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# City eNews

We Are Columbia



## CITY OF COLUMBIA TO HOLD WALK BIKE COLUMBIA PUBLIC MEETING

The City of Columbia invites citizens to see the draft pedestrian and bicycle master plan on Thursday, January 22 from 6-7:30 p.m. at EdVenture Children’s Museum, 211 Gervais Street in the Canal Room. This is an opportunity for citizens to give input on the plan recommendations and talk one-on-one with the planning team before City leadership considers formally adopting the plan.

Walk Bike Columbia! is a comprehensive effort to address the pedestrian, bicycle and transit needs of the City of Columbia through detailed analysis, public participation and interagency collaboration. The website for the project is [www.walkbikecolumbia.org](http://www.walkbikecolumbia.org) and includes an interactive map where users can pinpoint specific locations where they would like to see infrastructure improvements, a 5-minute user survey and other documents and project briefings that are updated regularly.

## START THE NEW YEAR WITH A NEW CAREER

Chief William “Skip” Holbrook launched a major Recruitment and Retention Initiative on Tuesday, December 9 that will allow the Columbia Police Department to hire qualified applicants for 45 (forty-five) vacant law enforcement officer positions. The Department’s Plan also includes a 7% (seven percent) pay increase and a host of incentives to help recruit and retain law enforcement personnel.

These initiatives are critical to public safety, as the Columbia Police Department works to become fully-staffed and better positioned to compete with neighboring law enforcement agencies, whose salaries and incentives have historically given them a competitive advantage over the CPD--making it more difficult for the Department to recruit and retain good officers.

The Columbia Police Department hopes to change that. Beginning in 2015, positions that require specialized skills and training will receive additional pay for their expertise. Officers who live in the City can look forward to a \$500 annual Residency Bonus and Educational Pay Incentives will be available to all personnel who earn professional degrees while working with the Columbia Police Department. Incentives also include signing bonuses for qualified and certified (new) officers, as well as low interest home loan programs.

According to Chief Holbrook, “attracting and retaining law enforcement’s best and brightest will put the Columbia Police Department in a more competitive position and help to ensure our departmental transformation.”

These employment opportunities, as well as the Recruitment and Retention Incentives, will be widely publicized within the industry and are expected to attract candidates from across the Midlands and Southeastern United States.



For more information about the Columbia Police Department and these exciting new opportunities, please contact:

**Columbia Police Department  
Office of Staff Development  
803-545-3552**

Or

**City of Columbia  
Human Resources Department  
803-545-3010**

## **CITY MANAGER TERESA WILSON TO SERVE AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR LEADERSHIP COLUMBIA LUNCHEON**

City Manager Teresa Wilson will be the keynote speaker for Leadership Columbia Alumni Association's Luncheon Series on Tuesday, January 20 at 11:30 a.m.

The Leadership Columbia (LC) program provides existing and emerging leaders with opportunities to enhance their civic knowledge and network. For over 40 years, the program has helped participants better understand how our community works, build relationships with the region's current and future leaders and become inspired to focus their talents in a way that will best serve the community.

## **YOUTH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM**

The Community Relations Council (CRC), in collaboration with the City of Columbia, hosted a Youth and Community Leaders Forum on Tuesday, Dec. 16 at the Columbia Police Department (CPD) Headquarters, 1 Justice Square. Mayor Steve Benjamin welcomed the attendees and the City's CPD and Parks and Recreation staff participated and served as subject matter experts.

"The roundtable discussion brought both large, small, new and veteran youth organizations together to discuss youth advocacy, mentoring and youth job creation. The objective is to focus on creating a healthier and safer community for children and youth. This roundtable was the first of a series of Community Relations Council youth focus events to come," DeAnna Bookert, Program Manager, Community Relations Council.

"As a city, we are committed to providing quality resources and programs to our youth," City Manager Teresa Wilson stated. "Our staff are dedicated to serving our children and to offering opportunities to partner with local youth organizations."

CRC's Youth Initiative uses innovative and collaborative programs to reach young people in school and community center settings that enhance self-esteem and positive learning opportunities. Their ultimate goal is to assist today's youth in becoming productive and wholesome citizens in the larger community.



Photo Above: City Manager Teresa Wilson.



Photos Above: Mayor Steve Benjamin (middle) and Police Chief William "Skip" Holbrook at Youth and Community Leaders Forum.

## ADVERTISEMENT FOR A VACANCY FOR MIDLANDS AUTHORITY FOR CONVENTIONS SPORTS AND TOURISM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The City of Columbia is accepting applications for the Midlands Authority for Conventions Sports and Tourism Board of Directors. The mission of the Midlands Authority for Conventions Sports and Tourism includes: directing and managing the activities and mission of the Columbia Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Columbia Regional Sports Council and the Columbia Regional Visitors Center; and overseeing the development and operation of the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center under a long-term management agreement for the benefit of the Governmental Entities: City of Columbia, Lexington County and Richland County.

We are seeking an individual to represent the lodging industry as required in this board's by-laws.

All applicants must work/reside within Columbia city limits.

**Deadline – Applications are due no later than Friday, January 10, 2015, 5 p.m.**

For applications and more information contact Connie Lucius at 803-545-4268 or send a request to [cflucius@columbiasc.net](mailto:cflucius@columbiasc.net). You can also visit our website at <http://www.columbiasc.net/boards-commissions> to download an application.

## ARBOR DAY

The City of Columbia hosted its annual Arbor Day Celebration on Friday, Dec. 5 at A.J. Lewis Greenview Elementary School. Mayor Steve Benjamin, Councilman Sam Davis and City staff were in attendance.

Arbor Day marks the beginning of tree planting season. Following the Arbor Day program, students participated in a ceremonial planting of trees.



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Photos Above: Mayor Steve Benjamin and students at Greenview Elementary School.

## CITY OF COLUMBIA TO HOST PUBLIC FORUMS FOR CITIZEN INPUT IN FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN

Columbia's Vision needs your voice! The City of Columbia's Community Development department will host public forums for citizen input in the Five Year Consolidated Plan for submission to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). All interested citizens of the City are invited to provide input and comments on community needs by attending one of the four public forums:

**Thursday, January 8, 2015 at 6 p.m.**

Earlewood Park Community Center, 1111 Parkside Drive

**Thursday, January 15, 2015 at 6 p.m.**

King Park, 2300 Greene Street

**Thursday, January 22, 2015 at 6 p.m.**

Edisto Discovery Park, 1914 Wiley Park

**Thursday, January 29, 2015 at 6 p.m.**

Woodland Park, 6500 Olde Knight Parkway

For more information, contact Dollie Bristow at 803-545-3371 or Community Development at 803-545-3373.

## RED RIBBON AFFAIR AND SILENT AUCTION

South Carolina HIV/AIDS Council (SCHAC) recognized the City of Columbia at its Red Ribbon Affair and Silent Auction on Thursday, Dec. 4. City Manager Teresa Wilson accepted thanks on behalf of the City.

South Carolina HIV/AIDS Council (SCHAC) is an organization dedicated to the reduction of the spread of HIV/AIDS. They believe this is a mission for all communities, governments and families throughout the state.



Photos Above: Councilman Davis, City Manager Teresa Wilson and City Staff accepting thanks on behalf of the City and City Manager Teresa Wilson, City Staff and attendees at the Red Ribbon Affair.

## 27TH ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION

The City of Columbia and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation announced the 27th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration will be held on Monday, January 19, 2015, at 4 p.m. at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Community Center, 2300 Greene Street.

Columbia Urban League President and Chief Executive Officer James T. McLawhorn, Jr. will be the keynote speaker. The celebration will also include performances from A. C. Flora High School Gospel Ensemble, The Brotherhood of First Nazareth Baptist Church and Jonathan Cannon, a Dutch Fork High School junior.

The celebration will also include a Wreath Laying Ceremony to commemorate the historic marker honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at 3:06 p.m. at the corner of Harden and Greene streets. Members of the Alpha Psi Lambda and Omicron Iota Lambda chapters of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. will lead the ceremony.

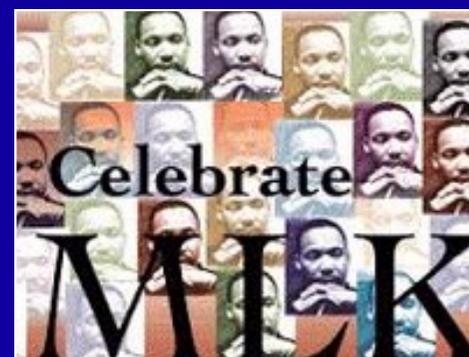
On Saturday, January 17, 2015, the Omicron Iota Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and Bridging the Gap With Alpha, Inc. will hold the 25th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. 5K Run/Fitness Walk at 9 a.m. at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park located at 2300 Greene Street.

If registering before January 9, 2015, the registration fee is \$25 (includes a commemorative T-shirt) or \$20 (without a T-shirt). After January 9, the fee is \$30 (with T-shirt) or \$25 (without the T-shirt). Proceeds from the race will benefit the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation and The Alpha Academy.

To register, visit [www.strictlyrunning.com](http://www.strictlyrunning.com). Applications are also available by calling 803-254-8070 or emailing [kolonel@bellsouth.net](mailto:kolonel@bellsouth.net).

For more information about the race, contact Willie L. Odom at 803-254-8070 or [kolonel@bellsouth.net](mailto:kolonel@bellsouth.net) or visit [www.AlphaOIL.org/MLK](http://www.AlphaOIL.org/MLK).

For more information about the 27th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, contact Shireese M. Bell at 803-545-3100 or [smbell@columbiasc.net](mailto:smbell@columbiasc.net), or visit [www.columbiasc.net](http://www.columbiasc.net).



## HOURLY OF CODE

IT-ology hosted “Hour of Code” workshops on December 8-12, where attendees learned the basics of computer programming. Using Code.org, workshops covered the basics of a variety of programming languages and tools.

The Hour of Code was a part of the annual Computer Science Education Week (CSEd Week), a celebration geared to encourage interest in the field and show anyone can learn the basics. For more information, visit [www.csedweek.org](http://www.csedweek.org).

## COLUMBIA COMMEMORATES THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BURNING OF COLUMBIA

Columbia Commemorates remembered the 150th Anniversary of the Burning of Columbia on Friday, December 5, 2014. Mayor Steve Benjamin, Eric Emerson, SC Department of Archives and History; David Campbell, Historic Columbia Board of Trustees; Mary Bentz Gilkerson, One Columbia for Arts and History; and Bill Ellen, Midlands Authority for Conventions were in attendance.

“This commemoration was an opportunity for all of us not only to mark this important moment in our history but also to take stock in how far we’ve come as a city and as a people,” said Mayor Steve Benjamin. “Over the past 150 years, the City has risen from the ashes.”

For more information, visit [BurningofColumbia.com](http://BurningofColumbia.com).

## SIMS PARK PLAYGROUND REOPENS

The City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department announced the grand reopening of the playground area at Sims Park on Saturday, December 13, 2014. The playground was closed in November for the installation of new playground equipment.

For more information, call the Parks and Recreation Department at 803-545-3100.



Photo Above: Student participants at the Hour of Code Workshop.

*“We offer workshops free to the public to kids of all ages,” said Jon Bartschi, Program, Delivery & Services Director. “We teach them how to computer program and write code in a fun, easy to learn way.”*



Photos Above: Mayor Steve Benjamin at the Burning of Columbia Press Conference and Sims Playground.

## COLUMBIA PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL GROUNDBREAKING

Professional baseball's return to Columbia took another major step forward on Tuesday, January 6, 2015. Mayor Steve Benjamin, along with Jason Freier, CEO of Hardball Capital; Bob Hughes, President, Hughes Development; Bob Keane, President and CEO, Spirit Communication; Greg Hughes, President, Contract Construction, Inc. and Project Manager for CCEB Venue Partners; and other City, State and company officials ceremonially broke ground on Spirit Communications Park at Columbia Common in Downtown Columbia. The state-of-the-art multi-use sports and entertainment venue will be home to an affiliated professional Minor League Baseball team beginning in April 2016.

"This is a milestone day for our entire city," Mayor Benjamin said. "It's taken hard work by many to make this possible, and more hard work is still in store, but our vision for a more vibrant Columbia is coming closer and closer to fruition. The countdown is now on to Opening Day in 2016."

The team will begin taking reservations for ticket packages on February 2, 2015. Information and pricing will be available online at [ColumbiaProBaseball.com](http://ColumbiaProBaseball.com) and [SpiritCommunicationsPark.com](http://SpiritCommunicationsPark.com) on January 27, 2015.

"We've seen this kind of development centered around a ballpark work throughout the country, including not so far away from Columbia," said Bob Hughes. "Folks in Columbia are in for a treat with Spirit Communications Park."

More than 900 jobs are expected to be created during the construction of the ballpark. Once complete, Columbia's professional baseball team will bring on approximately 35 full-time and 550 part-time employees.

The facility will also serve as a public gathering place for hundreds of indoor and outdoor non-baseball events each year. The park will host approximately 8,000 fans for baseball games and 14,000 for concerts.

"Today we break ground; In April of 2016, we'll play ball," said Mayor Benjamin.



Photos Above: Mayor Steve Benjamin opening the groundbreaking ceremony, Mayor Steve Benjamin and venue partners breaking the ground and first base at Spirits Communications Park.

# Women's Defense Class

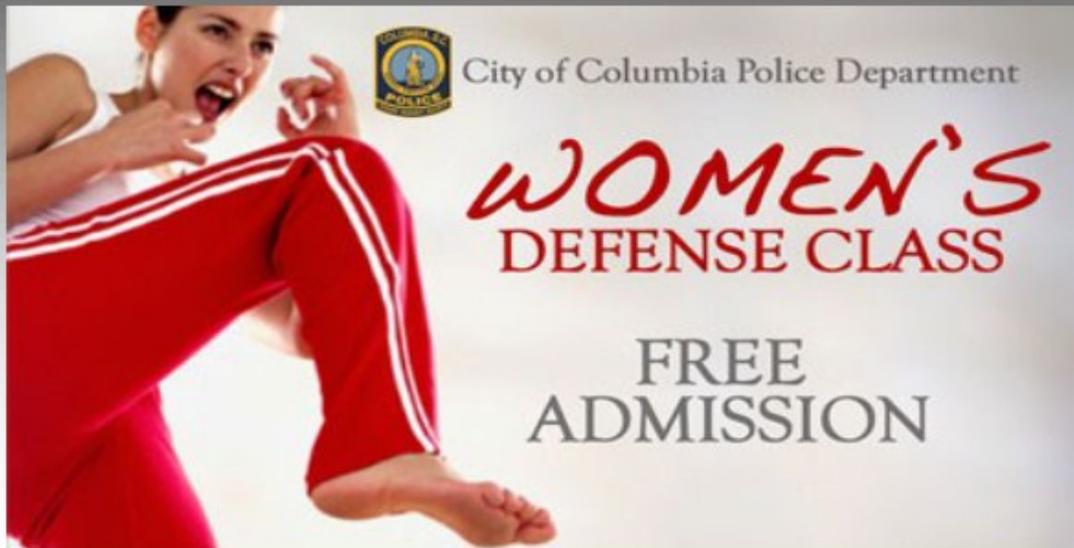


**Charles R. Drew Wellness Center**

2101 Walker Solomon Way Columbia, SC 29204

(803) 545-3200

[www.drewwellnesscenter.com](http://www.drewwellnesscenter.com)



**When: January 13 and January 27 @ 5:30PM**  
**You pick your day!**

**Where: Charles R. Drew Wellness Center**

**Who: Open to girls and women ages 13 and up**

- Stick to well-lit, well-traveled streets. Avoid shortcuts through wooded areas, parking lots or alleys where there are dark hiding spots.
- Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket, and try not to keep currency and credit cards all in one place.
- Have your car or house key in hand before you reach the door.
- The elbow is the strongest point on your body. If you are close enough to use it, do!

**Call 803-545-3200 to reserve your space TODAY!**



We Are Columbia

[www.columbiasc.net](http://www.columbiasc.net)

# Women's Wednesday



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City of Columbia  
Parks & Recreation  
1111 Parkside Drive  
Columbia, SC 29203  
803-545-3100  
[Columbiasc.net](http://Columbiasc.net)

## Women's Wednesday

## Pickup Basketball Games

**January 14, 2015**

**7-9 pm @ King Park**

**(2300 Greene Street, Columbia 29205)**

Pickup games start at 7:15 pm for women 18 & over

**Sports drinks and hors d'oeuvres provided**

**Free admission**

To register as a team or individually, contact Corinn Taylor or Carl Watson  
at (803) 545-3100, or Le'Shunn White at (803) 733-8452.

For more information, contact Corinn Taylor at (803) 545-3109 or [cetaylor@columbiasc.net](mailto:cetaylor@columbiasc.net).

# Financial Education Workshop



"BANK ON"  
COLUMBIA



***YOU'RE INVITED!***

**MANAGE YOUR MONEY - MANAGE YOUR LIFE**

**City of Columbia  
Community Development**

## **Start Fresh!** **Financial Education Workshops**

Having trouble managing your budget or paying down debt? Let us help you take control.

**Learn the importance of:**

- Banking
- Budgeting
- Saving
- Building your Credit



Workshops will be held 9-11:30 a.m. at 1225 Lady Street on the following Saturdays:

**January 17** | **February 21** | **March 21**

To register, call 803-545-0280 or email [rpking@columbiasc.net](mailto:rpking@columbiasc.net)



# Lifesavers Blood Drive

# LIFE SAVER

American Red Cross

**5th Annual Columbia Lifesavers Blood Drive**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Friday, February 27**

**7 a.m.- 3 p.m.**

**Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center**

To schedule your donation appointment, please visit  
[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS.



Sponsored by Mayor Steve Benjamin, the City of Columbia and the American Red Cross S.C. Region Board of Directors

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# City Media

[www.ColumbiaSC.net](http://www.ColumbiaSC.net)



TWC Ch.2 City Talk

**We Are Columbia**

Public Relations, Marketing and Media Department  
[pio@columbiasc.net](mailto:pio@columbiasc.net) P: 803-545-3020 F: 803-343-8719