

# Naturally Connected

## Get to Know the Albion Branch NAACP

By Cassidy Porter

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is a national civil rights organization established in 1909 “to ensure the political, educational, equality of minority group citizens of States and eliminate race prejudice”<sup>1</sup> Operating at a community level, the Albion Branch of the NAACP has been working toward equity and justice within Albion since 1933.

A defining achievement for the Albion Branch was in 1953 when West Ward school successfully closed, and Dalrymple Elementary School opened their doors to West Ward students. West Ward was an all-Black elementary school facing facility inequities compared to the nearby Dalrymple school. With the help of a parents’ boycott and threats of lawsuits, the actions of the Albion Branch sparked Albion’s own Civil Rights Movement.<sup>2</sup>

This defining purpose of education equity still runs deep in the Albion Branch. The current Education Chair, Mae Ola Dunklin, is passionate about youth education advocacy. She is driven by providing resources and proper education to the youth. Dunklin’s history with the NAACP began in Louisiana in her childhood. When Dunklin graduated from college and moved to Albion to be an educator in the public school system, she continued to focus on “educating the whole child” by providing equity through resources and information. Inspired by her 103-year-old mother who has seen more injustices than any person should, Dunklin continues her drive towards equity in our county. Some of her main actions include the annual “Back to School, Stay in School” event that provides Albion students with new school supplies and access to community programs, as well as helping coordinate college scholarships for Albion youth.

I spoke with two other important figures in the current Albion Branch, President Robert Dunklin, and Second Vice President Dr. Wesley Dick. Both men have had a strong impact on the Albion Branch and community. Being members since the late 80s, they have helped resolve countless grievances within and around the community. [Mr.] Dunklin has been President since 2006 and Second Vice President of the Michigan NAACP for a handful of years. Within his time Dunklin has pushed the importance of voting through education of the issues, registration, and any barriers that may occur at the polls. Dunklin is passionate about “giving people a voice” and wanting to create a change to the way that people are treated. The Albion Branch continues to resolve citizens grievances around “discrimination in employment and at school, hate crimes, and racial profiling.”

Dr. Dick’s formal involvement with the NAACP stemmed from Albion College campus student movement in the 1980s that demanded Albion College withdraw its stock holdings in South Africa with the goal of freeing Nelson Mandela and ending apartheid. When the Albion Branch supported the campus anti-apartheid protests, a bond was formed between the professor and the NAACP that has only grown stronger over time. Since the beginning of his teaching career, Dr. Dick has stressed racial justice and practices, and has emphasized the importance of keeping culture and history alive.

Although each with their own background and experiences, the Dunklins and Dr. Dick continue to strive towards change and equity because as [Mr.] Dunklin stated, “the work is never done”.



Left to Right: Robert (Bob) Dunklin, Dr. Wesley Arden Dick, Mae Ola Dunklin

**NAACP Vision Statement:** The vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights and there is no racial hatred or racial discrimination.

**NAACP Mission Statement:** The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination



**NAACP**  
Albion Branch

References: 1. naacp.org/about/our-history 2. Albion Branch NAACP: A Brief History” by Dr. Wesley Arden Dick Statements provided by Albion Branch NAACP

## What You Need to Know about Voting in 2024

### New: Early Voting

Early voting allows a voter to cast a ballot before Election Day in an experience similar to voting on Election Day.

During the early voting period, voters are issued a ballot and can then insert their ballot directly into a tabulator at their early voting site.

Any registered voter in Michigan has the right to vote early in person at an early voting site for statewide and federal elections in which they are eligible.

Voters in Michigan can register to vote up to and on Election Day, including during the early voting period.

Early Voting Site:

Calhoun County Building  
3rd Floor  
315 W Green St  
Marshall, MI 49068

Early Voting is open Saturday  
February 17th through Sunday  
February 25th, 9AM to 5PM.

### Upcoming Elections:

February 27th - Presidential Primary Election  
August 6th - Primary Election  
November 5th - General Election

### Polling Locations:

- Precinct 1:** Crowell School 1418 Cooper St
- Precinct 2:** St Paul Lutheran Church 100 Luther Blvd
- Precinct 3:** St Paul Lutheran Church 100 Luther Blvd
- Precinct 4:** Tennant Hall (Methodist Church) 600 E Michigan Ave
- Precinct 5:** Crowell School 1418 Cooper St
- Precinct 6:** Tennant Hall (Methodist Church) 600 E Michigan Ave

Polls will be open from 7AM to 8PM on Election Day





Upcoming Events

# Stay Involved!

Fold me in  
half and  
hang me on  
the fridge!

## February

- 1st:** 6PM Craft at Albion District Library
- 2nd:** 7PM Ann Wade Hearing Colors EP Release Party at Albion Malleable Brewing Co.
- 4th:** Last Day to Submit Photos for Albion Welcome Guide
- 6th:** 7AM - 2PM Superior Nutrition Grand Re-Opening
- 5th:** 7PM Blues at the Bohm
- 8th:** 6PM Yarn Club & Storytime at Albion District Library
- 11th:** 12:30PM - 2PM Men Who Cook at First Baptist Church
- 13th:** 12PM - 1PM Grant Technical Assistance Drop-In at Albion Community Foundation  
7PM Mardi Gras Party featuring Slavistar at Albion Malleable Brewing Co.
- 21st:** 12PM - 1PM Grant Technical Assistance Drop-In at Albion Community Foundation
- 22nd:** 6PM Storytime at Albion District Library
- 15th:** 5:30PM - 7:30PM Euchre Night at Albion District Library  
6PM Craft at Albion District Library
- 17th:** 9AM Member Morning at Kids 'N' Stuff Children's Museum
- 15th - 24th:** In the Next Room - Theatre Production, Albion College, Herrick Auditorium
- 29th:** 6PM Craft at Albion District Library

## March

- 7th:** 6PM Storytime at Albion District Library
- 11th:** 7PM ACT II Production of War of the World's Play at Bohm Theatre
- 12th:** 7PM ACT II Production of War of the World's Play at Bohm Theatre
- 14th:** 6PM Yarn Club at Albion District Library
- 16th:** 9AM Member Mornings at Kids 'N' Stuff Children's Museum
- 19th:** Albion Everywhere 2024 (Albion College)
- 21st:** 5:30PM - 7:30PM Euchre Night at Albion District Library  
6PM Storytime at Albion District Library

## Recurring Events

- Wednesdays:** 12PM - 1PM Brown Bag Documentary Series at Albion District Library
- Thru February 10th** - FURSCA Student Art Exhibitions at Bobbitt Visual Arts Center, Albion College  
Gallery Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9AM- 4PM, Fridays 2PM - 8PM, Saturdays 10AM - 2PM
- February 17th thru March 23** - Robert Martin Buehler, Philip C. Curtis Artist in Residence, Art Exhibition at Bobbitt Visual Arts Center, Albion College  
Gallery Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9AM- 4PM, Fridays 2PM - 8PM, Saturdays 10AM - 2PM
- City Council meetings occur the first and third Mondays of the month at 7PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall

## Listen to the Brick by Brick Podcast!



Listen to community members and leaders share their Albion experiences and involvements. Available on most streaming platforms or on the Downtown Albion website.

Read more stories here.



Scan the QR code to read more stories on the Downtown Albion website.

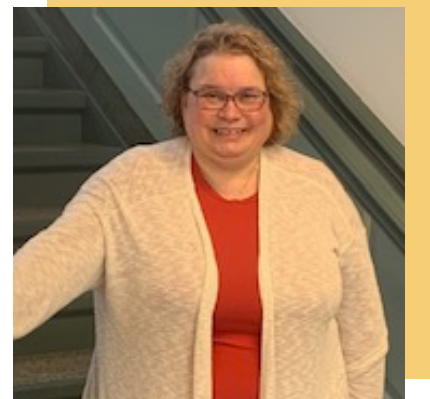
## City of Albion Employee of the Quarter

4th Quarter of 2023

*Nicole Acker*

ACCOUNTING CLERK

Nicole works in our finance department where she provides superb customer services to the citizens of Albion.



"...She just always has a smile and an infectious laugh."  
-Quote from Nomination Statement

## Upcoming Grant Deadline at the Albion Community Foundation

Applications are open for the Fund for Greater Albion, Youth Advisory Committee Fund, James C. Kingsley Youth Fund, and Riverfront Development and Environmental Fund.

Applicants must be IRS-recognized tax-exempt organizations or from local educational or governmental units directly serving the greater Albion area.

To learn more about the funds or to apply visit [albionfoundation.org](http://albionfoundation.org). Please contact the Foundation with any questions regarding the application process at [foundation@albionfoundation.org](mailto:foundation@albionfoundation.org) or (517) 629-3349.

**Applications are due Friday, March 15th, 2024 by 4PM.**



## Get Involved with the City's Boards & Commissions!

Current openings:

- Albion Trust** (2 Openings)
- Arts Commission** (1 Opening)
- Board of Review** (2 Openings)
- Building Boards of Appeals** (2 Openings)
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** (4 Openings)
- Economic Development Corporation (EDC)** (2 Openings)
- Equity Task Force** (2 Openings)
- Income Tax Board of Review** (1 Opening)
- Local Officers Compensation Commission (LOCC)** (2 Openings)
- Planning Commission** (3 Openings)
- Recreation Advisory Commission** (1 Opening)
- Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** (2 Openings & 2 Alternates)

If you are interested in serving, please contact the City Clerk's office at (517) 62907864 or email [jdamingo@cityofalbionmi.gov](mailto:jdamingo@cityofalbionmi.gov).



Scan the QR Code to learn more about the City's Boards & Commissions.

To submit feedback, information, or events for future documents contact [ambassador@albionfoundation.org](mailto:ambassador@albionfoundation.org).

