

Charleston County News Release

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Charleston County is Platinum Sponsor of the 2007 Black Expo

Expo events run March 8 - 10

For the second year in a row, Charleston County Government will sponsor an important local event, the 7th Annual Black Expo. The Black Expo will run from Thursday, March 8 through Saturday, March 10.

As a platinum sponsor, Charleston County Government contributed \$25,000 to the 2007 Black Expo.

"Charleston County government employees are excited to take a lead in the Black Expo again this year," said Evelyn DeLaine-Hart, Charleston County's Director of Organizational Development, who is coordinating the county's participation in the event. "We have always supported the Black Expo and are looking forward to being involved again this year. As diversity is a major focus for the County, our participation demonstrates our commitment to broadening our workforce and expanding our business partnerships."

Charleston County departments that will have a booth at the Expo are:

- Grants Administration
- Human Resources
- Procurement Department
- Sheriff's Office
- Solid Waste and Recycling Department

"Each department will have staff present to give information on Charleston County Services," said DeLaine-Hart. "For example, the Procurement Department will have a laptop running the County's Web site, so attendees can learn about the bid process and see what bids are currently available for businesses."

The theme of this year's exposition is "Empowering, Enlightening, and Educating." Funds raised will be used to support the Cannon Street YMCA and Project Cool Breeze.

According to the Black Expo's Web site, the local expo's concept was taken from Black Expo USA, a former national event that traveled the country. Black Expo's are now successfully held in cities such as Chicago, New York and Indianapolis, and are the largest events directly targeting the African-American community.

The purpose of the Black Expo is to promote economic development through increased exposure for minority-owned businesses. It is a family-oriented event that exposes the community to business opportunities and cultural resources.

Schedule of Events, 2007 Charleston Black Expo:

Thursday, March 8

- Business Opportunity Summit: 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. featuring Dr. Mel Gravely, author of "*When Black & White make Green*" at the Charleston Public Library

- Kick-off Reception: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at Charleston Waterfront Gallery

Friday, March 9

- Celebrity Golf Tournament: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Wescott Plantation Golf Club

- Pre-Expo Gala: 8 p.m. – 11 p.m. featuring Brian McKnight and Quinten Baxter at the Gaillard Auditorium. Tickets: \$40 & \$30 general admission, \$65 VIP.

Saturday, March 10

- Black Expo 2007: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Featuring Lou Gossett, Jr. as keynote speaker (speaks at 2 p.m.) at the North Charleston Convention Center. Cost: \$10 adults, \$5 children.

Visit the Web site at www.charlestoncounty.org for news, services and up-to-date information relating to Charleston County government.

- Written by Jennie Davis -