



THE REPORTER

State Employees Association of North Carolina



39th Annual SEANC Convention ★ Sept. 7-9, 2023 ★ Greensboro

ENHANCING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

2021-2023 President Martha Fowler presided over her third-straight convention.

CONVENTION THEME



This year we are celebrating our 76th anniversary. Our organization is going through some transformations that I believe will enhance our association. This year I want our theme to reflect how we as state employees stand together as a whole to ensure a better life for our members. This year's theme, "Enhancing Our Future Together" depicts our organization's dedication to ensuring our future as the loudest voice for state employees and retirees in North Carolina as our SEANC membership continues to grow.

Last year, I spoke on how SEANC is built on many foundations – a moral foundation, an ethical foundation, a business foundation, and an experience foundation. We are continuing to build upon these foundations because we must have a solid foundation to enhance our future. We are embarking on new ideas, new programs, and new ways of handling business. I ask you as SEANC members to continue to be strong when everything seems to be going against us, determined when the odds are against us, and to persevere if we are knocked back at times.

In the words of Albert Einstein, "The future is an unknown, but a somewhat predictable unknown. To look to the future, we must first look back upon the past. That is where the seeds of the future were planted." OUR FUTURE IS GOING TO BE GREAT! We as an organization have never forgotten our past, nor have we forgotten what it has taken for us to get to where we are. However, we must also realize there are times when our past teaches us to branch out and to continue to fight for what we know is right. "Enhancing Our Future Together" as an organization will always be our top priority.

One of my favorite authors and motivational speakers, Steve Maraboli, stated, "Cry. Forgive. Learn. Move on. Let your tears water the seeds of your future happiness." SEANC family, we have cried, we have forgiven, we have learned from our mistakes, and now it is time for us to move on.

SEANC's future depends upon each of us. Let us start today "Enhancing Our Future Together!"

Martha T. Fowler

2021-2023 SEANC President Martha T. Fowler

COMMUNITY SERVICE



American Diabetes Association Director of Development Katie-Rose Crater accepts a donation from Past President Martha Fowler on Oct. 24 at the SEANC office in Raleigh.

Each year, the SEANC President chooses a special charity for the Annual Convention community service project, members and districts donated to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Association and the American Diabetes Association. They also made donations to the SEANC Scholarship Foundation.



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In This Issue

- 2 Convention Theme
- 3 Business Sessions
- 4 Fellowship & Fun
- 6 2023 State Awards
- 10 Black & White Ball
- 12 2023-2025 President's Address

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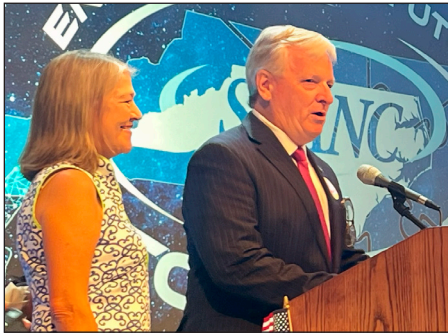
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BUSINESS SESSIONS

39th Annual Convention

President Martha Fowler presided over the 39th Annual SEANC Convention in Greensboro Sept. 7-9. Delegates from all 51 districts descended on Greensboro to conduct SEANC business.

Among the highlights, State Treasurer Dale R. Folwell updated delegates on the fight to bring transparency to the State Health Plan and retirement security.



State Treasurer Dale R. Folwell and his wife Synthia greet delegates.

A new slate of statewide officers were elected for the next two years.

Delegates honored Joe Ferrington, a 61-year-old UNC-Chapel Hill staff member who shepherded students to safety during the recent shooting on campus. Ferrington was in attendance at the Convention.



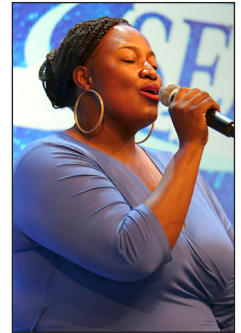
Executive Director Ardis Watkins delivered her report on Friday morning highlighting major victories and changes for SEANC in the past year and the challenges that lie ahead.



Invocation given by District 60 member Debi Artis.



Presentation of Colors by the NC A&T State Color Guard.



National Anthem
God Bless America by the
NC A&T State Fellowship
Gospel Choir.



Statewide officers and parliamentarians stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.



Past President Jimmy Davis commends President Fowler for her many years of dedicated service to SEANC and her excellent leadership as SEANC President.

BUSINESS SESSIONS



District 19 member Marie Tate enjoys attending convention each year.



District 1 members Joseph Haskett, and Janina and Mark DeHart take notes.

Record number of Bylaws Amendment considered

Delegated voted on a record 83 bylaws amendments that will help make SEANC a modern organization that is able to evolve and grow.

The amendments addressed everything from issues with our vendors to SEANC memberships to SEIU disaffiliation.

Delegates debated the amendments in adherence to Robert's Rules of Order.



District 19 member Carolyn Brown and Chairman Anthony Weaver review the amendment information.



Parliamentarian Kim Martin confers with Pres. Fowler.



Delegates voting on one of the 83 bylaws amendments.



District 18 Chairman Dewey Brower takes his turn during delegate polling.

FELLOWSHIP & FUN

President's Reception

CASINO NIGHT

Then President Martha Fowler hosted a festive evening on Sept. 6 that included delicious food, fun and fellowship for delegates and guests.



Emerging LEADERS Luncheon

The Emerging Leaders Council hosted its annual luncheon on Sept. 8 in the Imperial Ballroom.

State Treasurer Dale F. Folwell and his wife Synthia attended, as well as the SEANC officers. Council members and all new delegates were invited to attend as well.

Awards were presented to District 18 members Aggie Phillips (Award of Excellence), Belinda Lish (Most Dedicated), Christian Nicolson (Rising Leader) and District 22 member Rashia Norman (Unsung Hero).



FELLOWSHIP & FUN

Past Presidents' Luncheon



SEANC Past Presidents and spouses with then President Martha Fowler.

EMPAC Investor's LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION



Rep. Wesley Harris, EMPAC Chairman Mark Dearmon, Rep. Donna White, Rep. Harry Warren and Rep. Robert Reives II.



Rep. White chats with District 17 member Walton Jones.



Executive Director Ardis Watkins and Rep. Reives.



District 2 members Martha Ramsey, Rosa Phillips, Daniel Hervig and Wanda Morgan.



EMPAC SEANC *of the* LEGISLATORS of the YEAR

House Minority Leader Rep. Robert Reives II and Rep. Donna White received the EMPAC Legislators of the Year award for their dedication to state employee and retiree issues in the General Assembly session.

New Delegate Orientation

New delegates met on Thursday morning before the session started to learn what to expect over the three days of the convention.



2023 Awards

The **Member of the Year Award** recognizes a SEANC member for his/her continued service and active support of SEANC both in words and actions for the current year.

The **District Chair of the Year Award** recognizes a SEANC district chair for his/her dedication and active support of SEANC both in words and actions for the current year. District chairs are typically the persons called upon the most to handle SEANC's business and affairs and are frequently among the hardest workers in the association.

The **Distinguished Service Award** is presented to a SEANC member in recognition of **cumulative** service and active support to the association. Recipients are persons who year after year, work to promote SEANC's goals and objectives, serving in whatever capacity asked of them. Nominees are anticipated to be persons whose involvement and presence have left a lasting mark on the association.



District Chair of the Year
Deborah Harney
(District 22)

Member of the Year
Tracy Webb
(District 42)

Distinguished Service
Kirk Montgomery
(District 25)



Scholarship Foundation Cash Raffle Winners

The Annual Scholarship Foundation Cash Raffle is a major fundraiser for the foundation to continue to disburse funds to further the educational process of SEANC members, their spouses and dependent children.

Grand Prize (\$5,000)	First Prize (\$3,000)	Second Prize (\$2,000)
Franklin Leaven sold by District 39	Kim Delgado sold by District 64	Luther Thompson sold by District 58



Scholarship Foundation Board Member Nicole Hunter holds the wheel still as Past President Jimmy Davis chooses a raffle ticket submission.



Then Retiree Council Chairman Benny Brigman presented District 9 Chairman Jamie Robinson with the **2022-2023 Bob Hopper Award for Distinguished Service** on retiree issues.



Then Emerging Leaders Chairman and District 69 **Carl Elliott** received the **2022-2023 Presidential Honoree Award** for outstanding services.

Member Discount Awards

1st Place (\$500)	2nd Place (\$400)	3rd Place (\$300)
Tracy Webb District 42	Taneisha Thompson District 22	Tim Southard District 4

2023 Awards



District 22 received the **2022-2023 District of the Year Award** in recognition of outstanding membership involvement in advancing the goals of the association within the year.



2022-23 Executive Committee Awards. (Left to right) North Central Region Representative Janet Bunch, Treasurer Emily Jones, Piedmont Region Representative Cliff Brown, Eastern Region Representative Kathy Merritt, Insurance Board Chairwoman Laura Overstreet, Retiree Council Chairman Benny Brigman, President Martha Fowler, Parliamentarian Kim Martin, Parliamentarian Joyce B. Shaw, First Vice President Kirk Montgomery, Second Vice President Wendell Powell, Western Region Representative Cliff Johnson, and Immediate Past President Jimmy Davis.



Joe Farrington, a UNC-Chapel Hill employee, was honored for his heroism during the recent shooting on campus. Districts and individual delegates made donations to Farrington in appreciation for his efforts.

Darryl Arnold Awards



Public Schools Liaison **Brad Langhans** and Communications Specialist **Beth Dew** received Darrell Arnold Awards for excellence as SEANC staff members.



Past President Jimmy Davis presents President Fowler with the President's Gavel Award for her achievements as SEANC president from 2021 - 2023.

BLACK & WHITE BALL



President Fowler is escorted by her youngest brother Howard Thompson to the podium.



District 18 members Pamela Storr, Takesha Hammond and Cora Cash enjoy the event.



President Fowler welcomes delegates and guests to the 2023 Black & White Ball.



Newly elected SEANC President Kirk Montgomery catches up with Past President Wayne Fish.

BLACK & WHITE BALL



District 42 Chairwoman Shirley Bell sparkles during the ball.



Several members of President Fowler's family attended the banquet. Seated at her table from left to right are nephew Duran Villines, President Fowler, sister Betty Richards, brother Tony Thompson, brother Ronnie Thompson, sister-in-law June Thompson, brother Howard Thompson and sister Mary Villines. Seated at the table to the left of Fowler are her niece Candance Young, Fowler's brother Michael and his band (not shown) Aquarius Moon & Friendz, who provided entertainment that evening.



District 24 member Dr. Charlotte Williams and her husband.



District 25 John Gullo and District 41 Mike Gould.



2023-2025 SEANC Officers: Kirk Montgomery SEANC President, Wendell Powell First Vice President, Emily Jones Second Vice President, and Stacie Crabtree General Treasurer.

2023-25 President's Address

New President Kirk Montgomery pledges to advocate for every state employee & retiree

The following is SEANC President Kirk Montgomery's address to the delegates at the 39th Annual SEANC Convention on Sept. 9.

As I stand here, humbly accepting the honor of serving as your President of the State Employees Association of North Carolina (SEANC), I am reminded of this role's immense responsibility. It's not just a position; it's a pledge to advocate for every state employee who dedicates their life to serving our great state.

Before I speak to our future, it is important to acknowledge our past. Our past presidents, with their vision, commitment, and resilience, have shaped this organization into the formidable entity it is today. They have navigated challenges, celebrated triumphs, and forged pathways that have benefited our members and enriched our state's fabric. We owe them a debt of gratitude and the promise to carry forward the torch they've so passionately held.

Our young members represent our future. I urge every young state employee to join SEANC. Your voice, ideas, and unique perspectives are welcome and essential. In your hands lies the potential to sculpt North Carolina's future and preserve the livelihood of SEANC.

To our retirees, you have laid the foundation upon which we stand today. Your service, dedication, and wisdom are invaluable. Our promise to you is simple

but profound: We will advocate for your rights, security, and well-being.

Safety is paramount. Our public servants, irrespective of their roles, deserve to work in an environment that prioritizes their safety. It is our shared responsibility to ensure a secure North Carolina for all.

Wages and benefits that reflect our state employees' hard work and dedication are not just a need—they are a right. Every day, our members work tirelessly for North Carolina and it's high time that we, as a state, recognize and reward this dedication adequately.

Education is the beacon that lights our path. We will stand resolutely in our support for public schools, universities, and institutions that shape the minds of our future generations. They deserve nothing but the best.

Our municipalities are the pulse of North Carolina. They must have the resources and support to serve our communities effectively.

To our colleagues in Health and Human Services, your roles are paramount. Your commitment impacts lives daily, whether in mental health, public health, family support, or any of the myriad areas under this vast umbrella. Your work often touches the most vulnerable among us, ensuring they have access to vital services and care. We recognize your unique challenges and I pledge to advocate for better



resources, training, and compensation for our HHS employees.

I would also like to extend my deepest respect to our correction officers and every agency in our state. Your roles, often carried out away from the limelight, ensure the stability and progress of North Carolina. Your safety is paramount and should never be an afterthought; we will continue to advocate for this.

I must pause to extend my profound gratitude to James Holman, Stanley Drewery, Jimmy Davis, and Martha Fowler. Your mentorship, belief, and support have shaped my journey, molding me into the leader I aspire to be. I thank my home district, District 25, for your continued support. My heartfelt thanks also go to my anchor, my wife, Pamela Montgomery. Your unwavering support, insights, and enduring love have been my guiding star. And, in my faith, I thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for bestowing this treasured opportunity upon me.

In conclusion, as your President of SEANC, I promise to uphold the mission of creating a better and brighter association that works for every member daily. As a united force, we will shape a North Carolina that genuinely values and cherishes its state employees.

Thank you for entrusting me with this role. Let's make history together.

Montgomery broke out some of his dance moves after winning his election.

