

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C. — Two trailblazers in the Craft Beer industry, are investing in Eastern North Carolina. Briana Brake, Brewer and Founder of Spaceway Brewery, and Celeste Beatty, Brewer and Founder of Harlem Brewing, are collaborating to establish the Rocky Mount Brewery at the historic Rocky Mount Mills, a picturesque 150-acre mixed-use development on the Tar River.

Naming the company Rocky Mount Brewery resonated with both Celeste and Briana's commitment to celebrating local history and culture. Rocky Mount is the birthplace of Thelonious Monk, Sugar Ray Leonard, and Buck Leonard among many others.

The new brewery will begin operations this fall and the first beers will be limited release beers that highlight the Tar River Region's rich local history. Briana will serve as the head brewer and CEO, and Celeste will serve as Co-Brewer and Adviser. According to the NC Craft Brewers Guild, North Carolina boasts the largest number of craft breweries in the American South, with more than 260 breweries and brewpubs. The opening of Rocky Mount Brewery represents one of two black-owned breweries in the state of North Carolina and one of less than fifty women and minority-owned breweries in the country.

When asked how they met, the founders of Rocky Mount Brewery explained that they originally were introduced in the fall of 2016 during a business panel at Shaw University. That weekend, Briana invited Celeste to her home to help brew a batch. Last year, Celeste invited Briana to participate in brewing during the Art of Cool in Durham, NC and following the seminar, Celeste and Briana met with Sebastian Wolfrum, executive brewmaster for the Rocky Mount Mills, to learn about opportunities at the brewery incubator at the Mills.

“The Mills provided me with an exciting opportunity to explore brewing in my home state and be closer to some of our most loyal customers,” said Celeste. However, the challenge for Harlem was finding the right brewer. At the same time, Briana had been exploring opening a brewery of her own, and the idea of the Incubator and collaboration was intriguing to her. “After being presented with the amazing opportunity at the Mills I thought of this as not only a chance to work with Harlem Brewing and get Spaceway going, but also as a chance for me to connect with family that I have in the area, and be a part of Rocky Mount's exciting revitalization that's taking place both at the Rocky Mount Mills and the city's downtown development projects. I'm really excited to be living in Rocky Mount and opening Rocky Mount Brewery at Rocky Mount Mills!”

Rocky Mount Brewery will offer tastings, tours, local brewing apprenticeships and special release events as well as establishing a limited edition barrel-aging program. Eventually, the founders hope to open a cafe to highlight beer and pairings.

About Briana Brake & Spaceway Brewery:

Briana Brake is the founder and head brewer of Spaceway Brewing Company, LLC. She has been an avid home brewer for more than 4 years. She completed Certificate in Craft Beer Brewing at Wake Tech. Most recently, she served as Program Coordinator for the Center on Law Race and Politics at Duke University School of Law for over 6 years. The name Spaceway is a nod to the Afrofuture culture which seeks to imagine a future in which minorities, who are scarcely represented in pop culture images of the future, are depicted as leading characters. As in pop culture, images of the future minorities are scarcely represented in the craft beer industry. Spaceway Brewing Company is unique in that its goal is to not only invent simple and full-flavored craft-brewed beer but to create a sense of community through craft brewing education, innovation, activities/festivals and community ownership in addition to helping to change the industry's rare existence of minority brewers.

About Celeste Beatty & Harlem Brew South:

Celeste founded Harlem Brewing in 2000 in Harlem NYC with the vision to craft local beers that celebrate the history, culture, and community. An NC native, she is one of the early women pioneers in the craft beer industry. Her love of craft, community and a desire to celebrate heritage continues to inspire her recipes. The first Harlem Brew was Sugar Hill Golden Ale, launched in 2001; Harlem Renaissance Wit, Neighborhood Original was commercially brewed in 2013; and Harlem 125 IPA, a tribute to 125th Street 200th Anniversary was released in 2017. Today, the Harlem Brews are widely distributed throughout the East Coast, the UK, Japan. Recent distribution agreements will further expand the reach. Harlem Brewing has long been synonymous with the Village of Harlem through its relationships with Sylvia's Restaurant, Settepani, and Amy Ruth's. The New York Times called it "The Beer that Takes The A Train." Harlem Brew has garnered international media coverage on MSNBC, Fox News, NBC, People, Ebony, Forbes among others. Recognitions include the Harlem Business Alliance Entrepreneur of the Year (2002 and 2014), Clinton Foundation Emerging Entrepreneur, Local Hero Award from the Association of Resident Theaters and recently Best Brew NYC 2018. Harlem Brewing Company has Brewed it Forward Since 2000, supporting and hosting countless charitable fundraising campaigns for community organizations, including the NC Black Repertory Theatre, Studio Museum, Apollo Theater, Dance Theater of Harlem, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Chashama and many other amazing organizations.

About Rocky Mount Mills: Historic Rocky Mount Mills includes 300,000 square feet of office/multi-use space (including the historic mill building), 10-20 acres for selected advanced manufacturing and, eventually, 100 new and restored homes/loft apartments as well as existing and future restaurants, the upcoming Tiny House Hotel, River & Twine will feature 20 unique, brand new tiny homes located on the bank of the idyllic Tar River directly adjacent to all of Rocky Mount Mills and other amenities. The campus also features craft breweries, a craft brewery incubator and a brewery lab run by Nash Community College as part of their Brewing, Distillation, and Fermentation degree. Capitol Broadcasting Company (CBC) is leading the reinvention of Rocky Mount Mills -- the same development team that transformed Durham's [American Tobacco Campus](#) into an award-winning national model for historic rehabilitation.

###

CONTACT:

Celeste Beatty
(917) 728-9293

Briana Brake
(919) 667-8141

<https://media.visitnc.com/Briana-Brake-and-Celeste-Beatty-Team-Up-to-Launch-Brewery-at-Rocky-Mount-Mills>