



SPRING/SUMMER 2006

Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs Information Update

A Letter from Barry Barnet, Minister Responsible for the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs



As the Minister responsible for the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, I want to thank you for continuing to support this office in all its endeavours. I am excited to report that much has happened with the Office since the last information update.

In summer 2005 we successfully launched our colourful and informative website, which also happens to feature the photography of African Nova Scotian photographer Peter Marsman. The website is updated on a regular basis and includes information about the mission, mandate and goals of the Office, features a community events pages and photo gallery.

In August, we realized the next phase of our operational strategic plan and moved into our Halifax headquarters, located at 5670 Spring Garden Road. In September, then interim executive director Wayn Hamilton was appointed to the position of chief executive officer for the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs. Shortly thereafter staff was hired (see staff profiles in this newsletter) and in October, we had our first and extremely successful open house. The celebrations were only slightly marred by the retirement of Evangeline Williams who assisted Mr. Hamilton in developing the Office's framework and operational strategic plan.

Fall 2005 was an extremely productive time for the office. As staff settled into their new jobs they also took on the task of delivering two major initiatives simultaneously to the community. The traveling road show, as we called it, saw staff and me, visiting communities across the province to reintroduce the Office. It was important for community to see that the office was now fully operational.

On behalf of the Voluntary Planning Task Force on Heritage, the Office coordinated a series of focus group sessions in 13 African Nova Scotian communities across the province. African Nova Scotians were asked to assist in determining what heritage in Nova Scotia would look like for the next generation. The voices of many community members were captured and the information they shared will provide decision makers with the information they need to assist in planning future heritage programming in this province.

In the next few months, our goal is to continue to review programs and policy and pursue partnerships and initiatives within government and the community in an effort to strengthen the delivery of services to African Nova Scotians and facilitate an integrated approach within government to address African Nova Scotian issues. I will continue to encourage my colleagues at every opportunity to work with this Office to ensure we reach our full potential.

I appreciate your support and encouragement as we move through year one and look forward to working with you in the very near future.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Barry Barnet



Mission Statement

Assist, support, and enhance the provincial government's delivery of services to African Nova Scotians and be a partner in developing innovative solutions that lead to self reliance and sustainable development for African Nova Scotians and their communities.

Timeline

How we got here from there.

- *August 2003*

The Honourable Barry Barnet, MLA for Hammonds Plains–Upper Sackville is made Minister of the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA).

- *November 2003*

Wayn Hamilton was appointed interim executive director and Evangeline (Vangie) Williams was seconded from the Treasury and Policy Board to work with Mr. Hamilton as the Office's program administration officer.

- *September 2004*

During the fall session of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs was legislated a Public Sector Entity, with a mandate, government obligations and mechanisms enshrined in legislation to ensure that it can only be dissolved by majority votes in the legislative assembly.

- *October/November 2004*

Staffing and space allocation plans approved.

- *Winter of 2004/Spring-Summer 2005:*

- *May and June 2004:* Wayn Hamilton and Evangeline Williams visited African Nova Scotian communities to present the Office and its strategic plan.

- *Late summer 2004*

The Office produced its first newsletter aimed at updating the community on the Office's progress.

- *January 2005*

Angela Johnson was assigned to the OANSA as Communications Advisor, from Communications Nova Scotia.

- *February 2005*

Information booklet produced.

- *July 2005*

Website and logo launched.

- *August 2005*

The Office moved into a physical space.

- *Fall 2005*

- Marketing materials created, e.g. brochures, signs, banner, etc.

- September 7, 2005: Student Internship position began—2-year program through *Career Starts*, government internship program.

- September 28 2005: First CEO was appointed

- Sept-Nov. 2005: Remaining staff interviewed, hired and began work

- Oct. 18, 2005: OANSA Open House

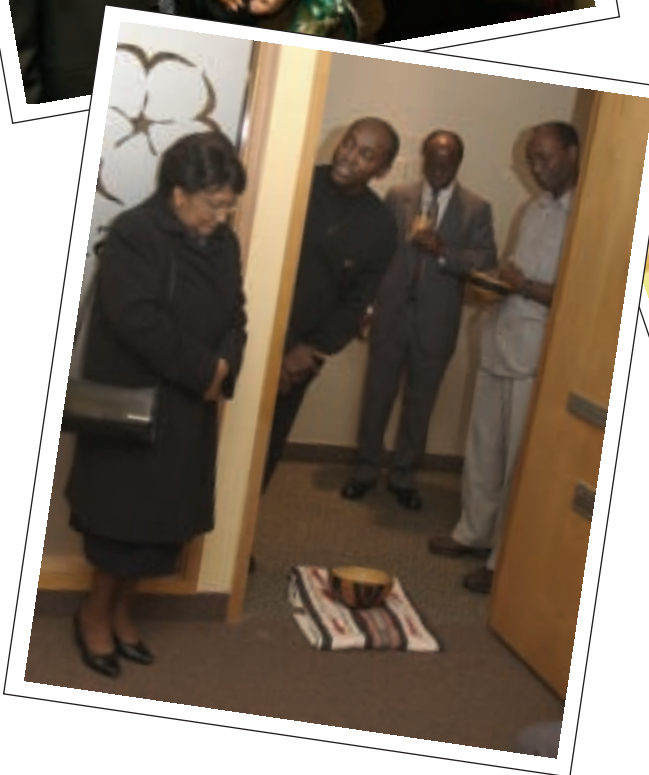
Open House

After months of selecting a location, revising the architectural layout, choosing paint colours, floor coverings and furniture, and finally moving in we had our first open house on October 18, 2005. The occasion was the culmination of many years of hard work first initiated by the African Nova Scotian community who indicated a need for this office. Under the direction of the honourable Barry Barnet who was made Minister of the Office, Wayn Hamilton and Evangeline Williams, who were seconded from their positions within government, created a strategic operational plan for this office.

For the first portion of the day, government employees visited our office. Minister Barnet was on hand to give an extra special thank you to individuals who provided us with exceptional assistance in establishing our office. They received one of our coveted promotional items, the ANSA T-shirt, mug or hat and traditional hug.

The remainder of the day we greeted community members who were eager to see we had indeed arrived, giving our new staff the opportunity to make important connections within the African Nova Scotian community.

As we enter our six-month of operations with full staff, we view our Open House as the 'official' beginning of our first year.



Top Left

Minister Barry Barnet, Evangeline Williams (ret.) and Angela Johnson

Bottom Left

Libation (blessing) the office ceremony

Top Right

Debra Gannon and Scott Drummond

Bottom Right

Wayn Hamilton is interviewed



Recent Activities

Since the Open House in October 2005, staff of the OANSA has been active. They have attended several meetings and have represented the Office on various interdepartmental, workgroups and committees. The staff has also participated in community and government events, projects and programs, conducted research and gathered materials in an effort to build the office's resources. They have also started to liaise with several organizations and individuals who have mutual goals on a variety of issues relating to African Nova Scotians.

Voluntary Planning Heritage Task Force

This past fall, Nova Scotians were asked to provide input into what heritage in Nova Scotia will look like for the next generation. In November 2005, African Nova Scotians were asked for their opinion on a new provincial heritage strategy.

The Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs coordinated a series of focus group meetings, on behalf of the Voluntary Planning Task Force on Heritage. Sessions were held in 13 historically African Nova Scotian communities across the province and the voices of many community members were captured.

This partnership between the community, the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs and Voluntary Planning also highlighted the value of engaging the perspectives of all Nova Scotians in these types of consultation processes. It is anticipated that this approach may serve as a model for future collaborations the office will embark on. Further information on this strategy can be reviewed by visiting the following webpage.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/vp/heritage/default.htm>

Partnerships

The following is a sampling of African Nova Scotian organizations and activities the Office has developed partnerships with and in some cases, been able to assist by way of a donation.

ADAM

(African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes)

The mission of ADAM, a non-profit community based organization, is to encourage and foster successful participation and integration of African Canadians from the Diaspora in educational, social, political, civic and economic activities in Nova Scotia and Canadian society.

ADAM will also have a welcoming component that will assist with resettling and motivating new Nova Scotians from the Diaspora to stay in Nova Scotia. The organization will address the issues and concerns of the African immigrant community and attempt to join the voices of the indigenous African Nova Scotian community and Nova Scotians from the Caribbean in order to create a collective voice from the Diaspora.

In December 2005 and February 2006, two community contact and mobilization sessions were held at Dalhousie University. The sessions were an opportunity for interested individuals to be informed, debate and build consensus for a mechanism / structure to assist ADAM in achieving its goals and objectives.

The Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs assisted ADAM with logistics for both workshops, provided facilitation, attended planning meetings and offered advice.

African Nova Scotian Music Association (ANSMA)

The office has partnered with the African Nova Scotian Music Association to develop activities that will advance the issues and concerns of African Nova Scotian musicians and artists.

Africville Genealogy Society

The Office has contributed towards the Feasibility Study for the Seaview Baptist Church and Africville Interpretive Centre project in conjunction with the Atlantic Canadian Opportunities Agency, the Halifax Regional Municipality, Heritage Canada, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage and the Office of Economic Development.

Black Loyalist Heritage Society

The office assisted the Society in programming activities such as the completion of their business plan, finalization of the Mugomeh Conference and the development of its coat-of- arms.

Cumberland County Black Homecoming

The Office supports the planning and development of a weeklong celebration of culture and history for African Nova Scotians living in Cumberland County. Activities will include a cultural display room and genealogy room. The celebration will create a permanent display of information that recognizes and celebrates the African Nova Scotian heritage in Cumberland County.

Glace Bay Universal Negro Improvement Association

The Office provided support to an African Nova Scotian youth leadership workshop and assisted the association's board in developing their business plan. The youth workshop was designed to enlighten young African Nova Scotian learners about respect and giving back to their community.

Greenville Community

A campaign is being established to raise the funds to build a new community centre in Greenville, Yarmouth County. The OANSA is pleased to have been asked to contribute towards this worthy cause.

The Health Association of African Canadians (HAAC)



Top Photo

Henry Bishop (BCC) and Phyllis March Jarvis (HAAC)

Bottom Photo

Margo Hampden (ANSA) and Phyllis Marsh Jarvis (HAAC)

The Health Association of African Canadians (HAAC) is a non-profit health association based in Halifax, with a mandate to provide resources, conduct research, and disseminate research findings to government agencies, institutions, and African Nova Scotian communities, with a long-term vision of seeking policy reform on health issues of African Canadians.

The vision for HAAC is to be a community based organization that will promote the health and well-being of African Canadians living in Nova Scotia through community mobilization, development, and leadership in research.

One of the most important aspects of HAAC's work is in promoting the collection of data and research around health status and issues of African Canadians. The Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs has supported HAAC's vision of engaging health practitioners and African Nova Scotian communities on issues related to health.



Imhotep's Legacy

The Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, the Department of Education's African Canadian Services Division, and the Black Student Advising Centre of Dalhousie University in partnership with Dr. Kevin Hewitt, a professor in the Physics Department of Dalhousie, sponsors a 14-week math/science exploration project for African Nova Scotian learners in grades 7, 8, and 9. The program is designed for African Nova Scotian learners who want to improve their math and science marks, develop a more positive attitude toward these subjects and gain or sustain parental support as they participate in this endeavor.

The project entitled Imhotep's Legacy is in its fifth year of operation. The program is designed to provide young learners the opportunity to explore math and science in an interactive, inquiry-based environment. Imhotep's Legacy is based on African American academic studies that examined students in small settings. The evidence indicated that when a small group is organized in a cooperative learning environment and is lead by committed and enthusiastic role models/mentors, academics improve and the social impact is positive. This premise, with some alterations, has had positive results for African Nova Scotian learners. The program is currently being offered in two schools in the metro area. Discussions are underway to deliver Imhotep's Legacy to other regions of the province.

Mathieu Da Costa Heritage Trail

The vision of the Valley African Nova Scotia Development Association's board of directors is to develop a provincially and nationally recognized African Nova Scotian Heritage Trail with colorful, informative interpretive panels installed at various locations of significance, each supplemented by local community histories throughout the Annapolis Valley.

Positive Parenting Workshops



Left to Right:

Katherine Conrad, NSGEU, Human Rights Commission; Gerry Clarke, Volunteer, BEA; Ben Bishop, Adult Education Coordinator, BEA; Margo Hampden, Program Officer, African Nova Scotian Affairs; Paul Ash, Student Services Consultant, African Canadian Services Division.

The Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs has partnered with the Department of Education's African Canadian Services Division and the Regional Educators to develop and deliver the Positive Parenting workshops. The program is designed to support parents in understanding child development, strengthen and/or engage community education committees, and increase parents' involvement in schools and in the education of their children.

In January 2006, the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs in partnership with the African Canadian Services Division performed a two-day seminar for trainers to prepare them for delivering these workshops in their perspective regions of the province.

On February 24 and 25, 2006, the program launched provincially and a Positive Parenting workshop was offered in Digby and the strait region. The expectation is to continue to offer this program to African Nova Scotian communities across the province.

ANSA Staff 2005:

Front Left to Right:

Evangeline Williams (ret.),
Minister Barry Barnet,
Natasha Jackson, Jessica
Lightbourne, Debra
Gannon, Wayn Hamilton.

Back Left to Right:

Angela Johnson, Margo
Hampden, and Scott
Drummond.



Staff Profiles

Current staff at the Halifax headquarters

Wayn Hamilton, *Chief Executive Officer*

Wayn was born in Beechville, Nova Scotia, a small African Nova Scotian community on the outskirts of Metro Halifax. He attended Dalhousie University and received a Bachelor of Arts in African Studies and a Bachelor of Education with a major in Language Arts. Wayn also has a Masters in Planning and Development from Guelph University.

Wayn Hamilton was a youth counselor for the YMCA'S Job Generation Project and is the past assistant director of the International Education Centre at Saint Mary's University. For several years, he was the regional educator in Dartmouth for the Black Educators Association and later moved on to be the student services consultant for the African Canadian Services Division, a unit of the Department of Education.

Wayn has spent fifteen years working and living in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone and has traveled to almost all West African countries.

In November 2003, Wayn and Evangeline Williams were seconded to the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs to develop the framework and strategic plan for the office. Two years later, he was appointed its first chief executive officer.

Wayn enjoys all forms of jazz and African beat music. His inspiration is Dr. Marie Hamilton (his mom) and anyone with a genuine passion to make positive changes in their life, the life of their community and beyond.

Natasha Jackson, *Senior Policy Analyst*

Natasha Jackson is a native and resident of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Following formal education in the field of microbiology, Natasha chose to pursue a career working with and for community. She brings over ten years of experience in the areas of affordable housing, community development, communications, policy and program development, adult education and project management.

Natasha currently serves as an active member on a number of community groups and is on the Board of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network. In this work, she focuses in the areas of diversity & inclusion.



Angela Johnson, Communications Advisor

Angela Johnson is a professional communicator with a background in broadcasting and public relations. She was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick but as the eldest of two daughters born into a military family, she moved around a lot and spent a good portion of her youth overseas in Germany. She now lives in Nova Scotia where she has paternal roots in North Preston.

Angela holds a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Radio and Television Arts from Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario and has obtained several communications related certificates and/or diplomas. For close to two decades, Angela has worked as a journalist and television broadcaster for local and national specialty television networks. In 2000, she formed her own production company, Mirabliss Media Productions, and in her spare time produces content for television, consults on broadcast related projects, writes for magazines and teaches news writing for the Journalism program at the University of Kings College.

As the communications advisor, Angela is responsible for directing the communication initiatives for the Office, ensuring government protocols and guidelines are followed. This includes issues management, writing speeches and news releases, liaising with media, coordinating a variety of communication materials and promotional items, and organizing news conferences and other events.

Angela enjoys her monthly book club, Sisters with Books, and visiting with family, particularly her two nephews, aged 8 and 3.

Debra J. Gannon, Office Manager

Debra has been working with the Provincial Government in various positions since 1984. In 1998, she became the first African Nova Scotian Administrative Assistant to the Premier of Nova Scotia.

Debra was educated at Bridgetown Regional High School and Kings County Vocation School and as well, obtained credits from Mount Saint Vincent University and numerous Professional Development certificates from the Public Service Commission.

Debra has spent many hours volunteering and her volunteer work earned her the Hiram J.

Atkinson Memorial Award in 1992, which is awarded to outstanding adult YMCA volunteers.

As the Office Manager for the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, Debra manages and supervises all the administration activities for the office. She prepares, controls and monitors the office budget in conjunction with the CEO; responds to complex queries and complaints; coordinates meeting schedules, events, and travel arrangements. Debra supervises the daily operations of the records management system ensuring an effective and efficient system is in place by supervising the daily operations.

Debra has a favorite Ghanaian saying that is: If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation). This well-known saying is attributed to the Ghanaian scholar Dr. James Emmanuel Kwegyir-Aggrey (1875-1927), one of this century's greatest educators.

Margo Hampden, Program Officer

Margo was born and raised in the Halifax metro community. She is an active member of her community and enjoys getting involved in activities and functions. She enjoys watching her son's play basketball and lacrosse. Margo obtained her certificate in Management through, Mount Saint Vincent's University and Saint Mary's University and has over 20 years experience with Nova Scotia Power, Aliant and the Provincial Government. She has worked in management, operations, technical systems and customer service and has dedicated her career to three main areas; customer relations, management / change management and negotiations. Margo has worked with many communities and organizations developing, revising and implementing projects, resolving conflict, providing mediation as well as negotiating new programs or services.

As program officer with the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, Margo looks forward to working with the community and government organizations to develop resources, implement new projects and programs and assist in achieving goals. She believes we cannot achieve the things we want by remaining who we are today. Change is inevitable.

Her favorite African Proverb is; Advise and counsel him; if he does not listen let adversity teach him.

Scott Drummond, Secretary

Scott Drummond graduated from the Nova Scotia Community College with a certificate in Information Technology after successfully completing the Business Information Technology course.

Scott has been employed with the government since 1999 working as a records clerk and as administrative support within the Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs. In 2001, Scott worked as a data entry/records clerk for the Department of Community Services, at their Portland Street and head office locations. Scott continued working in the records management field when he received a term position as a records clerk with Department of Justice. In 2003, Scott accepted a records clerk position with Continuing Care through the Department of Health.

In his spare time, Scott enjoys biking, baseball, reading and basketball with his son.

Jessica Lightbourne, Project Research Officer (Intern)

Jessica Lightbourne was born and raised in Bermuda. She lived in Wales and Spain before coming to Nova Scotia for higher education. Completing a Bachelor of Arts Sociology and Social Anthropology and a Bachelor of Laws, both from Dalhousie University, Jessica is committed to the pursuit of racial equity and justice.

After living in Nova Scotia for nine years, she has chosen to call Halifax home. Jessica was hired under the provincial government's Career Starts internship program, a program that allows recipients the opportunity to gain valuable work experience, while providing the employer with support in a variety of areas. Jessica assists the OANSA as its project research officer.

Jessica's primary responsibilities include: policy and program research and analysis, including research and data collection from the African Nova Scotian communities on health, social conditions, youth and the justice system, immigration, community development, heritage etc; and assisting in strategic development initiatives.

Jessica is a member of the Nova Scotia Mass Choir and loves to spend her free time participating in cultural and artistic activities.

CEO Appointment Wayn Hamilton

1.



2.



3.



4.



Photo 1:
Former Premier John Hamm announces
Wayn's appointment

Photo 2:
Wayn Hamilton and Minister
Barry Barnett

Photo 3:
Wayn Hamilton, former Premier John Hamm,
and Minister Barry Barnett

Photo 4:
Former Premier John Hamm talking to guests



Holland Remembered

Documentary Premiere



Arnold Johnson and sons, Mark and Al Johnson



Allan Blackwood, editor of documentary



Angela Johnson (ANSA, documentary producer)



Mark Johnson (son) and Arnold Johnson

Multiple Lenses Conference



Arnold and Al Johnson talk to Peter Stoffer, MP



Minister Barry Barnett delivers speech on African Nova Scotian Political Leaders, Advocates, and Activists.



Arnold Johnson signs autographs while granddaughter Antifa McDonald looks on



Honourable Jean Augustine at podium.



Crowd gathered for screening



Governments, Party Politics and Black Canadians panel.



ANSA LOGO



ANSA

The new logo incorporates several concepts that relate to the mission of the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA), including:

FLOWER

- The Mayflower is the official flower of Nova Scotia.

STAR

- This stylized star is symbolic in several different ways. A few include:
 - The Black Star of Africa has come to symbolize hope and honour.
 - A Black star to represent the people.
 - Points of the star resemble spokes moving forward as are our people.

BIRDS

- Represent freedom and fertility.
- Birds are said to carry the souls of our ancestors.

Inquiries, comments, submissions, or to be included on our mailing list, please contact:

Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs

5670 Spring Garden Road, Suite #604

PO Box 2691

Halifax, Nova Scotia

B3J 3B7

E-mail: ANSA_Newsletter@gov.ns.ca

General: 902-424-5555

Facsimile: 902-424-7189

Website: www.gov.ns.ca/ansa