



**AFRICAN-AMERICAN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
of South Central PA

PO Box 4022 Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17604

December 19, 2018

Contact: Debbie Smith at aahsconductor@gmail.com or 717-393-8553 or

Dr. Leroy T. Hopkins, Jr., President, at 717-224-7030

Reaching Back into Lancaster History “to Benefit the Future.” Black History Month Opportunities—February 2019

Black History Month in February 2019 offers opportunities for area residents to become tour conductors to share Lancaster’s African American experience and civil rights heritage with visitors and local residents.

Interested persons will be trained during a series of 2-hour sessions every Saturday in February. Stipends are available for trainees who complete the course requirements successfully and agree to participate in the upcoming fourth season of African American Heritage Walking Tours in the historic City of Lancaster.

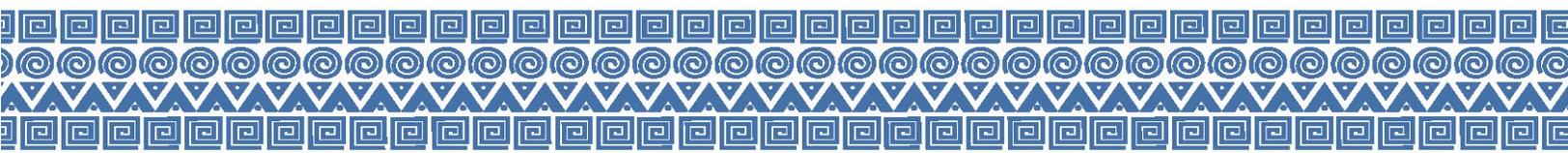
The training sessions, on February 2, 9, 16 and 23, will be held on the second floor of the City of Lancaster Visitor Center, 38 Penn Square in Lancaster. Sessions will begin at 10 AM and end at noon. Volunteers from the African American Heritage Walking Tour program will guide trainees through tour information and procedures.

“This is a unique opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds,” said Dr. Leroy Hopkins, President of African American Historical Society of South Central PA. “The goal of our program is to promote greater awareness and understanding of the diversity of our community that is directly related to respect for one another’s heritage.”

To register for the training program contact Debbie Smith at aahsconductor@gmail.com or 717-393-8553, or Dr. Hopkins, at 717-224-7030.

The African American Historical Society of South Central Pennsylvania is planning the project with assistance from LancasterHistory.org. This training program is made possible by a grant from the Walters/Unitarian Universalist Church Trust, which is an endowment from Arthur and Selma Walters to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lancaster, which supports events and programs “that affirm the worth and dignity of all humans.”

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“Our training program is entitled “Sankofa,” a word from the Twi language of Ghana, Africa, which literally means “to go back and get it,” said Hopkins. “Metaphorically, it means to retrieve the past to benefit the future.”

With Walters Trust grant funds, the Sankofa Project will pay \$250 stipends to each of the selected individuals who complete the sessions. Trainees will be expected to commit to assist in conducting the guided walking tours next year. Those tours will be held generally on the first Saturdays of the months from May through November 2019. The African American Historical Society of South Central Pennsylvania is a volunteer-based community organization working in partnership with LancasterHistory.org, and receives support from other community organizations.

Also through the Walters Trust grant, African American heritage will be shared more widely in 2019 in Lancaster and the region through the installation of two new historical markers in the city.

“We are proud to have been a part of this initiative to help launch this conductor training program, which includes the exciting goal of ultimately installing more African American history markers and displays throughout the City. Additional community collaboration and future partnerships will be key,” said Dr. Thomas R. Ryan, President and CEO of LancasterHistory.org.

The tour series and historical marker project of the African American Historical Society is also collaborative effort with the City of Lancaster Office of Promotion (LOOP) and in partnership with Historic Lancaster Walking Tour, which has been conducting history tours of Downtown Lancaster since 1976. Other community group co-sponsors are Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society and Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

The Walters Trust grant announcement comes at the conclusion of the first three years of African American Heritage tours in the City. During those three years of the African American Heritage Walking Tour program, more than 800 persons took the tours, generating nearly \$6500 to support the projects of the African American Historical Society, which includes the research, design and installation of the historical markers. The tours have been conducted on the first Saturdays of the month, beginning in May and continuing into the Fall.

BACKGROUND on grant funding:

Training program: \$6560. Markers: \$4500 Total: \$11,060

Art and Selma Walters Trust Unitarian Universalist Church of Lancaster Program Grants

Unitarian Universalist Church of Lancaster

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