Richland County Education Association-Retired
Columbia, South Carolina

September 2026
Volume 2, Issue 1

RCEA-R Reporter

"Retired Educators in Service to the Community"

SEPTEMBER MEETING DETAILS

The first meeting of the 2026-2027 school year will be held Thursday, September 10th, beginning at 11:00am. Please take note of the new location.

Moore Building

at the S. C. State Fairgrounds
(1200 Rosewood Drive)
Enter from Rosewood Drive, turn left at the rocket and the Moore Building is on the left.



Guest Speaker

Dr. Todd Walker, Superintendent
Richland School District One



Please report promptly so that we can begin on time and honor the schedule of program participants
Luncheon payments can be easily made via the website (rcear.org)

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

RCEA-R was very pleased to award the 2026 scholarships to ***Mari Crawford*** (Lower Richland High School) who is attending Winthrop University, majoring in Special/Education and Dance.



The second recipient was ***Jayden Gaskins*** (Richland Northeast High School), who is attending USC Columbia majoring in Music Education. Heartiest congratulations to both of these future educators.

More photos on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message.....2
Courtesy Report 2
Member News 3
Community Events 4

PLEASE NOTE:

The September Community Service Project focuses on the needs of students at Epworth's Children's Home.

Members are asked to bring donations to the September 10th meeting. (A list will be emailed and is on the Epworth's website.)

RCEA-R P. O. Box 25432 Columbia, South Carolina 29224
rcearcolumbia@gmail.com Website: rcear.org



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members:

Education today is both exciting and challenging! As thousands of students returned to classrooms across the Midlands, they entered a learning environment shaped by new realities and rapidly evolving expectations including:

- Technology restrictions that influence how students access and use digital tools
- Metal detectors and other safety measures that affect daily school routines
- Artificial intelligence, which is changing how educators, students, and families think about teaching and learning

For educators and families, these are complex times to navigate. Thoughtful communication, flexibility, and a shared commitment to student success will be essential as schools continue to adapt. Our roles as retired educators can play a significant role in assisting schools to be successful in light of these rapid changes. ***My challenge to all RCEA-R members continues to be active engagement and involvement in our schools***. Your time, experience and support can make a huge and lasting impact. This school year, be the difference that makes the difference!

Ida W. Thompson, President

COURTESY REPORT

Sympathy cards were sent to ***Brenda Milton***, and ***Genoise Washington.*** The Executive Board sent a bereavement acknowledgement to ***April Cobbs.***

Get well cards were sent to ***Willene Dansby, Brenda Milton and Ida Thompson.***

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Report any bereavements, hospitalizations and illnesses promptly so RCEA-R can respond.

SISTERCARE DONATIONS



Many thanks to the RCEA-R members who made contributions to ***SisterCare*** during the June meeting. ***President Ida Thompson*** delivered the items to the staff following the meeting. The staff was most appreciative of the generous and much needed items and monetary gifts.

2026 Scholarship Winners

RCEA-R was pleased to have ***Dr. Kim Moore*** in attendance at the June 11th meeting as the scholarships were awarded.







NEWS AND NOTES ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

RCEA-R members continue to be visible in the community, representing our organization and bringing visibility to retired educators.



Ida Thompson had the pleasure of congratulating ***Kadir Nelson***, recipient of the ***2026 Coretta Scott King Award for Lifetime Achievement*** presented at the American Library Association's 150th Conference held in Chicago, June 25-30. He has authored and illustrated over 40 books during his distinguished career, making significant contributions to children's literature ***Dr. Jill Biden*** was the conference keynote speaker.



Several RCEA-R members attended the ***"We Care Literacy Training"*** workshop sponsored by the S.C. State Department of Education held July 8th at Reid Chapel AME Church. It was designed to help participants with skills and strategies to help others learn to read and strengthen their literacy skills. In attendance were ***Cynthia Taylor, Pat Brown, Ida Thompson, and Pat Gold.***

The AARP sponsored play "Mama's Girls" was presented August 22 at the Richland District Two Performing Arts Center. The very large and enthusiastic audience included a number of RCEA-R members; a few of whom are pictured with the play's cast. They include ***Frances Goins, Ida Thompson, Pat Gold, Alfreda Tindal and Janie Fair***.



A number of RCEA-R members attended the ***Intersections on Main Street: African American Life in Columbia*** event at the Columbia Museum of Art September 1.



Special guests were relatives of ***Richard Samuel Roberts***, the renowned Columbia photographer whose works have been captured in a volume titled **A True Likeness.** ***Dr. Bobby Donaldson***, Executive Director of the Center for Civil Rights History and Research (USC) is pictured with the group.

PREPARING TO VOTE

RICHLAND COUNTY
VOTER
REGISTRATION
OFFICE
300 Columbia Mall Blvd
Ste. 210
Columbia, SC 29223
PHONE
803-576-2240 Option 1

November 3, 2026 is General Election Day in South Carolina. Now is the time for every eligible citizen to take the steps to be prepared for the elections.

The ***SCVotes website (scvotes.gov),*** hosted by the ***S.C. Election Commission***, is an excellent source to answer all your questions regarding registration, polling places, election dates, sample ballots and more.



Scholarship Reminder

Donations to the RCEA-R Scholarship Program can be submitted throughout the year.
Donations can be made online (www.rcear.org) or mailed to the post office box
P. O. Box 25432
Columbia, SC 29224

MISSION

RCEA-R works to keep its members informed of current rights, benefits, and privileges, to further the general welfare of retired school personnel, and to maintain continued interest in professional growth.

RCEA-R is open to both certified and classified personnel.

New Members

Carol Tyler Carson, Karen Roach

ON THE CALENDAR

September 7
Labor Day

September 13
National Grandparents Day

October 2
Last Day to Register for November Elections

October 12
Columbus Day

October 31
Halloween

November 3
Election Day

November 11
Veterans Day

November 12
RCEA-R Meeting

November 26
Thanksgiving Day

SCEA Town Halls Scheduled

The SCEA is inviting educators to come, listen, share, and connect with fellow educators and community members in a series of town halls. These sessions are designed to discuss the future of public education in South Carolina. These events are free and open to the public. **The Columbia session will be held on October 30, 2026.**



Member Recognitions



During the June 11th meeting, Social Workers, Industrial/Vocational Arts, Classified and Associate members were photographed.

Thanks to all our members for your years of service!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Annual Jubilee Festival

Experience the vibrant spirit of history and culture at the 48th annual ***Jubilee: Festival of Black History & Culture***, hosted by Historic Columbia and presented by Legacy Traditional Schools. The festival takes place **Saturday, September 19, 2026**, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., at the Mann-Simons Site for a FREE, multigenerational celebration everyone can enjoy! The festival features live music, food trucks, artist demonstrations, historic house tours and market vendors. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.



RCEA-R Officers:
Ida Thompson, President Janie Fair, Vice-President, April Cobbs, Secretary, Marvin Byers, Treasurer, Wanda Turner, Financial Secretary, Sandra Vant, Parliamentarian
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