Books Sandwiched In 2026 Speaker Bios

Jan 26

Dr. Frank Rodriguez

Dr. Frank Rodriguez is Superintendent of Beaufort County School District in South Carolina, overseeing more than 22,000 students across 30 schools.

A Florida native, he earned a BS in Social Science Education from Florida State University (1993), an MS in Curriculum and Instruction from Florida Atlantic University (2000), and an EdD in Educational Leadership from Florida Atlantic University (2009). Before joining Beaufort in 2019, Rodriguez spent 26 years in South Florida education: starting as a secondary social studies teacher, serving as a program coordinator for the Florida Department of Education, and advancing in Palm Beach County as an elementary and secondary principal, Area Director of Transformation Schools, Assistant Superintendent over six departments, Area Superintendent, and Regional Superintendent.

Known for his bilingual communication—starting robocalls in English and Spanish as "your proud Superintendent"—Rodriguez prioritizes student engagement, visiting schools regularly and hosting advisory sessions. He has driven college and career readiness initiatives, including 30 state-approved CTE programs with a 98.9% completion rate for 1,500 students in 2023.

His leadership has earned accolades: 2025 South Carolina Superintendent of the Year by SCASA; 2023 Superintendent to Watch by the National School Public Relations Association; induction into The Citadel's Zucker Family School of Education Wall of Fame; and Superintendent of the Year 5A/4A by the South Carolina Athletic Administrators Association. Rodriguez lives in Beaufort County with his wife and two children.

Feb 2

CAPT Tracy R. Isaac

Captain Tracy R. Isaac, USN, NC is a board-certified Adult Health Clinical Nurse Specialist and Ambulatory Care Nurse, serving as Commanding Officer of Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NMRTC) Beaufort, Commanding Officer of Naval Support Facility (NSF) Beaufort, and Director of Naval Hospital Beaufort, South Carolina.

She earned her doctoral degree in Health Science from Nova Southeastern University in 2018, a Master of Science in Nursing from The Catholic University of America, and a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from the National Defense University's Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy.

Isaac's 30+ year Navy career includes clinical and leadership roles at Naval Hospital Okinawa, Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, Naval Hospital Jacksonville (Assistant Department Head, Family Medicine, and Director for Mental Health), and National Defense University (Command Nurse). From 2019 to 2022, she served as Nurse Corps Staff Inspector at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's Office of the Medical Inspector General. She assumed command in June 2023, succeeding Capt. Chad E. Roe.

Under her leadership, NMRTC Beaufort supports over 35,000 beneficiaries, including active-duty personnel from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, emphasizing readiness, training, and community partnerships.

Feb 9

Captain Craig Reaves

Captain Craig Reaves is a lifelong shrimper, commercial fisherman, and owner of Sea Eagle Market in Beaufort, South Carolina, championing local seafood amid industry challenges. Born into a North Carolina fishing family, Reaves started shrimping at age 14 in the 1980s with his father, Laten Reaves, a veteran shrimper since the 1960s who founded Reaves Brothers Seafood in 1970. By 16, he captained his own boat, the *Boy Shrimper*, and worked summers out of Georgetown, SC. In 1992, the family relocated to Beaufort County with their shrimp boat, where Reaves expanded the business.

Married to Jana Reaves, whom he met in the early 1990s at the family's Holden Beach restaurant, they have three children: Melena (22), CJ (20), and Molleigh (5). With brother Cameron, who captains the *Palmetto Pride*, and parents Laten and Alice, the Reaveses operate a multi-generational enterprise. Reaves captains the *Gracie Belle*, harvesting shrimp, oysters, and crabs in Lowcountry waters.

In 1996, Craig and Jana opened CJ Seafood Express in Port Royal, followed by acquiring Sea Eagle Market in Beaufort in 1997. They've grown it into the region's largest local seafood supplier, serving 65+ restaurants, and operating a working waterfront at Village Creek on St. Helena Island. Today Sea Eagle Market is widely regarded as one of the area’s premier sources for fresh local seafood and has been voted “Best Seafood in Beaufort” multiple years. Reaves also caters festivals and events, emphasizing "from our boats to your table."

Craig remains an active captain on his trawlers, oversees daily operations, and is a vocal advocate against imported seafood fraud. He serves on the Southern Shrimp Alliance and Beaufort Area Hospitality Association boards, pushing against foreign shrimp dumping, unfair trade, and environmental threats like heavy rains. With Beaufort's fleet down from 100 boats in 1992 to under 15 today, Reaves promotes buying wild-caught U.S. shrimp and supports efforts to build a new generation of fishermen. At nearly 60, he remains resilient, adapting his boat for mobility issues and riding out hurricanes at sea.

Feb 16

Libby Ricardo, MFA

Libby Ricardo is an Associate Professor of Theater and Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB).

A native of Cranston, Rhode Island, she began performing professionally at age 10 with Trinity Repertory Company and the Providence opera. She holds a BFA from NYU Tisch School of the Arts (training at Stella Adler Studio, Bali Conservatory, and Amsterdam) and an MFA in Performance from the University of Georgia.

Since moving to the South Carolina Lowcountry in 2012 with her husband, fellow USCB professor George Pate, Ricardo has become a leading figure in regional theater. She directed the award-winning *Grease* (2012) for Beaufort Theatre Company and has since acted in and directed numerous productions with Lean Ensemble Theater, Centre Stage, and others. Notable directing credits include *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Art*, and a pandemic-era radio *A Christmas Carol*.

At USCB, she teaches acting, directing, and interdisciplinary courses that apply theater techniques to healthcare, hospitality, and humanities education. In 2024 she received the Ray Doughty Arts Integration Award from Palmetto State Arts Education for her innovative cross-disciplinary work.

Ricardo is known for her ensemble-driven approach, her advocacy for community theater, and her belief that theater builds essential life skills in empathy and communication.

Feb 23

Dr. Andrew Bridges

Dr. Andrew S. Bridges is President and CEO of the Nemours Wildlife Foundation in Yemassee, South Carolina, leading conservation efforts in the ACE River Basin.

A wildlife biologist with expertise in ecology and land stewardship, Bridges earned his M.Sc. from Texas A&M University and Ph.D. from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Prior to joining Nemours in April 2022, he served as Director of Conservation Planning for Ducks Unlimited, bringing fieldwork, science, and project management experience to advance habitat restoration and research.

Under his leadership, Nemours—established on the historic duPont family plantation—has expanded research facilities, including the 2021 Wiggers Laboratory and the 2024 Eugene and Laura duPont Conservation Hall. The foundation supports studies on species like red-cockaded woodpeckers and alligators, funds graduate research at Clemson University, and enhances public education through guided tours, accessible docks for youth fishing, and events like the annual Fall for Wildlife.

Bridges emphasizes community engagement and adaptive strategies to address environmental challenges, honoring founder Eugene duPont's vision of a premier wildlife research center.

Mar 2

Amanda Brewer Dickman

Amanda Brewer Dickman is Director of the Beaufort County Library system in South Carolina, overseeing six branches serving a growing Lowcountry community.

She holds a BA in Speech Communication (Summa Cum Laude) from Charleston Southern University and an MLIS from the University of South Carolina. Joining the library in 2007 as a reference librarian at the Beaufort Branch, she innovated programs like couponing workshops, adult summer reading, and the "New Harmonies" Smithsonian exhibit. She advanced to Reference Manager at Bluffton Branch (2012), Manager at Lobeco Branch (2013), and revived the Bookmobile service in 2016.

Promoted to Deputy Director and then Director in 2021, succeeding Ray McBride, Dickman earned Beaufort County Librarian of the Year (2016) and participated in the ALA's Emerging Leaders program. Under her leadership, the system emphasizes digital resources, community programs, and expanded access, including the 2024 opening of the Samuel E. Murray Library in Port Royal—the town's first public library. She champions libraries as vital for "learning, leisure, and life" amid rapid population growth.