Greetings from the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill! We are honored to announce an exciting new partnership between the Southern Historical Collection (SHC) and the Eastern Kentucky African American Migration Project (EKAAMP), and we would welcome your participation in the development of a participatory archive here at UNC to document the rich history of black Appalachia.

The American South -- the place, its past, and its people -- is of special significance to African American history, and the questions of race are at the heart of southern history. From the period of enslavement through the “Long Civil Rights Movement” to the present, the struggles and triumphs of African American life have shaped the South and changed the nation and the world. Sadly, the documentation of African American life in the South is at worst absent and at best underrepresented in many archival collections.

In the spring of 2013, the SHC began working with EKAAMP founder Karida Brown to correct these gaps within the archival record by creating an archive, from the ground up, that will document African American life in the Appalachian region. The EKAAMP project consists of expanded collection development, preservation of oral history interviews, digitization of original primary source materials, and community collaborations and outreach.

There are many ways to participate in the project. Individuals can choose to donate materials and artifacts that represent their personal life history. Families can collaborate by submitting a group donation on behalf of their family history. And organizations will have the opportunity to contribute materials relating to the history and function of the organization as it relates to the African American experience in eastern Kentucky.

This unique archive will be preserved for future generations in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and these materials will be made available to those who wish to study this important history. We look forward to collaborating with you on this exciting new project!

Biff Hollingsworth &
Barrye Brown

Archivists, Southern Historical Collection
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill