



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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\$1 Million Awarded in Harford County's Inaugural African American Heritage Grant Program

BEL AIR, Md., (Oct. 12, 2022) - Harford County has awarded \$1 million in its first grant program dedicated to preserving African American history. County Executive Barry Glassman announced the awards on Wednesday at a reception for grantees at the historic Liriodendron Mansion in Bel Air.

During his remarks, the county executive gave special thanks to three Harford County women who had inspired him, from his early days as a college intern in Annapolis to the present. He said that Ms. Christine Tolbert taught him the value of preservation, and Rev. Violet Hopkins-Tann and Mrs. Janice Grant showed him that preservation was worth standing up for - and fighting for.

Applications for Harford's African American Heritage Grants were solicited in July for projects that contribute to the research, preservation, and interpretation of local African American history. Individuals, nonprofits, businesses, and local governments were eligible to apply.

Harford County's Historic Preservation Commission reviewed submissions and made recommendations to the county executive for the awards. Funding for the program was included in the budget proposed by the county executive and approved by the County Council for the fiscal year 2023.

"The people and places that came before us helped shape Harford County," County Executive Glassman said. "African Americans are integral to our story and this program will raise up this heritage for future generations."

Harford County African American Heritage Grants were awarded as follows:

Applicant: Fairview African Methodist Episcopal Church

Award: \$37,130

Fairview AME Church plans to rehabilitate its historic church building and the former Fairview School. The church building, built between 1909 and 1911, serves the communities of Forest Hill, Jarrettsville, and Rock Spring. The Fairview School building, currently used as a residence, was built in 1927 to educate African American children in Forest Hill and remained in use until 1945.

Applicant: Mrs. Janice Grant

Award: \$107,201.04

Mrs. Grant requested funding to begin stabilization of the Johns-Turner House in Aberdeen for the future conversion into the Aberdeen Center for Black History and Culture. The Johns-Turner House, constructed in 1930, represents nine decades of an enduring struggle by several branches of an African American family to advance during eras of economic depression, segregation, and discrimination.

Applicant: Harford Community College Foundation

Award: \$11,958.64

Harford Community College faculty and students will work with the Harford County chapter of the NAACP to document the African American civil rights experience in Harford County. This project will include digital and in-person exhibitions, collection of oral history narratives, training community-embedded oral historians, and design and production of signs marking significant civil rights locations throughout the county.

Applicant: Havre de Grace Colored School Museum and Cultural Center, Inc.

Award: \$257,500

The Havre de Grace Colored School Museum and Cultural Center will use the awarded funds to continue the rehabilitation of their historic former school building. The Havre de Grace Colored School was completed in 1912 and expanded in 1936, serving the African American students of Havre de Grace until the opening of Havre de Grace Consolidated School in 1953.

Applicant: The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc.

Award: \$64,200

The Historical Society of Harford County will assess its holdings related to African American history and assist with the location of additional archival and artifact contributions from members of the Harford County African American community. The artifacts and archives identified will be used in the development of a traveling exhibition celebrating the African American experience in Harford County.

Applicant: Hosanna Community House, Inc.

Awards: \$70,597 Freedman Bureau exhibit; \$52,200 Hosanna School capital improvements; \$274,630 McComas Institute church and graveyard capital improvements

The Hosanna Community House plans to rehabilitate the historic Hosanna School Museum, McComas Institute and graveyard, and Mt. Zion Church, and develop a new interactive experience to tell the story of the Freedman's Bureau and the Hosanna School, and McComas Institute. The Hosanna School, McComas Institute, and Mt. Zion Church are representative of the important role that education and religion have played in the history of Harford County's African American community.

Applicant: St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church Gravel Hill

Award: \$115,000

St. James AME Church Gravel Hill will undertake rehabilitation of its historic church building and a property boundary survey to assist with preservation of the surrounding historic graveyard. The 173-year-old St. James AME Church Gravel Hill is one of the oldest historically African American congregations in Harford County. Its graveyard is the final resting place of 300 Harford Countians, including four veterans of the U.S. Colored Infantry, who fought to ensure freedom for all Americans during the Civil War.

Applicant: Springhouse Family Farm, LLC

Award: \$9,583.32


The Springhouse Family Farm, LLC, owner of the historic Woodview Farm, will hire a consultant to research the history of enslavement at Woodview. Oral tradition states that an outbuilding on the property was once used

as quarters for persons enslaved on the farm. This project will grow the body of knowledge on enslavement in Harford County and at Woodview, culminating in a public presentation of the findings and the potential for future historical interpretation on the property.



Attendees at the award announcements in Bel Air for Harford's inaugural African American Heritage Grants.

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