

Coastal Georgia Tourism Discussions: African American Heritage and Culture
Breakout Discussions Notes
November 20, 2020

Breakout Question # 1:

What opportunities for collaboration do you see around this topic?

- working with communities and organizations to share/ tell these stories
- Look inside and outside of Georgia for resources
- [Georgia Historical Society](#) can help communities learn where/how to start
- Different museums, cultural centers along the coast could collaborate
- Sharing funding sources
- Assist each other with proposal development
- International collaboration between Gullah Geechee communities and similar communities around the world.
- Connecting entrepreneurs with university programs (ex: mariculture) to grow/expand their ideas
- Market Gullah Geechee restaurants
- Working with state/fed agencies who own/manage lands where there are Gullah Geechee communities (ex: SINERR, GA DNR, US Fish Wildlife Service)
- Expand formal partnerships
- [Brunswick African American Cultural Center](#)
- [St Simons African American Heritage Coalition](#)
- [Mosaic Museum](#) (Jekyll Island Authority)
- Regional pathways/trails
- African American/Gullah Geechee Business Inventory
- (Human/Fiscal) Capacity building partnerships
- Community voice
- Explore Georgia website
- Identify influencers, specific stories to promote
- Grants-Tourism Product Development Grant for coastal communities
- Sharing resources for newcomers/ try to consolidate information about Georgia
- Heritage Tourism Guide
- Local CVBs
- Historical and General Business resources for Glynn County
- Specifically focus on Downtown Brunswick (Albany St)
- Savannah Tours-add Gullah Geechee cultural information to tours if not already part of them
- Keep it authentic; local tour leaders
- Reach out to younger audiences
- pre-recorded content for schools and community centers to show to students/visitors
- Make an itinerary about Gullah Geechee opportunities/destinations
- Influencers can promote itineraries
- Slower paced tours (bikes, walking etc). and stories told by influencers
- Forming partnerships with organizations that can provide cultural information

- Two sites in Liberty County
- More opportunities to meet and share information on this topic so groups can support one another
- Commercial Fisheries sector-working waterfronts
- Partner with restaurant industry for product development; tying these together with commercial fishing/working waterfronts
- Creation of a community network
- Research on archeology and history to help tell stories
- Educational resources at Marine Extension/GASG; help develop new ones

Breakout Question 2:

What types of information/training/programs should be developed so that people who are interested in learning about and promoting Gullah Geechee culture can do so in a culturally appropriate manner?

- Any training and stories need to come from Gullah Geechee people
- Sharing stories/oral histories (first person)
- [Pinpoint Museum](#) is a great model to look at
- Collaborate with the GG community to create educational resources (digital, graphics) that are shared broadly
- Community conversations about what works, what doesn't, and this is how we would like to proceed (from the Gullah Geechee perspective)
- Regionalism is important, but so is maintaining local distinctions
- Brand strategically (regional vs local)
- Sensitivity/cultural awareness training
- Fundraising/ grant writing
- [Tourism Reset](#) (information from scholars)
- [SCORE](#)
- UGA [SBDC](#),
- [Appalachia Non-Profit Resource Center](#)
- Department of Community Affairs and other state agencies
- Heirs Property
- [National Parks Service](#)
- [National Association of Interpretation](#)
- [American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association](#) (AIANTA)
- Incorporate stories through restaurants (menus, staff?)
- Appreciation vs. Appropriation
- Diana Pike described business plan incentives for local entrepreneurs creating the authentic heritage experience. See her suggestions on webinar at CHEA.
<https://cheaglobal.org/>
- Highlight Career opportunities for younger audiences
- Fix generational gap, incentives for local businesses, organizations, musicians
- Training on appropriate presentations for cotton and rice plantations
- Using social media to illustrate Gullah culture appropriately

- Gullah Geechee app to show you what is available so you can visit
- Providing snippets of historical information on social media
- Include map of all historic sites on app
- One place to find all coastal apps and combine into one somehow?
- Utilize virtual online information
- Including restaurants as attractions to giving authentic experiences
- Online training that is already in existence. Where is located? How effective has it been?
- Making sure business information listed online is correct and current (Specifically Yelp and Trip Advisor, etc)
- Hotel Concierge Training
- Docent training
- Check Corridor map to make sure it includes all the appropriate opportunities
- Providing easily consumed information

Breakout Question #3:

Other considerations?

- Trainings/events shouldn't just be a one day/one-time thing
- Help [Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor](#) get staff members in each state
- Community forum/educational opportunities with established partners/establishments; don't recreate the wheel; share what's already happening
- Balance support (of first person sharing) with promotion
- Raise the profile of entrepreneurial ideas
- Better leverage on existing resources
- Apply to be on the National Register of Historic Places
- Facilitated Community meetings (make sure the community is leading)
- Community ownership of process/assets

Additional Comments

- In the presentation you mentioned that we could find an overview of primary interpretive opportunities that had been identified, can you mention again where we can find that information. Here is a link to Corridor website: <https://gullahgeecheecorridor.org/>
- Resource: OCEANS, Inc non-profit organization whose mission is to remember, honor, and celebrate all those who were enslaved in the United States of America. Weeping Time Commemoration Page-<https://oceans1.org/>
- [Weeping Time Historical Marker:](#)
[Enslaved People of Butler Island Historical Marker:](#)
[Hampton Plantation:](#)
- There has been a lot of discussion around Butler Island over the past year. Recently, Ms. Eunice Moore, a descendent of BI, described Hwy 17 as the “*trunk of a tree with branches of rich culture and history at every turn.*” Can you share examples of regional collaborations that have raised awareness regionally, but preserved the “local distinctions” Heather discussed in the presentation?
- From Heather L. Hodges-[Weeping Time Marker documentary.](#)

- [Gullah Geechee Heritage in the Golden Isles \(American Heritage\)](#) co-authored by Dr. Patrick Hollady
- [Tourism RESET](#) (Race, Ethnicity and Social Equity in Tourism)
 - <https://www.tourismreset.com/news/2019/4/9/working-with-and->
- Over 50 Gullah Geechee community members from GA, SC and FLA made a homecoming trip to Sierra Leone in December 2019. A documentary is available. Organizers are interested in more international, cultural exchanges: <https://www.sctv.org/stories/culture/2020/south-carolina-etv-premiere-hour-long-gullah-roots-documentary-october-1>
 - From Patrick Holladay-Everyone be on the lookout for a report and series of papers I am writing with Amadu Massally, Director of [Fambul Tik](#), who led these tours.
- I see Aundra Fuller from the Brunswick African American Cultural Center on the call! We have supported her community-based efforts to support cultural appreciation and heritage tourism. We encourage all to connect with her! Her building also has a fantastic memorial to Ahmaud Arbery. Important work
- Podcasts are also great platforms for sharing Geechee stories. Matthews Raifford's is great: <https://heritageradionetwork.org/series/jupiters-almanac>.
- Tourism Leadership Council has a great concierge certification program in Savannah. Need to make sure they are tapped into GGCHC.
 - Our report contemplates and encourages more collaboration with hoteliers.
 - This was my first job out of college, a lot of local vendors would actually invite hotel concierges to experience their site/tour/ restaurant/ etc free of charge so that we would recommend them
- Guides to safe travel will be welcome for some time: <https://mailchi.mp/a22b6c58829d/where-to-explore-the-gullah-geechee-corridor-safely-4785826>
 - They can reach out to me (Dionne Hoskins-Brown) or I can ask the team to contact them. dionne.hoskins-brown@noaa.gov
- In The Bahamas, we have a program called [BahamaHost](#) that focuses on educating those that work in our tourism sector about our history, what is available, and how best to engage tourists. Like Hunter & Keinan (Liberty County) have said, this training culminates with tours to historic sites.
- No one has mentioned the National Park Service. Their coastal sites (Fort Frederica, Cumberland Island etc) are big attractions that also share Gullah Geechee heritage. They should be connected to the infrastructure and we should work closely with them.
- We (Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant-Kimberly Andrews) are developing an Environmental Resource Center at the old fire house used by Rebuilding Together and the Environmental Justice Advisory Board in Brunswick (Albany St.). We could incorporate materials there. At some point when it is safe, we will resume community events for residents in downtown in Brunswick.
- Add [Savannah State University](#) to the resource list.
- We did not mention earlier but the GGCHC hosts quarterly public meetings and people working on HT projects are welcome to attend and present. They are usually held at historic sites.

- GGCHC is currently rebuilding our website to include more resource information for sites and DMOs. Should be launched in early 2021.
- Find Tourism Product Development grant info online: industry.exploregeorgia.org
Heritage Tourism guide: <https://www.georgia.org/sites/default/files/wp-uploads/2013/09/GA-Heritage-Tourism-Handbook.pdf>