

NAS NEWS

Summer 2026 Edition
Vol. 16 Issue 2

*The Center for the study of South Carolina's Native American peoples,
their histories, and their cultures.*



**August Opening
for Smithsonian's
"Americans"**

**Farewell to
Chris Judge**

**NASC Celebrates
Chancellor Investiture**



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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Greetings from the Director:

On Thursday, April 30, friends and colleagues of Professor Christopher Judge gathered at the Native American Studies Center in Lancaster to bid a fond farewell to our colleague. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend. In my absence, I shared the comments below, which was read by our colleague, Elisabeth Avelar. I share them with you in the hope that the words give evidence to the great respect and admiration I have, we all have, for our friend and now former colleague, South Carolina State Archaeologist, Chris Judge:

My apologies for not being able to join you for this bittersweet occasion. For two decades I have worked side-by-side with Chris Judge—starting Native American Studies, opening the NAS Center, expanding our work, bringing in new colleagues and losing some dear friends along the way. But we aren't saying goodbye to Chris, but farewell—with the hope that he fares well.

I know how much this new position means to him, and even more so to our Native American communities. He will carry with him the successes that he has had here at USCL—being named Senior Instructor, raising tens of thousands of dollars for our funds and endowments, sharing his work and that of the Center with others, continuing our Lunch and Learn series, creating a community of lab volunteers, and so much more.

But we honor Chris Judge not just for his work, but for his passion, his commitment, and his kindness. Many of you know the role he played in helping our late colleague Brent Burgin in his final days. But you might not know that when my late wife was sick and eventually passed away, Chris ran the Center and Native American Studies for several months. I knew our work was in good hands, and I will forever be grateful.

And everybody knows of Chris Judge. Everybody. Go anywhere in the state and you are likely to find someone who says—you work with Chris Judge? I know that guy. He's great. But we at the NASC have been lucky to really get to know Chris and to call him both a colleague and a friend.

Now if I were there, this would be the point that I start to choke up. So let me conclude with this thought—We at the NAS Center really are a family. Most of us have been here since the doors opened or shortly afterward. And like a family under one roof, we argue, we laugh, we get annoyed with each other, we tease each other, we share stories, and we really care about each other. And like a family, we will always be here for Chris and will take pride in his future successes. And we will always think of him as one of ours.

Here's to 20 years of service! And here's to the amazing job I know you'll do in your new service to the state. And I look forward to continuing to work with you one way or another in the future!

Stephen Criswell

CONTENTS

05. A Farewell to Chris Judge
09. Center to Host Smithsonian Exhibition Exploring Prevalence of Indian Images, Words and Stories in American History and Contemporary Life
11. NASC at USC Palmetto College Chancellor Investiture
12. USCL Assists with Folk Heritage Awards
13. AG+ART 2026
14. Spring Art & Craft Festival Wrap-Up
15. America's Tapestry Project Continues
16. Mini Markets, Gardening Programs Continue through 2026
17. D. Lindsay Pettus Gallery Updates
18. Cogito Director, Center Friend Receives Award
19. Recent Faculty Lectures
22. Events Calendar
23. Center Exhibitions
24. Meet the Author: "100 Things to do in South Carolina Before You Die"

FRONT PAGE CAPTION:

Thanks to Quinlan Canty, Logan Canty, and Kennedy Canty (Catawba Nation) for sharing drumming and dancing on Main Street during our Spring Art & Craft Festival in early May!



ABOVE CAPTION:

The Center is proud to be one of six host sites for the Smithsonian Museum on Main exhibit "Americans" as it travels South Carolina August 2026 to June 2027!

In March, Center Assistant Curator Sharon Simmers-Norton and Director of Campus Collections and Galleries Brittany Taylor-Driggers (mid-table) attended a special planning session hosted by South Carolina Humanities in preparation for the exhibit's opening in the Center's galleries this August. As state humanities scholar for the tour, Chris Judge presented a lecture linking the exhibit's content to information on South Carolina's Native communities.

Americans was developed by the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and adapted for travel by Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and state humanities councils across the country.

Support is provided by the Smithsonian's Our Shared Future: 250, a Smithsonian-wide initiative commemorating the nation's 250th. Signature support for Smithsonian's Our Shared Future: 250 has been provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.

HOURS

Monday: Closed
Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Friday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday: Closed

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Learn more about our Native
American Studies Faculty and Staff
[here!](#)

Follow the Center on [social media!](#)

Native American
South Carolina Archive:
nativesouthcarolina.org

NAS NEWS STAFF

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Did you know that the Center recently celebrated its 150th lecture as part of the W. Brent Burgin Lunch and Learn Lecture Series, which began in 2013? USCL Professor of English Christopher Bundrick presented the lecture, "Cold Mountain Field Notes," providing a little musical accompaniment as part of his lecture. Watch the lecture [here.](#)

A FAREWELL TO CHRIS JUDGE



A few months ago, before we knew that USC Lancaster Senior Instructor of Anthropology and Center Archaeologist Chris Judge was leaving us- perhaps before even he himself knew- to become State Archaeologist with the South Carolina Institute for Archaeology and Anthropology, we had a large tour group looking in to our Fred “Henry” Shute Archaeology Lab. Someone in the group looked at the large table- casually covered by a number of boxes, pottery sherds, and spear points – and remarked, “I love the disarray; it has such character.” Since Chris’s departure last month, it has been strange to see what once was organized chaos turn into an ordinary tabletop, possibly for the first time since the Center’s founding in 2012.

We celebrate Chris’s 21 years of dedicated service at USCL, where he distinguished himself through significant achievements in academia, notably through his work in helping to establish Native American Studies at the university in 2005. From fieldwork to public scholarship, Chris’s work has spanned multiple settings outside of the classroom, including excavating archeological sites, presenting lectures around the state, and overseeing the weekly community archaeology lab, just to name a few. As full as his schedule stayed, he always welcomed everyone from school groups to dedicated lab volunteers to elected officials and dignitaries to individuals seeking to learn more about a mysterious object they found in their backyards.

As colleagues share personal stories and well wishes in the following paragraphs, Chris has made a lasting impact, and we wish him much happiness and success in his new role; his character will indeed be missed.
-AL

How can a person be happy and sad at the same time when you know a person is leaving one job to take on a much bigger job? Especially when it means you won't get to see your former teacher, mentor, and friend. Someone who is even more than those things, someone who has become like a family member. Chris, you are all of these things and I can only say 'kate' and nemusah. May your new job bring new discoveries and because I know it will be filled with many new challenges but great rewards as well. You will be missed here at the NASC.

-Beckee Garris, Center Program Assistant



I have been incredibly fortunate to work alongside Chris Judge since I first arrived at USCL as an instructor in 2007. Together with our amazing faculty and staff, we rolled up our sleeves to build and shape the Native American Studies program from a handful of separate offices scattered across the main USCL campus into its own beautiful, dedicated home at the Native American Studies Center in downtown Lancaster. Chris has been absolutely central to that journey, and it's hard to imagine the Center without his daily presence.

What I've always admired most about Chris is that he balances stellar academic research with a total lack of fear when it comes to hard physical labor. Years ago, before the Center opened, I had the privilege of joining his work at an archaeological dig at the Johannes Kolb site. We spent long, exhausting days digging and sifting in the dirt, followed by wonderful evenings singing and drinking at a hunting cabin close to the site. That same tireless, practical spirit came out when we moved into our downtown location; Chris was right out there

alongside our faculty and staff as we went to the defunct Humana buildings to shlep heavy furniture back to the Center to save on costs.

Whether he is uncovering history or hauling shelves, Chris has always been ready to lend a hand, a smile, or an encouraging fist pump. While this isn't a permanent farewell, I am going to deeply miss walking from my office to the front of the Center and not seeing Chris there to wave or say a quick hello through the "fish tank." Thank you, Chris, for two decades of dedication, partnership, and incredible memories. Wishing you the absolute best in your next chapter!

-Claudia Heinemann-Priest, USC Lancaster Instructor of English, Catawba, and Native American Literature, Center Linguist



It's difficult to imagine USC Lancaster and the Native American Studies Center without Chris Judge. Chris was on my hiring committee and one of the first faculty members to welcome me to USCL in 2022. He has been a supportive mentor at the NASC and consistently provided valuable insights. I've been inspired by his commitment to his profession and engagement with individuals, communities, and organizations beyond our campus. At conferences, I frequently hear Chris's name brought up as an invaluable source of knowledge and experience. I wish Chris the best on his well-deserved opportunities.

-Evan Nooe, USCL Assistant Professor of History, Center Historian

Once upon a time, I was a USCL student. At the time I was working as a server as many students do, and looking to gain experience in another field. One afternoon, going to Chris's anthropology class I saw a sign on the door that read--

"Center closed today due to lack of staff."

And I remember asking Chris if the Center needed staff.

A few weeks later, I was hired to wash artifacts in the archaeology lab. Little did I know that I would still be here almost 10 years later working as the Visitor Coordinator, scheduling groups, tours, and funny enough... making sure there is always someone at the front desk.

Over the years Chris has been a great boss, teacher, mentor, and co-worker. One important lesson I carry from cultural anthropology class is that everyone has their own lived experience that shapes the way they view and interact with the world around them. This is a lesson I think about often and has shaped me in a positive way and fostered empathy.

As sad as I am to see Chris go, I know he will do well in this new position! Thanks for the important lessons I didn't realize I was learning at the time and thanks for the great memories working at the Center and in the archaeology lab with Crystal, Elisabeth and all the lab volunteers.

You will be missed by all of us! I wish you the best of luck in all your future endeavors, farewell and Godspeed!

-Katelyn "Katie" Shull-McManus, Visitor Coordinator



What can I say about Chris? He is an amazing teacher and friend. When I met him, I was a student at USCL, taking his Anthropology courses at the Native American Studies Center. I would occasionally see him on campus playing guitar in jam sessions with Professor Bundrick, too. Next thing I knew, I was asked to take a position as Visitor Coordinator and Student Assistant by Professor Fran Gardner, working for Chris with both front desk duties and in the lab. I am a busy body, so when I was promised to never have idle hands, boy did he mean it, and I loved it. "There is always something to do here," was something I often heard from Chris, which was great, and hasn't changed. Chris taught me many things about the ins and outs of the Center, as well as the archaeology lab, which helped me prepare for my Special Projects Coordinator role I have today. He is amazing at more than that, though. From both a student and staff member perspective, Chris is a great mentor to go to for advice, life lessons, and he makes an amazing floral arrangement, straight from his back yard. With all of the times I've said "if it weren't for Chris" in the past 10-ish years, it will be weird not looking for him to help me with "tall-person" things, or walking into his office for a bit of his experienced advice on all the projects we work on at the Center.

We've worked on some amazing things together. Countless artifacts washed, sorted, and rehomed to their respective locations; databases for all of the lab things as well as Center material; years of wonderful Center events that we've tag teamed on; my first grant-writing experience; exhibit things, including the Center's current children's exhibit that I wouldn't have been able to do without his support; community liaison work that I couldn't have coordinated without his and Brent's connections and people skills; newsletters, lunch and learns, fundraising, fundraising, and, oh yeah, fundraising!

I'll miss going into his office and bugging him, that is for sure, but I look forward to working with him in his new position as State Archaeologist. I think I speak for all who care for him at the Center when I say we love our dear friend, Chris, and we look forward to seeing all of the amazing things he will do. I can't say farewell, because I plan to contact you often. I want to hear about all of your new adventures, and you still have to teach Atreus how to play guitar one day when he is ready! I want to say more, but you know how I babble. Cheers, Chris! Below is an old favorite of mine, where the NAS faculty showed up for their amazing staff as we graduated from USC Lancaster. Thank you to Garrett Smith for the photo.

-Elisabeth Avelar, Special Projects Coordinator



CENTER TO HOST SMITHSONIAN EXHIBITION EXPLORING PREVALENCE OF INDIAN IMAGES, WORDS AND STORIES IN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY LIFE

The Native American Studies Center is pleased to be the first South Carolina site to host the Smithsonian traveling exhibition, “Americans” from Saturday, Aug. 22 through Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026. The exhibition from the Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street and the National Museum of the American Indian explores how deeply intertwined American Indians are in the history, popular culture and identity of the United States.

The Center and the surrounding community have been chosen by South Carolina Humanities to host “Americans” as part of the Museum on Main Street program—a national/state/local partnership to bring exhibitions and programs to rural cultural organizations. The exhibition will tour six communities in South Carolina from August 2026 through June 2027.

Based on a major exhibition at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., “Americans” highlights the ways in which American Indians have been part of the nation’s identity since before the country began. Images of American Indians are everywhere, from imagery on commercial products and professional and high school sports mascots, to classic Westerns and episodes of Seinfeld and South Park. Indian names are everywhere too, from state, city, and street names to the Tomahawk missile. Beyond these images and names are familiar historical events and stories—Thanksgiving, Pocahontas, the Trail of Tears and Battle of Little Bighorn—that have become part of everyday conversation.

Through photographs, hands-on interactives, objects, and videos, the exhibition offers a new way of understanding a country forever fascinated, conflicted and shaped by its relationship with American Indians.

A short, animated film, “The Invention of Thanksgiving,” provides a whimsical take on how a simple meal shared between Native Americans and early English settlers evolved into a central part of America’s traditional origin story and a national holiday.



Thanksgiving postcard ca. 1915. Photo courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition examines three stories that are part of American national consciousness and popular culture. The first is devoted to Pocahontas, the young Powhatan woman who played a key role in saving the colony of Jamestown. Another story explores the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Signed by President Andrew Jackson,

the act envisioned a United States without Indians. One of the boldest and most far-reaching laws in American history, removal transformed the country—generating great wealth for the nation and catastrophe for Native Americans. The third looks at the complicated story of the Battle of Little Bighorn, also known as Custer’s Last Stand. “Americans” explores how these events have been remembered and represented throughout the years.

The exhibition title is a play on words and nods to the name originally given to this country’s Indigenous inhabitants by Europeans. It is meant not only as a reminder of the primacy of American Indians in the territory known as the United States but also of the tangled relationship between Indians and the people now called Americans.

With support from South Carolina Humanities, each location will develop complementary exhibits, host public programs and facilitate educational initiatives to further explore this complicated history and to share local stories about Native American identity and representation in American culture.

Support for “Americans” is provided by the Smithsonian’s Our Shared Future: 250, a Smithsonian-wide initiative commemorating the nation’s 250th. Signature support for Smithsonian’s Our Shared Future: 250 has been provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.



Indian Memorial, Little Bighorn National Monument, 2012. Photo courtesy of Stephen Saks Photography/Shutterstock.

MoMS is a collaboration of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service | Smithsonian Affiliations and state partner organizations. It serves museums, libraries and historical societies in rural areas, where about one-fifth of all Americans live. The partnership brings exhibitions, educational resources and programming to small towns across America. MoMS has visited all 50 U.S. states as well as Guam and inspired over 1,900 towns to rediscover their local histories while finding a renewed sense of community pride. Visit online at museumonmainstreet.org.

NASC AT USC PALMETTO COLLEGE

CHANCELLOR INVESTITURE



Several Center faculty and staff joined in celebrating the investiture of Craig Wilson, J.D, PH.D. as Chancellor of the University of South Carolina Palmetto College on Tuesday, May 12. In a luncheon preceding the ceremony, Center Program Assistant and Catawba artist Beckee Garris gave the blessing in English and Catawba, and Assistant Curator Sharon Simmers-Norton spoke about the artwork she and Director of Campus Collections and Galleries Brittany Taylor- Driggers selected for display from the Center's Special Collections. We welcome Chancellor Wilson and look forward to working with him!

Watch the full ceremony [here](#).

Image Captions:

Top left: Some of the Center's faculty and staff pictured with Chancellor Wilson.

Photo courtesy of Sahar Aghasafari.

Top right: USC President Michael Amiridis speaks after the presentation of the chancellor's medallion.

Bottom left: Beckee Garris greets the crowd before giving the blessing in Catawba and English.

Photo courtesy of Shana Dry.

Bottom middle: Chancellor Craig Wilson addresses the audience.

Bottom right: Sharon Simmers-Norton speaks to Chancellor Wilson about the beadwork, basketry, Catawba pottery, and other artwork on the table before them, as Beckee Garris looks on.

USCL Assists with Folk Heritage Awards

USC Lancaster is pleased to play a small role in honoring traditional arts and culture this year, invited by the South Carolina Arts Commission to co-administer the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award.

“Due to changes at the McKissick Museum, who previously jointly managed the awards with the S.C. Arts Commission, there was a need for someone to coordinate the awards,” said Native American Studies Director Dr. Stephen Criswell.

When Criswell, a 2018 winner of the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award for his advocacy work supporting folklife and traditional arts in South Carolina, was approached about assisting with the award, he sought the assistance of Director of Campus Collections and Galleries Brittany Taylor-Driggers, and the two were able to bring USCL on to help manage the awards.

This year’s winners include Beckee Garris (Catawba Nation), for her artistry in Catawba pottery and basketry, Tammy Leach (Wassamasaw Tribe of Varnertown Indians), for her artistry in beadwork, and Laurel Horton, for her advocacy in the art of quilting. Read the awardees bios [here](#).

The Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award is named for the late State Rep. Jean Laney Harris of Cheraw, respected as an outspoken advocate and ardent supporter of the arts and cultural resources of the state. The award is presented annually by the South Carolina General Assembly to practitioners and advocates of traditional arts throughout the state. For this year’s awards cycle, the FHA program was jointly managed by the South Carolina Arts Commission and USC Lancaster.

The awardees were honored in a May [livestream broadcast](#), along with winners of this year’s South Carolina Governor’s Awards for the Arts.

For more information about the Folk Heritage Awards, visit the S.C. Arts Commission [website](#). Nominations for the 2027 cycle open on Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2026.

Congratulations to this year’s winners!



Beckee Garris (Catawba Nation), one of the 2026 Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award winners, films an interview with a film crew as part of the [S.C. Arts Commission’s livestream awards presentation](#).

AG+ART 2026



We loved seeing everyone at this year's [Ag + Art Tour of Lancaster County](#), with special activities held at the Center on Saturday, May 9.

Friday evening before the event, USCL Director of Campus Collections and Galleries Brittany Taylor-Driggers attended the kick-off celebration at Laurel Haven Estate. On Saturday, Master Gardener Intern and USC Lancaster Professor Claudia Heinemann-Priest, shown here transporting a cart of plants and speaking with visitors, led tours of the Three Sisters and Medicine Wheel Gardens across from the Center in Red Rose Park. Inside the Center, visitors could stop by the front desk to pick up a corn husk doll “take and make” kit from with Center Assistant Curator Sharon Simmers-Norton and purchase homemade jams, soaps, and more (pictured at the table with Simmers-Norton) by Catawba artist Marie George of [Esaw Yaksu](#) (River Mother).

Watch our previous virtual programming on the Center's [Youtube Channel!](#) Be sure to like, subscribe, and ring the bell for notifications!

Visit [NASCA](#) to learn more about South Carolina's Native Communities and access images, videos, timelines, an interactive map, and more!



Over 20 talented artists representing Beaver Creek, Caddo, Catawba, Waccamaw, and other tribal nations were on site for our annual Spring Art & Craft Festival, held in May as part of the City of Lancaster’s Red Rose Festival.

Thank you to all attendees, our new and returning artists, and special thanks to Quinlan Canty, Logan Canty, and Kennedy Canty (Catawba Nation) for sharing drumming and dancing on Main Street.

Pictured are Alex Boatwright (Catawba Nation), speaking with a guest; white beaded earrings by Cheyenne Cauthen (Catawba Nation); Brionna Canty (Catawba Nation), beading earrings at a table; wood-burned hats by Lisa Skeen (Black River Tribe of Winyah-Dawhee); Evie Hatfield (Catawba Nation) and Tony Hatfield, seated behind hand-made wooden walking sticks; and patterned earrings by Kathleen Shtunkinish (Caddo Nation), based on designs found recorded in archaeological accounts of Caddo earspools.

SPRING ART & CRAFT FESTIVAL WRAP-UP

AMERICA'S TAPESTRY PROJECT CONTINUES

Work continued this spring on the America's Tapestry Project, which we first reported in our last [newsletter!](#)

In March, we welcomed back artists Lisa Lindler (Waccamaw Indian People) and Joshua Shumak (Wassamasaw Tribe of Varnertown Indians), and South Carolina State Director Karen Wallach as they continued to stitch the South Carolina tapestry.

This time, the trio were joined by Director of Campus Collections and Galleries Brittany Taylor- Driggers, pictured here stitching horsehair with Shumak, and Catawba artist and Center Program Assistant Beckee Garris, who is pictured weaving a long leaf pine needle basket that will be stitched into the tapestry.

Learn more about the America's Tapestry Project, an artistic celebration of America's 250th anniversary through the medium of embroidery, [here](#).



MINI MARKETS, GARDENING PROGRAMS CONTINUE THROUGH 2026



Looking for something to do the third Saturday of each month? Our monthly mini pop-up art markets and Cultivating Connections gardening programs continue the third Saturday of each month! Pictured here are Catawba Nation artist Marie George (in background) and Toni Simerly and PAIA Lower Eastern Cherokee Nation SC artist Dakota Little Hawk Simerly (in foreground) at the March pop-up market, and Center Linguist and USC Lancaster Instructor of English, Catawba, and Native American Literature Claudia Y. Heinemann-Priest speaking during the March Cultivating Connections.

The monthly mini pop-up markets, featuring two artists working in different mediums, take place from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; participating artists will be announced on our website and social media pages.

The Cultivating Connections gardening program highlights different horticultural topics each month, with presentations and hands-on activities. Tools and materials will be provided for all activities, but participants are welcome to bring their own small hand tools such as gloves, trowels, and clippers if they prefer to use their own equipment.

Registration is strongly encouraged for this program; email usclnasp@mailbox.sc.edu or call (803) 313-7172 to sign up.

June 20
July 18
August 15¹

September 19
October 17
December 19²

1. There will be no Cultivating Connections in August.

2. There will be no pop-up market this month, after the Winter Native American Art & Craft Festival on Saturday, Dec. 5.

D. LINDSAY PETTUS GALLERY UPDATES



Pardon our dust- our D. Lindsay Pettus Gallery is getting a makeover! From freshly painted walls to new artifacts and artwork, visitors can enjoy a sneak peek of changes happening now in our “The Story of Catawba Pottery” exhibit; we hope to complete renovations soon but will announce when the new exhibit is ready. We appreciate everyone’s patience as we make some exciting changes in the galleries!



Thank you to Dr. Debbie Rowell, [USCL Instructor of Criminal Justice](#) for inviting Center faculty and staff to visit her CRJU 311: Policing class to hear guest speaker Lydia Locklear-Canty (Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina), Partner at Current Tribal Law!

Locklear-Canty shared a fascinating overview of tribal law and her experience establishing a police department for the Catawba Nation in her former role as a tribal attorney for the Nation.

COGITO DIRECTOR, CENTER FRIEND RECEIVES AWARD

Congratulations to Cogito Academy Director Van Steen, who was presented the South Carolina Outstanding American History Teacher Award earlier this year in Columbia by the South Carolina Society of the National Society Daughters of Colonial

Earlier this year, Steen was named Director of Cogito Academy, Instructional Coach since its opening in 2025. He previously Andrew Jackson Middle School for three years and U.S. History School. A friend of the Center, Steen has facilitated field trips and at the Center.

In addition to studying history, Steen was also a student Archaeologist (now State Archaeologist with the South Carolina Anthropology) Chris Judge met Steen in 1985 at an excavation for Valley and later worked with him at the Johannes Kolb site in in Allendale County. He also took archaeology classes with Judge

“Van is a skilled excavator,” said Judge. “When we opened the NASC, his parents, Frank and Andee Steen, donated the spearpoints and arrowheads that grace the display behind our reception desk at the Center, along with a significant large collection of artifacts. Van worked as a professional archaeologist for a number of years before shifting gears and becoming a high school history teacher.”



Van Steen, pictured with his recent donation of Catawba pottery.



Double Indian Head Bowl (2004) by artist Matthew Tucker (Catawba Nation); from the Educational Foundation of USCL- Van Steen Collection.

Recently, Steen generously donated 55 pieces of Catawba pottery from his family's collection, which includes wedding jugs, fluted bowls and jars, vases, braided bowls, and more from artists Matthew Tucker, Viola Robbins, Earl Robbins, Margaret Robbins, and others.

Congratulations, Van!

RECENT FACULTY LECTURES



During his last few months as Center Archaeologist, Chris Judge presented several talks around the state. In March, he presented “The Elusive Cheraw Indians of South Carolina” at the Cheraw Arts Commission in Cheraw, S.C., followed by “Native Society in Revolutionary South Carolina” as part of the Georgetown Public Library “A Glorious Cause” public history initiative in Georgetown, S.C. (held in conjunction with the exhibit “Resilience and Revolution: Native Peoples in 18th Century South Carolina on display this spring at the library). In April, Judge presented “Native American Archaeology in South Carolina: Food for Thought” at the Charleston Festival, a foodways-themed fundraiser for the Historic Charleston Foundation. Left, Judge greets Anita and Paul Campbell, longtime friends of the Center and donors to the Center’s W. Brent Burgin Archives, at his Cheraw lecture. Photo by Jacqueline Hough.

Lecturing in the Midlands this April, Native American Studies Director Dr. Stephen Criswell spoke to the Cayce Historical Museum in Cayce, S.C., and for the University of South Carolina Office of Access and Opportunity about the Catawba pottery tradition. Pictured center, Criswell speaks to an audience at the Cayce Historical Museum. Photo courtesy of the Cayce Historical Museum Facebook page.

Appearing virtually, Center Historian and USCL Assistant Professor of History Dr. Evan Nooe spoke to Assistant Professor of History Dr. Jeffrey Washburn’s graduate studies seminar on the Native South at the University of Texas Permian Basin in April. Right, Nooe discussed his book “Aggression and Sufferings: Settler Violence, Native Resistance, and the Coalescence of the Old South” and held a virtual Q&A with students. Photo by Jeffrey Washburn.



Taylor-Driggers Receives Excellence in Service Award

Congratulations to USCL Director of Campus Collections and Galleries Brittany Taylor- Driggers, who is this year's recipient of the Chris P. Plyler Excellence in Service Award for Palmetto College Campuses. The Plyler Award recognizes faculty who excel in service to their campus, community, and profession, emphasizing the importance of such contributions since its inception in 2015. Photo courtesy of USC Lancaster.

Simmers-Norton Joins People of the River Arts Council

Center Assistant Curator and Catawba artist Sharon Simmers-Norton (pictured) has joined the newly formed People of the River Arts Council as a member of the group during its inaugural year. The mission of the People of the River Arts Council brings Catawba artists together to support, uplift, and advocate for one another. As an artist-led council, it works to protect Catawba art and traditions, encourage learning and creative growth, uphold quality and care in their work, and connect artists with programs, resources, and opportunities across the Nation and beyond.

Congratulations, Sharon!

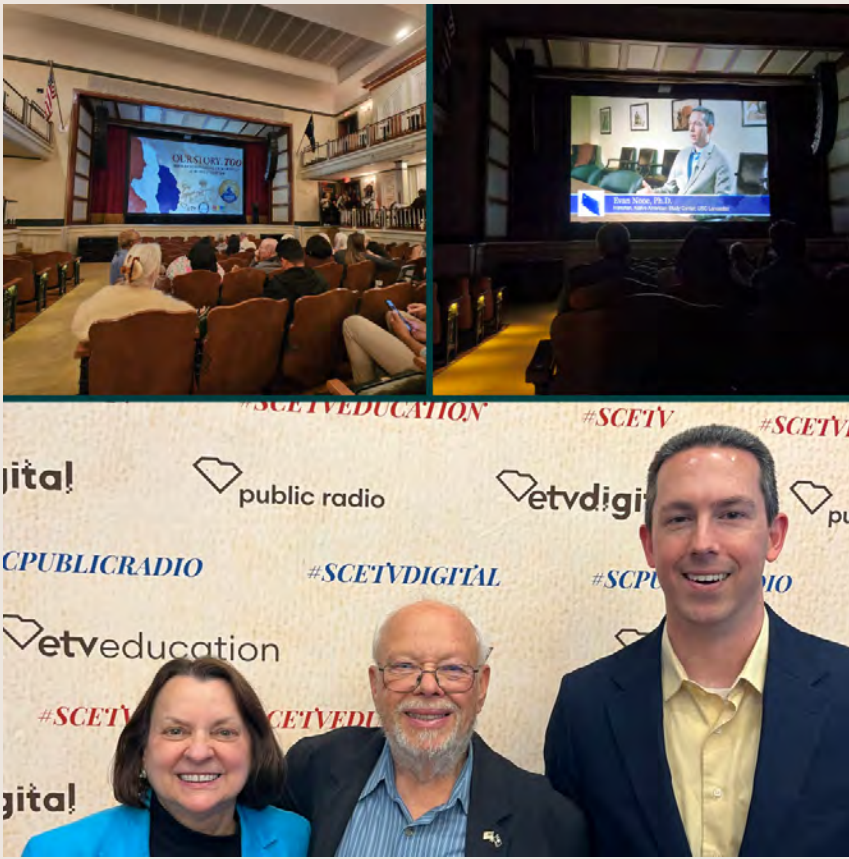


Center Historian Featured in SCETV Rev War Documentary

In our previous newsletter, we announced that Center Historian and USCL Assistant Professor of History Dr. Evan Nooe was interviewed as part of the SCETV documentary, “Our Story, Too: Women, Native Americans and African Americans in the Revolutionary War,” which debuted on the network in March.

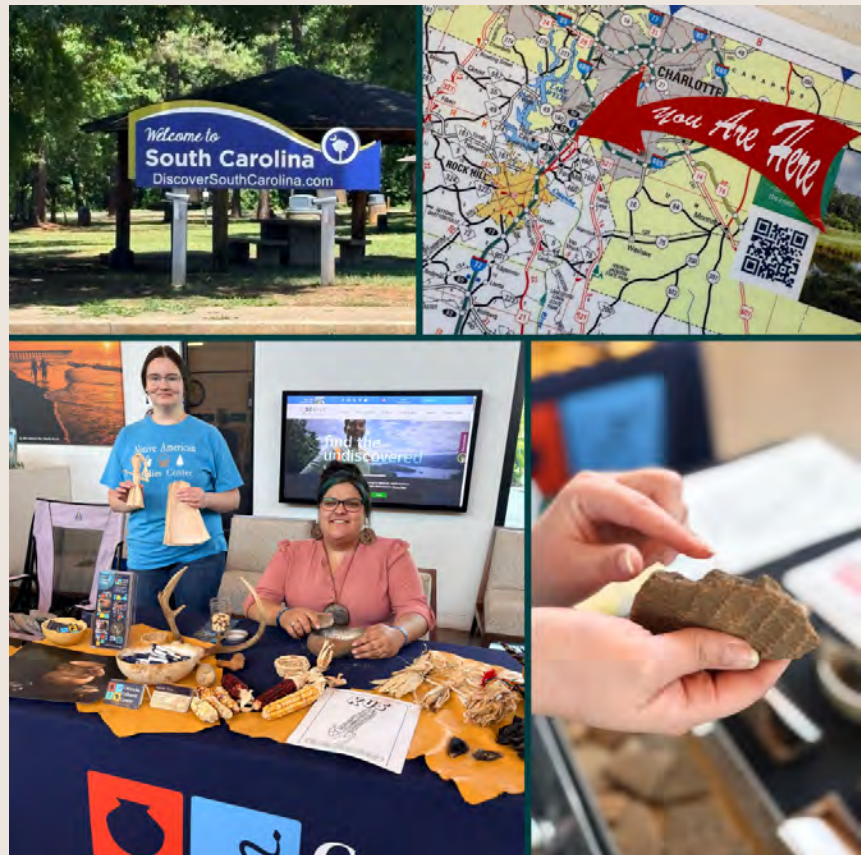
In April, Nooe attended the special reception and screening for the program, hosted by SCETV and SC 250 at the Newberry Opera House in Newberry, S.C. Nooe is pictured here with historians Dr. Melissa Walker and Dr. Vernon Burton, who also appear in the documentary. Photo courtesy of Chuck Reback.

Stream the program [here](#).



Travel & Tourism Week 2026

Along with many other **Olde English District Tourism Commission** organizations, Public Relations Coordinator Ashley Lowrimore and Visitor Coordinator Katelyn Shull-McManus represented the Center during the annual Travel & Tourism Week event, held at the Fort Mill Welcome Center. The two shared information about the Center and showed archaeological artifacts and Catawba pottery. Shull-McManus demonstrated the art of corn husk doll-making, which made a great collaboration with neighbor Kassidy Plyler, Cultural Programs Coordinator with the Catawba Cultural Center, who demonstrated corn grinding.



EVENTS CALENDAR

Mini Pop-Up Art Market

JUNE
20
10 A.M. -
4 P.M.

Held on the third Saturday of each month, these monthly mini pop-up art markets feature two Native American artists working in different mediums. This month's market features Catawba pottery by Nancy White (Catawba Nation) and jewelry and beadwork by Mary Beth Gunn (Catawba Nation).

Author Talk & Book Signing

JUNE
20
10:30 A.M. -
NOON

Join Amelia Old, author of "100 Things to Do in South Carolina Before You Die," for a conversation about the people and places that shape South Carolina. The program concludes with a Q&A and book signing; copies of the book will be available for purchase.

"Cultivating Connections" Garden Program Series: The Layered Landscape

JUNE
20
NOON -
3 P.M.

This new initiative brings together the community, faculty, staff, and students to learn hands-on skills while exploring traditional Indigenous ecological knowledge through presentations and hands-on activities. This session covers lasagna gardening and composting; email usclnasp@mailbox.sc.edu or call (803) 313-7172 to sign up.

Lunch and Learn: "Doing the Dirty Work: Reflections of a Master Gardener"

JUNE
26
NOON

Lecture by Claudia Y. Heinemann-Priest, USCL Senior Instructor & Certified Master Gardener.

Mini Pop-Up Art Market

JULY
18
10 A.M. -
4 P.M.

Held on the third Saturday of each month, these monthly mini pop-up art markets feature two Native American artists working in different mediums. This month's market features Catawba pottery and traditional herbs by Justin Johnson (Catawba Nation) and jewelry and beadwork by Jeannie Sanders-Smith (Catawba Nation).

"Cultivating Connections" Garden Program Series: Remnant Piedmont Prairies

JULY
18
NOON -
3 P.M.

This new initiative brings together the community, faculty, staff, and students to learn hands-on skills while exploring traditional Indigenous ecological knowledge through presentations and hands-on activities. In this session, Clemson Cooperative Extension Area Forestry and Wildlife Agent Robert Carter, Ph.D., discusses plants found in the remnant prairies in the Piedmont; email usclnasp@mailbox.sc.edu or call (803) 313-7172 to sign up.

Lunch and Learn: "Cherokee Family, Tribe, and History"

JULY
24
NOON

Lecture by Eastern Cherokee, Southern Iroquois and United Tribes of South Carolina Chief Lamar Nelson and Vice Chief Judy Noe.

Exhibit Closing

AUGUST
5

Last day to see the exhibit, "Blooming into Light: Artwork by Sierra Cauthen."

Mini Pop-Up Art Market

AUGUST
15
10 A.M. -
4 P.M.

Held on the third Saturday of each month, these monthly mini pop-up art markets feature two Native American artists working in different mediums. This month's market features medicine bags/ beadwork by the late Barbara MorningStar Paul (Lakota Nation) as represented by family members; soaps/resin art by Tammy Knight (Catawba Nation), and pottery by Robbins Family Pottery (Catawba Nation).

Exhibit Opening

AUGUST
22

First day to see the exhibit, "Americans."

Lunch and Learn: "Davidson and Dispossession: The Dismantling of the Catawba Reservation, the Establishment of Davidson College, and the Importance of 'Hard History'" *Sixth Annual W. Brent Burgin Lunch and Learn Lecture

AUGUST
28
NOON

Lecture by Dr. Rose Strem lau, Charles A. Dana Associate Professor History/Gender & Sexuality Studies, Davidson College.

CENTER EXHIBITIONS

D. Lindsay Pettus Gallery: Currently under refurbishment.

North Gallery: “As Long as the Waters Flow: Native Americans in the South and East.”

Featuring the striking images of photographer Carolyn DeMeritt in collaboration with writer Frye Gaillard for their book of the same title, this exhibit of over 30 portraits documents Native American tribal citizens from the Deep South, Mid-South, and Northeast. Through Aug. 10, 2026.

Five Points Gallery: “Blooming into Light: Artwork by Sierra Cauthen.” From surreal landscapes to abstract compositions, this colorful exhibit showcases the paintings and digital photos of Catawba artist Sierra Cauthen. Through Aug. 5, 2026.

Red Rose Gallery: “The Work of Our Hands: Celebrating the Catawba Artists Who Honor the Clay with their Work.” This exhibition highlights award winning Catawba artists and advocates of the Catawba Nation- particularly winners of South Carolina’s Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award and the National Endowment of the Arts Folk Heritage Award. The NASC partnered with the Georgia Harris Foundation to honor these artists and the legacy they leave behind. Through Dec. 15, 2026.

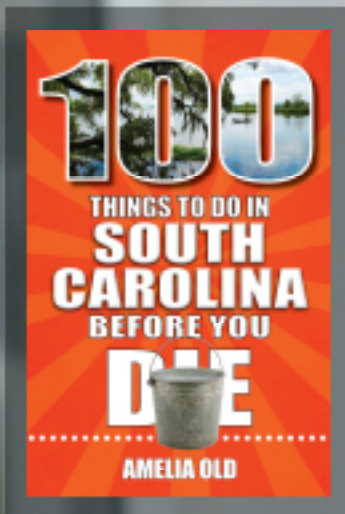
Duke Energy Gallery: “Clay and Play!” This educational children’s exhibit includes traditional Native American folktales, colorful displays and wall murals, pottery displays, an interactive Three Sisters Garden where guests can “pick” corn, beans, and squash, and other props for immersive play. Through Dec. 15, 2028.

Back Gallery: “Growing Through Donations.” This exhibit highlights donations from our Special Collections. Semi-permanent Exhibit.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

North & Five Points Galleries: “Americans.” “Americans,” a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian, explores how deeply intertwined American Indians are in the history, pop culture, and identity of the United States. The exhibition delves into familiar events, including the story behind the Thanksgiving holiday, the legacy of Pocahontas, the Trail of Tears, and the Battle at Little Bighorn. “Americans” was developed by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. The exhibition was adapted for travel by Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and state humanities councils across the country; “Americans” is made possible in South Carolina by South Carolina Humanities. Opens Aug. 22, 2026. Through Oct. 3, 2026.

Saturday, June 20
10:30 - Noon



Meet THE AUTHOR

The People, Places, and Stories That Define South Carolina

Join Amelia Old, author of "100 Things to Do In South Carolina Before You Die," for a conversation about the people and places that shape South Carolina. This program moves beyond a list of destinations, focusing on how places are experienced through the stories, history, and communities connected to them. Amelia will share how the book came together, what guided her selections across the state, and what she discovered along the way.

Hosted at the Native American Studies Center, the discussion will also highlight the importance of preserving cultural history and the role places like the Native American Studies Center play in deepening our understanding of the region.

Free and open to the public, the program will conclude with a Q&A and book signing.



119 S. Main Street
Lancaster, SC 29720
803-313-7172
nativeamericanstudies.org

