

Racial Justice and Equity Research Fund Proposal

Research Strategy: ***Indigenous Discovery Tour of UofSC's Historic Horseshoe****

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In 2010, UofSC Professor Bob Weyeneth led a senior seminar to investigate the history of slavery at South Carolina College. Students identified the names of 21 people enslaved at the College, a fraction of the number of enslaved people owned by the College or by parties who brought slaves onto the campus to work in a variety of capacities. Students' research also revealed that at least 12 buildings on campus are named after known slave owners.

In 2017, the 21 enslaved people identified by name were memorialized in front of the President's House on the Horseshoe, behind which remains the one remaining slave dwelling on campus. A second marker acknowledging the contributions of enslaved people was installed in front of the Museum.

Meanwhile, students recently have organized to reenergize earlier student efforts to make the University of South Carolina a more diverse, equitable and inclusive institution of higher education. One of their areas of concern—outlined in a document entitled *Revision 2020*--focuses on "[t]he renaming of all buildings on our university campus named after individuals with racist backgrounds." The Presidential Commission on University History--organized by President Caslen in 2019—is exploring options for addressing students' concerns. The Commission's goal is

to learn more about the university's past and educate the community about their findings. Along with slavery, the commission will look into the history of women, civil rights, veterans and other groups on campus. (*Daily Gamecock*, 01/12/20)

Housed in the one Progressive-era building located at the head of UofSC Columbia's Historic Horseshoe, McKissick Museum is uniquely poised to reflect on and give voice to the multiple histories enshrined in the physical heart of the campus. In alignment with the Commission's goals, the Museum partnered with Southern Studies faculty and director of the Collaborative for Race and Reconciliation Jennifer Gunther to curate *A Woman's Right*--a 2-part exhibit about the history of how women at UofSC have fought for their rights--to coincide with the fall 2020 justice-themed semester hosted by the College of Arts and Sciences.

To continue supporting the Commission's and the students' efforts, McKissick Museum proposes partnering with Anthropology and Southern Studies faculty Courtney Lewis, UofSC

Lancaster's Native American Studies Center's Director Stephen Criswell, and DeLesslin George-Warren, Special Projects Coordinator for the Catawba Cultural Preservation Project, to create an *Indigenous Discovery Tour of UofSC's Historic Horseshoe*. The primary research for this project will be undertaken by a team of four undergraduates in the summer of 2021 under the direction of Lewis, Criswell, and Przybysz. Students will mine the archival resources at the South Caroliniana Library, the Native American Studies' Center, the South Carolina State Archive, and the National Archives to investigate how the experiences of Native Americans were shaped and continue to be shaped by policies advanced by UofSC leadership and/or alumni, specifically the people after whom buildings on the Historic Horseshoe are named. They include: John and Edward Rutledge; Henry William DeSaussure; Stephen Elliott; William Harper; Hugh Swinton Legare; Frances Lieber; Maximillan LaBorde/George McCutchen; Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and Charles Pinckney; and J. Rion McKissick. Students will share their research with DeLesslin George-Warren, who will draft a script for an in-person *Indigenous Discovery Tour* of the Horseshoe that McKissick staff will also make available digitally on its website in fall 2021.

Unfortunately, many materials related to pre-Civil War era Native American history have not been digitized and COVID has created serious constraints for research in this area. The National Archives is closed until further notice, making researchers highly dependent on research librarians to access materials. While the SC State Archive has reopened its Research Room 8:30am-5pm, Tuesday through Saturday., the South Caroliniana Library's Graniteville Reading Room has limited its opening to 10am-2pm by appointment at least five days in advance. By delaying the start of this project until summer 2021, we expect some of these constraints to have diminished. Nevertheless, the project PIs will plot a research strategy for students that will help ensure their ability to meet project goals within COVID constraints that may continue.

Exploratory research suggests there are rich historical materials relevant to this project that will meaningfully add to our understanding of how South Carolina College's leadership and alumni informed how the United States of America addressed "the Indian question." In 1837, South Carolina College alumni Hugh Swinton Legare--after whom a building on the Horseshoe is named--was serving in Congress and gave a major speech in support of increased appropriations to remove the Seminoles from Florida, declaring that "to remove them is a kindness to them. They cannot exist in the midst of the white race." Furthermore, he remarked that "it is too late now to look into the equity of the principles" of the first European settlers in their dealings with the Indians, and pledged, "I will do whatever I can constitutionally to reconcile these people to their fate and to justify our policy to the civilized world" (see pp. 307-312 in *A Rhetorical Study of Hugh Swinton Legare* at <https://ufdcimages.uflib.ufl.edu>). Today, the Seminole Tribe of Florida prides itself as being the only tribe that never signed a peace treaty with the United States of America. It seems "these people" were never reconciled to what European-Americans regarded as their "fate," raising the question: Is it ever too late to look into the equity of the principles that have shaped racist public policies in the United States?

Only 17% of Native American students continue their education after high school compared to 60% of the U.S. population. And according to a 2019 Partnerships of Native Americans report, while 28% of Americans have completed college, only 13% of Native Americans hold degrees. With the number of Native Americans attending and graduating from college apparently falling, the University of South Carolina has an opportunity to create a pipeline for Native American students to come to UofSC and thereby begin to address the repercussions of centuries of racist public policies that have shaped Native Americans' lives.

Crafting an *Indigenous Discovery Tour* of UofSC's Horseshoe is envisioned as phase one of a 3-phased collaboration with the Catawba Indian Nation to raise the public's awareness of Native American history in our state, make UofSC's campus culture more hospitable for Native American students, and devise a summer program for Catawba Indian youth to experience what it is like to live and learn on UofSC's Columbia campus.

Once the *Indigenous Discovery Tour* of the Horseshoe is complete, plans are to secure external funding to support phase 2 of the project—the creation of an *Indigenous Discovery Tour* of the Senate and House Chamber portraits (approximately 40 paintings) at the South Carolina House in time for the opening of the 2023 exhibit of Catawba pottery at the Columbia Museum of Art that is being organized in partnership with the Native American Studies Center.

In 1973, Columbia Museum of Art [CMA] curator Steve Baker organized what was then a groundbreaking exhibition of Catawba pottery. With help from the UofSC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center, CMA is restaging this exhibit. The proposed research project will culminate in *Indigenous Discovery Tours* (walking and digital) of the Historic Horseshoe and the South Carolina State House portrait galleries. These tours will be promoted in connection with the opening of this exhibit and remain an important resource for South Carolinians' understanding Native American history, critiquing racist ideologies, and promoting racial justice well beyond the timeframe of the exhibit.

Phase 3 of McKissick Museum's collaboration with the Catawba Indian Nation will involve adapting a highly successful 3-week "Digi-Culture Lab" summer program pioneered by Sipp Culture in Mississippi to introduce middle school students to how to grow their own food, how food sovereignty and land issues intersect, and how to use digital media to tell their personal and community's place-based food stories. Drawing on the expertise of Catawba Nation members, faculty with the Arnold School of Public Health (with the Green Quad's Faculty Principal Dr. Joe Jones as a key advisor), and faculty with the School of Visual Art and Design, the idea is to bring Catawba middle school students to UofSC in the summer to sample college life and learn skills that empower them as growers, critical thinkers, and digital story tellers. With the uncertainty that COVID has created regarding in-person campus experiences for non-university community members, McKissick leadership and Laney Buckley, Community Outreach Director at the Catawba Indian Nation, have agreed to table plans for a Digi-Culture Lab at

UofSC Columbia until summer 2022. We will use 2021 to pursue external funding in support of this residential program, planned to launch in the summer of 2022.

*The project title is adapted from George-Warren's title for his docent tour of the Smithsonian's National Gallery.