



New Charleston-area Black Caucus, recognized as a unique group remains consistent...

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The Charleston Area Black Caucus, founded in the first quarter of 2020 as a Tri-County coverage Political Action Committee (PAC), has taken off with a quantum leap. The group has pledged to groom more African American candidates to run for political office. Other initiatives include offering training, programs, seminars and services centered around voter education and economic development.

The group will take a magnifying glass to disparities inherent in the court system and other institutions with a view toward finding viable solutions. On topic will be discussions on how to abolish systematic oppression and unfair judicial outcomes resulting in lack of access to funding for businesses and residents in the black community.

The group held its opening reception in October 2020 where 13 board executives were installed to assist with the week-to-week operations needed to propel the organization forward. The highly anticipated reception was very received with an overwhelming response from the community, particularly in light of the pandemic. Community members also pledged to support the group's efforts.

The first order of business for the caucus has been laying groundwork through awareness and inclusion by offering virtual introduction sessions to the community. During the sessions the group's Community Relations Task Force (one of seven already formed by the group) discusses the organization's mission, vision and five year action plan. Attendees have the opportunity to ask questions and gain clarity about the organization.

Melanie Brown, spearheading the Community Task Force, offers an optimistic vision for 2021. *"We plan to spend this year laying a powerful landscape by educating and informing as many constituents as possible."* She added that the political work must start right away, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

"There is a full roster of items that must be covered; from voter participation, candidate training, understanding the pulse and landscape of our area economy, data analysis, diversity and proper representation in over a dozen of municipalities," says Charles Miller.

Rashaad Smith adds, *"This is just Phase I, and I am learning so much. I am a young entrepreneur and Charleston native that has struggled to find a consistent group that wants to do something about making modern day resources more accessible for black millennials"*

and gen z's around here. This Caucus plays no games. We are on it". Both men assist Ms. Brown on the Community Relations Task Force.

The organization, recognized as a PAC under the Diversity & Inclusion Council of the Southeastern Chamber of Commerce hosted an Inaugural Membership Gala February 5, 2021 at the Your Signature Event Hall in Ladson, SC. The group has an active social media pages: <https://www.facebook.com/CharlestonBlackCaucus> and Instagram.

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