

Report to the Governor and the General Assembly
2019 Annual Report
on the
**African American Heritage
Preservation Program**



Asbury United Methodist Church, Easton, Talbot County

**Maryland Commission on
African American History and Culture**

84 Franklin Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

africanamerican.maryland.gov

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023

mht.maryland.gov



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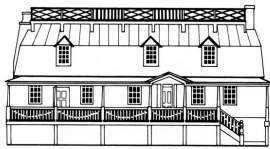


The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

Mission Statement

The mission of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture is: to interpret, document, preserve, and promote Maryland's African American heritage; to provide technical assistance to institutions and groups with similar objectives; and to educate Maryland's citizens and visitors about the significance of the African American experience in Maryland and the nation.

The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture is housed within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives.



Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032
410-514-7600
www.mht.maryland.gov

Maryland Historical Trust

Mission Statement

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. Through research, conservation and education, MHT assists the people of Maryland in understanding their historical and cultural heritage.

MHT is a division of the Maryland Department of Planning.



Background

The Maryland General Assembly created the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program (AAHPP) during the 2010 session. The program was reauthorized, with modifications, as a permanent program during the 2015 session. The AAHPP encourages the identification and preservation of buildings, sites, and communities of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland. The program is administered as a partnership of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (Commission), a unit of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), a division of the Maryland Department of Planning (Planning).

Nonprofit organizations, government entities, business entities, and individuals may apply for AAHPP grants. Nonprofit organizations are not required to provide match for grant funds, but are encouraged to contribute to their project's success. All other grantees must provide 1:1 match. Eligible activities include acquisition, construction, and pre-development associated with a construction project. Assisted properties must involve buildings, sites, or communities of historical or cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland.

This report is submitted in accordance with the requirements of State Finance and Procurement Article § 5A-330(i), SB 601/Chapter 371, 2015.

Activity of the African American Heritage Preservation Program in FY19

FY19 Grant Cycle

In March 2018, MHT provided instructions, AAHPP guidelines, and applications on the program webpage. MHT staff held grant workshops across the state in April and May 2018. Applicants submitted 35 eligible project proposals by July 1, 2018, requesting \$3.041 million for projects in 16 counties and Baltimore City.

The Commission recommended 12 projects for funding, which were approved by the MHT Board of Trustees and the Secretary of Planning and announced in December 2018. In May 2018, the first AAHPP emergency grant was awarded to the Friends of Stanley Institute, Inc. for urgent stabilization needs at the Bazzel Church in Dorchester County.

FY19 Grant Awards

Bazzel Church (Emergency Grant)

4136 Bestpitch Ferry Road, Cambridge, Dorchester County

Sponsor: The Friends of Stanley Institute, Inc.

Grant: \$55,121.92

This emergency grant will fund initial stabilization of the foundation, walls, and roof structure of Bazzel Church, a vernacular Gothic Revival-style church dating to the late-19th or early 20th century. Located in Bucktown, the church stands on the site of an earlier 1876 chapel where Harriet Tubman's family members reportedly worshipped.

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church

18 Higgins Street, Easton, Talbot County

Sponsor: Historic Easton, Incorporated

Grant: \$100,000

The grant will fund structural repairs and interior finishes to the first floor fellowship hall of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest African American church in Easton and the second oldest in Talbot County. Dedicated by Frederick Douglass in 1878, the church building served as a temporary high school for Black students in the 1930s, and is now a community center for a historically African American enclave known as the Hill.

Button Farm – Barn

16820 Black Rock Road, Germantown, Montgomery County

Sponsor: The Menare Foundation, Inc.

Grant: \$46,000

The grant will support the stabilization of the walls, roof, and foundation of the barn at Button Farm, which occupies 40 acres of the 6,000-acre Seneca Creek State and has extant agricultural buildings dating from 1880 to 1920. Constructed c. 1880, the barn served as a dairy barn through the mid-20th century and will be adapted for interpretation in the future.

Laurel Grove Road School

3439 Laurel Grove Road, Federalsburg, Caroline County

Sponsor: Community Civic League of Federalsburg, Inc.

Grant: \$100,000

Funding will help the Community Civic League of Federalsburg replace the windows, HVAC, and siding, as well as improve interior finishes and site grading, at the Laurel Grove Road School, originally constructed in 1918 as part of the Rosenwald School initiative, and in use until desegregation in 1964. Today, the building is a multipurpose community resource center.

Fort Frederick – Williams Schoolhouse

11347 Big Pool Road, Big Pool, Washington County

Sponsor: Department of Natural Resources – Maryland Park Service

Grant: \$100,000 (Grantee Contribution: \$10,000)

After Nathan Williams, an African American farmer, purchased Fort Frederick in 1857, and developed the property into a productive farm, the Williams family established a school for local Black children. Washington County purchased land from the family, and in 1899 constructed the Williams Schoolhouse, which operated until 1914. With this grant, the Williams Schoolhouse, one of the last remaining African American schoolhouses in Washington County, will be restored to its original appearance.

Frostburg State University Upper Quad – Brownsville Monument

101 Braddock Road, Frostburg, Allegany County

Sponsor: Frostburg State University

Grant: \$8,000 (Grantee Contribution: \$4,500)

Frostburg State University will install an interpretive monument describing the historic significance of the African American community of Brownsville, established in 1866, and displaced by state officials in 1926 for the expansion of the university. The state compensated homeowners only \$10 for their houses, and residents who moved to an adjoining area were relocated in the 1950s for another university expansion. Today, only two buildings remain.

Havre de Grace Colored School

555 Alliance Street, Havre de Grace, Harford County

Sponsor: Community Projects of Havre de Grace, Inc.

Grant: \$100,000

Funds will support accessibility improvements and waterproofing of the basement of the Havre de Grace Colored School. Originally constructed in 1910 as a two-room wood-frame primary school for black children, the 1930 four-room brick addition also served as the first public high school for Black students in Harford County.

Maynard-Burgess House

163 Duke of Gloucester Street, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County

Sponsor: City of Annapolis

Grant: \$100,000 (Grantee Contribution: \$100,000)

The City of Annapolis will undertake interior structural repairs and finishes, as well as the construction of a bathroom addition, in the 19th century Maynard-Burgess House, which has long-term associations with two Black families. The first floor of the house, which offers important insights into African Americans' lives before and after the Civil War, will be opened to the public for interpretive purposes and office space.

Samuel and Ida Torsell Mini-Museum,

9 Winters Lane, Catonsville, Baltimore County

Sponsor: Grace A.M.E. Community Development Corporation

Grant: \$100,000

This grant will fund drainage improvements and the construction of an Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible parking area at the Samuel and Ida Torsell Mini-Museum in the Winters Lane National Register Historic District, one of the largest and most intact historic African American neighborhoods in Baltimore County. From the 1920s to the 1940s, Mr. Torsell produced a newsletter that provided African American entrepreneurs with a means of advertising their goods and services, while Mrs. Torsell was the organist and pianist for the local church.

Sotterley Plantation – African-American Cemetery

44300 Sotterley Lane, Hollywood, St. Mary's County

Sponsor: Historic Sotterley, Inc.

Grant: \$46,000 (Grantee Contribution: \$3,000)

This award will help map the cemetery of Sotterley's enslaved community and construct trails and interpretive signs. Dating to 1703, Sotterley Plantation is a National Historic Landmark, and is the only Tidewater plantation in Maryland that is open to the public, with more than 20 original buildings spanning its 300-year evolution.

St. James Methodist Episcopal Church

10565 Champ Road, Princess Anne, Somerset County

Sponsor: The Oriole Historical Society, Incorporated

Grant: \$100,000

Funds will support window and door repair as well as interior plaster and finishes at St. James Methodist Episcopal Church, built by African American carpenters and shipbuilders in 1885. St. James Church, which has remained largely intact since the early 20th century, will be converted to a meeting place and community center.

St. Paul Church

26086 Beauchamp Branch Road, Denton, Caroline County

Sponsor: St. Paul Church Historical, Revitalization, and Maintenance, Inc.

Grant: \$100,000

Funding will support the stabilization of St. Paul Church, one of the earliest African American churches in Caroline County, with associated burials dating to at least the 1840s. The church will be converted into a center for community education and awareness of African American culture in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Two Sisters' Houses (Caulkers' Houses)

612-614 S. Wolfe Street, Baltimore City

Sponsor: The Society for the Preservation of Federal Hill and Fell's Point, Inc.

Grant: \$100,000

This grant will help stabilize the walls, foundation and roof of the Two Sisters' Houses, also known as the Caulkers' Houses, which represent a rare surviving example of wood frame vernacular housing built in industrializing urban areas during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Constructed c. 1798, these buildings are also significant for their association with the African American community's history in the ship caulking trade.

FY20 Grant Cycle

Applications, instructions, and program guidelines for FY20 funding were made available in March 2019. A series of six grant workshops were held throughout the state in March and April 2019:

March 21, 2019 - Delmarva Discovery Museum, Pocomoke City

April 4, 2019 - St. Mary's City Visitor Center

April 9, 2019 - Havre de Grace Colored School

April 11, 2019 - Washington County Public Library, Hagerstown

April 16, 2019 - Towson Public Library

April 18, 2019 - Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center,
North Brentwood

Online applications were accepted through July 1, 2019. Once applications are received, MHT staff conduct a threshold review of the project proposals and forwards eligible applications to the Commission for review and ranking. The MHT Board of Trustees and the Secretary of Planning consider the recommendations for approval.

Project Accomplishments & Updates

Magothy Elementary Rosenwald School

Pasadena, Anne Arundel County

Sponsor: Mount Zion United Methodist Church – Magothy

In the 1920s, the congregation of the Mt. Zion United Methodist Church built the Magothy Elementary Rosenwald School with partial funding provided by the Rosenwald school program. Both the church and school played an important role in the social and cultural development of the area's African American community. After desegregation, the school building was used as a community and storage space. The congregation is in the process of rehabilitating the school so that it can be returned to use as a community center. Funded by a FY18 AAHPP grant, the design phase of the overall project was recently completed. The architect investigated the building to determine the traditional configuration of both the original portion of the school and the addition, built only a few years after initial construction. Subsequent phases of work will return the building to its 1920s appearance.

Brome Plantation Slave Quarter

St. Mary's City, St. Mary's County

Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City Foundation, Inc.

The Brome Plantation Slave Quarter, a rare example of the wooden dwellings used to house enslaved people in the Chesapeake Bay region, has been the subject of intensive archaeological study. African Americans lived in the house before, during, and after the Civil War. This grant project resulted in the rehabilitation of the building, returning it to a three-room interpretive structure, with one room representing the era of slavery, one the era immediately after Emancipation, and one the occupancy by tenant farmers during the 20th century. The building is one of the collection of historic and reconstructed buildings open to the public in Historic St. Mary's City.

Kennard High School and African American Cultural Center

Centreville, Queen Anne's County

Sponsor: Kennard Alumni Association, Inc.

Constructed in 1936, Kennard High School was the only secondary school for African American children in Queen Anne's County until it closed in 1966. With funds from multiple sources, including three AAHPP grants, a multi-year capital project to rehabilitate the school for use as a community center was largely completed in 2016, with work on permanent exhibits continuing after that point. The Kennard Alumni Association held its grand opening in early 2019, showcasing both the new exhibit spaces and the publicly available event space.



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Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor



Robert S McCord, Secretary
Sandy Schrader, Deputy Secretary