



Connections



Welcome Letter from the AACRN Staff

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Stokely Carmichael, Gwendolyn Green, and Joan Trumpauer Mulholland. Source: "Breach of Peace" by Eric Etheridge. Credit: NPS



Ian Wilkinson's mural of what Homer Plessy may have looked like. There are no pictures of him. Credit: NPS

Welcome to our May newsletter. The AACRN newsletter is your guide to what's happening in the program, upcoming opportunities, member news, and spotlights. In this issue, you'll discover what AACRN has been up to and learn how the team can continue to support your resources through the Network.

This month, AACRN is celebrating its theme, "From Civil War to Civil Rights" by highlighting three important Civil Rights histories that occurred in the month of May. The May 18, 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case that established racial segregation did not violate the U.S. constitution and started 'separate but equal' era. The May 17, 1954 *Brown v. the Board of Education*, which ruled that U.S. state laws establishing racial segregation in public schools are unconstitutional, and the start of the first Freedom Rides which took place on May 4, 1961. All of these events are in direct relation to one another as each event demonstrates the long fight for civil rights.

For AACRN members, please feel free to share your news with your community so that we can highlight and promote your site and its connections to civil rights. Let us know what you'd like to see! Our newsletter will arrive in your inbox monthly to keep you up to date on our upcoming events, webinars, and new additions to the network.

Our inquiry for this month to members. How did these events shape your history and community? How do you honor them? Please let us know!

Sincerely,

AACRN Staff

Meet the Team

- Ashely Adams
AACRN National Coordinator
- Ariel Roy
AACRN Partner Historian
- Tirrea Billings
ACE Fellow, Media and Communications Consultant

Cover image: From the Civil War to Civil Rights Summary Report cover. Credit: NPS

For AACRN inquiries, please contact aacrn@nps.gov.

Meet the Newest Members of the Network



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

[AACRN Logo Use Guidelines](#)

Did you Know? As an AACRN member, you can use the program's official logo! The Logo may be used in limited fashion by AACRN members only, for noncommercial purposes. For details about appropriate uses of the logo and to request permission, find more via the link above.

[Submit an Application](#)

Do you own, work with, or know of a property, facility, or program that helps to tell the story of African American civil rights? Current AACRN members can submit multiple applications or pass along the message of joining the Network. To find out more: please visit the website below.

[Discover the Network](#)

To learn more about the other members within the Network, please visit the members page!

In May 2024, AACRN welcomed **16** members properties, facilities, and programs to the Network. We celebrate these new members for their commitment to interpretation, preserving, and documenting African American civil rights histories and stories. Please feel free to click on the names to learn more.

1. **Cory United Methodist Church**
Cleveland, OH
2. **The Peale Museum**
Baltimore, MD
3. **West Oakland Mural Project**
Oakland, CA
4. **Tabernacle Baptist Church**
Augusta, GA
5. **Historic St. Joseph AME**
Durham, NC
6. **Lugares Historicos.**
Orlando, FL/Puerto Rico
7. **Florida State University Civil Rights Institute**
Tallahassee, FL.
8. **Reckoning with Remembrance: History, Injustice, and the Murder of Emmett Till exhibit**
Washington, DC.
9. **Mount Peace Cemetery**
Lawnside, NJ.
10. **St. Matthew Christian Methodist Episcopal Church**
Milwaukee, WI
11. **Stagville Descendants Council**
Durham, NC.
12. **The Stagville Memorial Project**
Durham, NC
13. **The African American Cultural Garden**
Cleveland, OH.
14. **America's Black Holocaust Museum**
Milwaukee, WI
15. **Sweet Honey in the Rock (singing group)**

16. **Baltimore National Heritage Area**



Mt. Peace Cemetery and historic marker.

Credit: Dolly Marshall



The Women of the Black Panther Movement Mural in Oakland, CA
Credit: West Oakland Mural Project

AACRN Member Spotlight:

Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park



Photo: Living history walks featuring six reenactors portraying characters from 1854 to 1954 and linked neighborhood stories to national stories of the Civil War and civil rights.
Credit: NPS

May 17, 2024, marks 20 years since the grand opening of Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park on May 17, 2004. This date marks the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, the 1954 landmark decision that ended legal segregation of public educational facilities in the United States. The Brown v. Board of Education NHP is housed in the former Monroe Elementary School, one of Topeka's four historically segregated African American elementary schools.

In 1990, the structure was put up for auction. Fearing that the building might be razed, the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research sought out the Trust for Public Land who purchased the building and grounds in 1991. In 1991, Monroe Elementary School was also designated a National Historic Landmark. On October 26, 1992, President George W. Bush signed the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site Act (Public Law 102-525) and in 1993, title to the school and grounds were conveyed to the National Park Service. After several years of rehabilitation and restoration work, Brown v. Board of Education NHP opened as a visitor's center with interpretive exhibits, a restored kindergarten classroom, and a resource library.

Please visit Brown v. Board of Education NHP online, <https://www.nps.gov/brvb/index.htm>. Or pay the site a visit located at 1515 SE Monroe St. Topeka, KS 66612 .

Hours of Operation. Tuesday - Saturday, 9:00 am - 5:00 PM (CST)

For AACRN Members

- Check out our newest member's official newsletter. Florida State University Civil Rights Institute has released its inaugural newsletter, "[The Empowerment Exchange](#)"
- The 'Sister Rosetta' Art Exhibition Opening Reception at the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library (Denver, CO) which begins on Saturday, June 1st from 2pm -4pm. The exhibit is in recognition of Black Music Month and Juneteenth and will run through until August 31st. For more information, please see their website [Denver Public Library](#)

Upcoming Grant Opportunities

MISSISSIPPI DELTA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Dates of Remembrance

- May 4, 1961- Start of the Freedom Riders
- May 17, 1954 - U.S. Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka
- May 18, 1896- U.S. Supreme Court decision on Plessy v. Ferguson
- May 19, 1925 - Birthday of Malcolm X
- May 27, 2024 - Memorial Day observance

The Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area's summer grant cycle is now open!

Grant awards of up to \$15,000 will be available for projects that preserve, perpetuate, and celebrate the Mississippi Delta's rich and complex heritage.

Applications will be accepted from Wednesday, May 22 to Sunday, June 30, 2024.

If you have questions about the grant portal, click the button below to access a series of tutorial videos.

If you still have questions about the system after reviewing the tutorials, contact our office at grants@msdeltaheritage.com

Please click on link to view the applications. [Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area Summer Grant.](#)

History of Equal Rights (HER) Grant Opportunity

The National Park Service (NPS) is proud to announce the History of Equal Rights Grant Program (HER) which preserves sites related to the struggle of all Americans to achieve the ideal of equal rights. HER Grants are funded by the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), administered by the NPS, and fund a broad range of physical preservation work and pre-preservation planning activities for historic sites that are listed in or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or as a National Historic Landmark. Congress has appropriated \$5 million for the HER Grant Program for fiscal year 2024.

[History of Equal Rights Fact Sheet](#)

Applications will be due August 20, 2024.

Please click on the link on how to apply. [Grants.gov/HER](https://grants.gov/HER)

Save the Dates - Upcoming Conferences for AAAM and ASALH



Association of African American Museums

2024 Theme: Commemorating the 60th Anniversary
of the Civil Rights Act.

<https://blackmuseums.org/aaam2024-baltimore-dates/>

Dates: Aug. 13-16, 2024



Association for the Study of African
American Life and History

2024 Theme: African Americans and
the Arts.

asalh.org/conference

Dates: Sept. 25-29, 2024.

AACRN on the Move: The NPS Historic Network Training Workshop



About the Workshop

Representatives from the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (UGGR NTF), the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network (RENE), and the African American Civil Rights Network (AACRN) converged in Beaufort, SC for an inaugural meeting of the three historic networks. The workshop took place from May 21st to May 24th at the headquarters of the Reconstruction Era National Historic Park is also the home of the Reconstruction Era Network in Beaufort.

The goal of the workshop was to facilitate Network collaboration and cooperation of the African American odyssey from escape from enslavement to freedom-seeking, Reconstruction, and the legacy of civil rights in the United States. Representatives discussed areas of improvement, community outreach, and best practices on sharing network resources. Network to Freedom began in 1998 and has since grown to over 700 members across 39 states and territories. The success of Network to Freedom has inspired other networks such as Reconstruction and AACRN to seek out and tell the multi-generational histories of African Americans. AACRN began in 2017 followed by the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network in 2019.

Over the course of the workshop, Reconstruction Era NHP park rangers gave the team a tour of Beaufort and the surrounding areas of the members associated with RENE. The Penn Center, the Mather School, the Hutchinson House on Edisto Island, and finishing out the event by attending The Original Gullah Festival in downtown Beaufort.

Photos



The Penn Center



Mather School bell



Tabernacle Baptist Church



NPS exhibit tables at the Gullah Festival



The Hutchinson House

To find out more about the Network to Freedom and the Reconstruction Era Network, please visit their websites.

The Network to Freedom mission is to honor, preserve and promote the history of resistance to enslavement through escape and flight. Underground Railroad History continues to inspire people worldwide.

The program works in collaboration with local, state and federal entities, as well as individuals and organizations to create a "network" of sites, facilities, and programs with a verifiable connection to the Underground Railroad

- Visit [Underground Railroad Network to Freedom](#)

The Reconstruction Era Network is managed by Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, includes sites and programs that are affiliated with the Reconstruction Era. The network facilitates and reviews Reconstruction Era related research and collaboration with affiliated sites and programs through agreements and partnerships. This network is nationwide and works to provide opportunities for visitors to connect to the stories of Reconstruction.

- Visit the [Reconstruction Era National Historic Network](#)