered in-person internships and whose permanent residence is more than 50 miles away.

For more details and to apply, [visit the USDOT website](#).

### Office of HBCU Outreach at NCDOT

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Visit our webpage at:  
<https://www.ncdot.gov/about-us/board-offices/offices/hbcu/Pages/default.aspx>

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