

Beaufort County News Release

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH AREA | COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY DEPARTMENT

Contact:

Fred Leyda
Human Services Director
843-521-3152

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sheldon Township Community Sets Example, Receives Visit from Leadership South Carolina, Celebrates 20 Years

[Leadership South Carolina](#), a prominent leadership development and civic engagement group, recently visited the Sheldon Township for a three-day session focused on social issues and health topics. The class spent one of its days completely immersed in the Sheldon Township's challenges and successes as a rural community in Beaufort County.

The focal point of the workshop was the Sheldon Township Community Support Partnership, a grassroots group established two decades ago in 1997 to develop the Sheldon Township community.

"We are pleased to have one of the state's leading civic organizations here to join us in discussion and fellowship and to learn about our efforts here in the Sheldon Township," said Reverend James E. Moore of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Dale. "We're small in number but our results are vast because our volunteers work with unwavering faith to find projects and resources to help our community to overcome educational, economic, social and health issues."

The partnership, made up of resident volunteers and no full-time staff, has brought more than \$4.8 million into the community in the past two decades.

"We sometimes turn away money. If we can't figure out how to make it sustainable for our community, we turn it away," said Fred Leyda, Beaufort County Human Services Director. "It's not about the money. The group has no office. No phone. Just a PO box. Literally, we are a group of community members coming together to see how we can make difference."

Workshop participants and panelists included STCSP leadership and local leaders from the Beaufort County Human Services Department, Beaufort County Early Childhood Coalition, Beaufort County School District, Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, Beaufort Memorial Hospital, the Extra Mile Club, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, and Whale Branch Early College High School.

The panelists spoke to a group of more than 40 leaders from government, non-profit and business sectors throughout the state.

"It's so important for all South Carolina leaders to understand how communities can help better themselves. Beaufort's success in the Sheldon Township demonstrates what can be done if they find common ground and work for the good of all. Clearly this shows the best of Beaufort and we were privileged to see this 'Beloved Community' up-close," said Helen Munnerlyn, executive director of Leadership South Carolina.

"The Sheldon Township Community Support Partnership is a testament to the value in collaborative efforts of a community's most essential asset... it's people," said Beaufort County Councilman Gerald Dawson, who represents District 1, which includes the Sheldon Township communities. "I've attended STCSP meetings for nearly two decades now and although our work is not complete, I am proud of what we have accomplished. We've come together for children, to provide sustainable resources that will benefit them through adulthood."

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The panel discussions were filmed by [The County Channel](#). The morning session can be watched [on demand here](#). The afternoon session can be watched [on demand here](#).

The event was photographed by Beaufort County's Communications and Accountability Department. Some photos are included below. A full album can be viewed [here](#).

The event was also filmed and photographed by [Whale Branch Early College High School](#) media arts students.

The Sheldon Township Community Partnership works to initiate development, acquire resources, implement plans and strategies, evaluate outcomes for projects with specific objectives to improve the prospects of Sheldon Township children. The Partnership accomplishes this by facilitating development of sustainable collaborative relationships that can leverage financial resources, functioning capabilities, beneficial access and community support.

[Leadership South Carolina](#) is the oldest state organization dedicated to leadership development and nurtures a deeper sense of service and civic engagement for the betterment of all South Carolinians. This year's class includes more than 40 statewide leaders in government, business and nonprofit. This was the group's first visit to the Sheldon Township community.

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