

FY 2009 Project Abstracts

Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program

The Brooklyn Historical Society (New York) – P345A095002

Title: In Pursuit of Freedom: Abolitionism and the Underground Railroad in Brooklyn

In Pursuit of Freedom is a multifaceted, innovative, educational initiative focusing on the history of the Underground Railroad, shaped by three nationally-known cultural organizations:

- The Brooklyn Historical Society, the primary repository for Brooklyn history since 1863;
- The Weeksville Heritage Center, steward of a nationally-significant, historic site that documents one of the nations earliest free African-American communities; and
- The Irondale Ensemble Project, a theater company dedicated to public engagement.

Starting in October 2009 and implemented over three years, In Pursuit of Freedom deploys mutually-reinforcing elements to help a broad, public exploration of Brooklyn's anti-slavery struggle:

(A) A series of permanent historical markers will anchor a rich, multimedia walking tour starting from a commemorative installation by a world-renowned artist at a centrally-located public park.

(B) Interpretive exhibitions at the Brooklyn Historical Society, Weeksville Heritage Center, and the Irondale Center at the Lafayette Avenue Church.

(C) A content-rich Web site will connect all of the components: introduce the walking tour; preview the interpretive installations; and present archival documents, images, maps, a downloadable tour map, and accompanying podcasts.

(D) A scholarly symposium, college courses, and educational curricula will provide school children throughout New York City with primary source documents, images, maps, and new resources about Brooklyn's role in the struggle for freedom in the 19th century; and

(E) An original theater production will draw upon the story of abolition in Brooklyn. The overall project budget is \$4.7 million dollars over three years, of which \$936,249 will be provided by the U.S. Department of Education.

FY 2009 Award: \$936,249

Total Estimated Award (3 years): \$936,249

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**The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History (Michigan) –
P345A095005**

Title: The Cooperative Underground Railroad Education Partnership

The story of the Underground Railroad is a well-documented part of American history. Unfortunately, much of the information and documents from this important history, as well as the stories of African history and African-American history, are still not readily accessible to students and teachers. Eastern Michigan University's College of Education, along with the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, and the Quarlls Watkins Heritage Project (QWHP) will partner to create instructional materials and activities to help all students learn about African and African-American history.

The partnership will be known as the Cooperative Underground Railroad Education Partnership (CUREP). The partnership aims to: (1) develop an online portal for students, teachers, and researchers to access information about these histories; (2) develop and offer professional development for teachers with an online course so that they can teach about the Underground Railroad and other histories; (3) develop electronic materials for the Pan African Nurturing and Development Association (PANDA) Games; and (4) create multimedia touch screen gallery about the Underground Railroad history in the museum's core exhibition, *And Still We Rise*.

This three-year partnership will make high quality instructional materials, activities, and professional development available to many teachers. In turn, thousands of students will benefit from being able to access and learn about African and African American history in general and the Underground Railroad in particular. Because materials will be available electronically on the Web, this partnership will have a significant national impact.

FY 2009 Award: \$603,802

Total Estimated Award (3 years): \$603,802

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The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (Ohio) – P345A095006

Title: New Framework and Standards for Underground Railroad History & Education

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center will undertake a two-year project that establishes a new framework and standards for delivering innovative exhibitions, programming, and learning experiences about the history and lasting legacy of the Underground Railroad. This project will combine humanities scholarship, programming, and emerging technologies to enhance the experience of visitors, students, and scholars, as well as extend the reach of Underground Railroad history and its legacy into 21st Century research and education practice.

This project's activities will occur within a framework designed to optimize their educational and organizational impact through its use of museum curation and exhibition, humanities scholarship and education, public outreach and dissemination, and project management. These activities include:

- Enhanced Audio Tours
- Scholarly Lectures, Gallery Talks, and Workshops
- Community Docent Training & Volunteer Program
- First Person Interpretation
- On-line Graduate Education
- Digital Backpack for Students
- Teachers Institutes
- Summer Camps
- Freedom Box through Objects and Performance
- Temporary & Fixed Exhibits

FY 2009 Award: \$400,000

Total Estimated Award (2 years): \$400,000

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