Lower Richland Alumni Foundation – Diamond Festival 2024 Progress Report

Since the pandemic the 18-year-old festival has experienced tremendous growth as well as major setbacks. The flow of attendees dropped drastically during the pandemic, but we are now once again seeing a steady flow and an increase in attendance from across the country.

Our organization/committee has been working to rebuild this family oriented and community-oriented event to reach its fullest capacity. Our goals are simple to increase tourism in the area, showcase our rich heritage, our schools and churches in the community and increasing community engagement.

Tourism – we surveyed our attendees upon arrival and our data showed we brought in attendees from over 23 different zip codes beyond those in the Lower Richland area. Attendees from Sumter, Bishopville, Orangeburg, Greenville, Rock Hill, Lexington, Camden, and Swansea South Carolina. Attendees from Philadelphia, PA, Charlotte North Carolina, Jacksonville Florida and Atlanta Georgia. We averaged 2000 people in attendance.

Showcase – we were able to showcase talent from the midlands as well as talent from neighboring counties and states. The students in the midlands were able to showcase their academic achievements, musical instrumentals, vocal display, athletic and cultural skills. We were also able to showcase local organizations and program offerings such as summer camps and programs throughout the community. Participation and activities for all ages was provided.

Community Engagement – This festival allowed for the community to engage with other communities as well as new members of the community that are not familiar with the heritage of the local Lower Richland community. Through surrounding groups that provided displays. Schools in the local area were also provided with a platform to showcase their talent and accomplishments to the community at large. Honoring community heroes that have contributed to the success of the community were also recognized as well as outside celebrities that have or currently work with the community were also recognized.

In conclusion a review of our annual event was held, and we are proud of the progress the event has made and believe that this event will continue to increase in the numbers of attendees and participants reach the level it was at prior to the Covid pandemic. All attendees that were interviewed were very pleased with what the event had to offer and said they look forward to next year’s event.