



# The Landberry Foundation

## 2021 Annual Report

September 2022



# The Landberry Foundation

## 2021 Annual Report

**The Landberry Foundation**

4623 Deer Park Rd  
Owings Mills, MD 21117

[grants@landberry.org](mailto:grants@landberry.org)

[www.landberry.org](http://www.landberry.org)

This publication produced by the Landberry Foundation  
Photo by [Matt Thornhill](#) on [Unsplash](#)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
History of the Foundation	1
LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY	3
Accomplishments in 2021 .....	6
Bylaws	6
Award Selection Process	6
2021 FINANCIALS	7
LOOKING AHEAD	7

# INTRODUCTION

The mission of the [Landberry Foundation](#) is to advance family land retention and sustainable management in vulnerable communities – particularly in African American and Native American communities – that are at risk of family or community land loss.

While the Foundation was registered as a 501 (C)(3) in May 2020, the idea was born out of experiences of multiple generations of Black and Native American families.

## History of the Foundation

The Landberry foundation emerges from generations of work in both the Land & Berry families to pursue freedom & prosperity through the purchase and maintenance of family homesteads and ancestral lands.

The histories of the Land and Berry families exemplify the experiences of so many African American and Native American families in the United States. They underscore the importance of land tenure, establishment of ancestral home and the understanding of how essential land is as a pathway to liberation, spiritual health, sense of belonging, cultural preservation, and intergenerational wealth-building.

Grounded in this rich family history and catalyzed by the growing family legacy of land brokers, in 2020 Alexandra Sutton Lawrence founded the Landberry Foundation. The Foundation’s mission and organizational efforts focus on lands within Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio.

### **The Berry Family**

The story of the Berry family begins with Cattilla (also: Cuttillo or Qustilla), a Northern Mbundu man born about 1630 in the Kingdom of Ndongo in Africa and transported to the New World in about 1650 -- likely as a prisoner of war after being captured in the Portuguese crown’s advances against Queen Nzinga. Arriving on the *White Lion*, he was indentured in Virginia; after his indenture, he married an Englishwoman named Katherine Jewell and had one daughter, Mary Jewell-Cuttilla. When Mary bore a son to the Englishman John Berry, the Berry line was born.

In the early 1800s, a group of the Berry descendants migrated to Ohio, where they helped to settle one of several thriving communities of free people of color in the region, who established homesteads, churches, and schools in their new homeland. Richard T. Berry, Sr. (“Uncle Dick”, b. 1811) became a particularly preeminent figure in Xenia, Ohio – where he and his wife Louisa Grinson raised four sons and two daughters and were pillars of the community. In 1913, his sons Fred and Richard, Jr. raised a memorial monument there in his honor. His son George Henry raised a son,

James Frederick Berry (b. 1890), who attended Howard University and the Purdue University School of Pharmacy, graduated in 1917 and afterward founded a successful pharmacy chain (the Unity Pharmacy) around Indianapolis.

James Frederick's wife, Esther Elnora Bauman (also: Bowman) was the daughter of Thomas Bowman, who had co-founded the Industrial Savings and Investment Company in Indianapolis in 1900, one of the earliest investment companies for colored people in the region. Esther also descended from the Scott family, a prominent African American/Native American family whose numbers included influential artists, educators, and community leaders in the midwestern Saponi (Yèsah) community. Like the Berrys, the Scotts and other Indigenous migrants had fled their homelands (the Yèsah ancestral territory spread across North Carolina & Virginia) between 1810 and 1860 due to increasingly oppressive laws against free people of color.

In their joining, Esther and James brought together two magnificent family histories, charting a course forward into a bright future. Carrying with them the values of leadership, faith, integrity, and commitment to community, The Berry Family held fast in honoring their ancestors' homelands, protecting their new homesteads, and sowing prosperity in the fertile soil of the Midwest.

### **The Land Family**

The story of the Land family also begins in the Kongo-Angolan kingdom, where the earliest Land ancestors were captured into the burgeoning Trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 1700s and brought to the Americas to labor on cotton plantations in the south. They were taken into the Port of Charleston and later brought to Chester, South Carolina, where generations lived and labored under the devastating conditions of enslavement.

After Emancipation, the Lands became sharecroppers, then later purchased some portion of the property on which they had been formerly enslaved. This land – and the love and guidance of the earliest-recorded family matriarch, Hope Johnson Land (b. 1790), established a family homestead in Chester County, adjacent to which Reverend Joseph C. Land (b. 1831) later built and founded Zion Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church. Reverend Joe's wife, Henrietta Bryant Darby (b. 1858) was an educator, and one of the first wave of African American teachers who were trained after Emancipation. Their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren continue to reside on the family land, and to serve as pillars of their South Carolina community.



# LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

## Staff

Executive Director

**Alexandra Lawrence**



Alexandra Sutton Lawrence, Ph.D. is a non-profit executive, biodiversity conservationist, and community folklorist from Baltimore, Maryland. She currently serves as the Vice President of Conservation, Justice & Equity at Ocean Conservancy – where she works to engage communities and lawmakers in protecting lands & waters of cultural importance to Indigenous and African American communities across the United States. She previously held the positions of Senior Regional Director, Southeast at The Wilderness Society and Science Policy Program Director at the Duke University Initiative for Science &

Society. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Duke University Energy Initiative, a doctorate at the Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment, a master’s in wildlife & fisheries at Texas A&M University, and a bachelor’s in biology at Howard University. She is also the founder of Kedge Conservation, a social enterprise supporting adult education in East and Southern Africa.

## Board

President

**Jason Sutton**



Jason Sutton has over 20 years of experience in residential and commercial real estate sales, and has been trained in non-profit work through more than 10 years as a Director at Catholic Charities. His in-depth knowledge of the real estate market in Maryland, Washington D.C., Virginia, and North Carolina guides our work in the Tidewater region. He is also the founder and principal managing partner of Argonauts Property Group, and serves the community as a member of the African American Art Advisory Board for the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.



Vice President  
**Gabriel Harris**



Gabriel Harris is an entrepreneur and real estate professional with more than 20 years of experience in owning and operating a family business and small urban farm. His expertise in agriculture, property maintenance, small scale farming/urban farming in the African American community, and residential solar allow him to guide our grantee selection process.

Board Member  
**Esperance Sutton**



Esperance Sutton is a retired real estate pioneer, who attended Coppin State College after high school, then graduated with BS from University of Baltimore in Business Administration. She has worked in Real Estate for over 30 years, as an agent and as a Broker-Owner and currently holds a license in both Maryland and North Carolina, partnering with her son Jason, licensed also in Virginia. Worked at Coppin State University for 20 years upon retiring in 2018. Mrs. Sutton started first endowment at Coppin in 2006 in memory of her mom and another in 2018 in memory of David D. Sutton.

She has been active in community life and improvement for over 30 years through volunteerism and membership in community organizations, including Women Behind the Community (WoBeCo) and the Women’s Civic League.

Board Member  
**Denise DeLeaver**



Denise DeLeaver’s background has been in real estate since 1972, a time when African-Americans were few in this industry. Denise managed several companies and owned her own company over her 40+ year career in real estate. Denise enjoyed helping people achieve their dream of home ownership and has mentored many young real estate professionals. Denise is an active member in Baltimore City and Metropolitan area. She has worked with the NAACP, the American Heart Association. In addition, she is a board member of her neighborhood association in addition to being a board member of the Women’s Civic League. Denise is

originally from Brooklyn, New York. She is an alum of Florida A & M University and has one son, of whom she is extremely proud.

Board Member  
**George Uzzle**



George Uzzle serves as a Title III Director at Coppin State University in Baltimore, Maryland. He is a proud graduate of the University of Maryland with a Master’s Degree in Finance. In addition to his professional endeavors, George serves on the Board for the Mattie B. Uzzle Outreach Center in Baltimore Maryland. In his spare time, he is also an active member of the Israel Baptist Church, in Washington, D.C.

Board Member  
**Beverly Carter**



Beverly Carter, Esq. currently serves as the Director of Thompson Carter Family Fund, a private non-profit. She was Formerly employed with States Attorney's Office for Baltimore City Administrative Attorney in Criminal Justice System including the Circuit Court System. She is a long-standing member of the Monumental City Bar Association. She is also a devoted wife and mother of two.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2021

In its second year, the Landberry Foundation affirmed its bylaws, updated the Board of Directors, and awarded its first grant.

## **Bylaws**

The Landberry Foundation is a limited 501(C)(3) registered in Maryland, U.S.A. As part of the registration process, the Foundation established bylaws which elucidate, among many aspects:

- Purpose of the organization
- Dedication of assets
- Board of Directors and their general roles and responsibilities
- Standard of care
- Procedures and record

## **Award Selection Process**

As part of building a strong foundation, Landberry established an application process to allow applicants to submit requests for funding on a rolling basis. Selection criteria were established with consultation with the Board of Directors and will be applied to any applications received.

Landberry accepts applications from individuals, family coalitions, community groups, tribal entities, non-profit organizations, or social innovation startups/enterprises founded by members of communities impacted by land loss. Awards range from \$500 to \$5,000, but most grants will be under \$3,000.

Community groups, tribal entities, and non-profit organizations may apply for and receive funding up to three years in a row but must reapply each year. Individuals, families & family coalitions may apply for and receive funding up to two years in a row but must reapply each year. Startups & family enterprises may only receive funds once, but unsuccessful applicants may reapply. A site visit may be made after a grant is awarded.

Recipients must provide an interim report by June 1st of the year following the granting of funds, and a final report by November 1st of the year following the granting of funds.

The full grant application should be no longer than a max 2,000-word narrative, plus budget(s), financial statement, and (if applicable) a tax ID designation letter.

## 2021 FINANCIALS

The Foundation was active 12 months of the 12-month fiscal year, which runs from January 1-December 31. The Foundation received no additional private donations, and minor expenses totaling less than \$1,000 went to administrative fees for website development and maintenance.

In the third quarter of 2021 the Foundation received an application from the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe. They requested \$4,800 in support of their efforts to buy back an essential part of their ancestral land along the Mattaponi River. The application was approved, and funds were dispersed before December 2021.

**In 2022, \$43,230 of the original donations remained available for updating initial limited 501(C)(3) status to a regular 501(C)(3) and to employ a financial consultant to ensure that Foundations financial systems and taxes were in good standing.**

The Foundation employed the services of Linton & Associates in Durham, North Carolina for tax preparation for the 2021 fiscal year.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The Landberry Foundation will capitalize on the achievements of year 1 to diversify its financial streams, begin providing grants and establish a strategic plan for the first 5 years of operations.

In 2021, the Foundation is committed to awarding two grants, totaling at least \$5,000, with final amounts reported at the end of 2021. In the third quarter of 2021 the Foundation received an application from the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe. They requested \$4,800 in support of their efforts to buy back an essential part of their ancestral land along the Mattaponi River. The application will be considered in the following quarter.

In the coming fiscal year, the Foundation will also develop a strategic plan, which will:

- Elucidate organizational values and vision.
- Flesh out the desired outcomes and affiliated performance milestones and targets as well as expected timeline for accomplishments.

- Describe the procedures and expectations for accountability, which will reflect the Foundation's values and bylaws.
- Outline the organizational financial and operational priorities.
- Establish a timeline and goals for growing and diversifying Landberry's budget to enable the Foundation to scale up the volume and timeline of awarding grants.

**We look forward to sharing our growth with you.**

**To make a tax-deductible donation to  
the Landberry Foundation,  
please email us at [grants@landberry.org](mailto:grants@landberry.org)  
or reach out to Esperance Sutton, Board Chair.**

The Landberry Foundation  
4623 Deer Park Rd  
Owings Mills, MD 21117  
[grants@landberry.org](mailto:grants@landberry.org)  
[www.landberry.org](http://www.landberry.org)