

2015 Annual Report

Freedom's Frontier NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



Counties Kansas

Allen • Anderson • Atchison •
Bourbon • Chautauqua •
Cherokee • Clay • Coffey •
Crawford • Douglas • Franklin •
Geary • Jackson • Jefferson •
Johnson • Labette •
Leavenworth • Linn • Miami •
Montgomery • Neosho •
Osage • Pottawatomie • Riley •
Shawnee • Wabaunsee •
Wilson • Woodson •
Wyandotte

Missouri

Barton • Bates • Buchanan •
Cass • Clay • Jackson • Johnson •
Lafayette • Platte • Ray •
St. Clair • Vernon

Geography and People

Location: 41 counties in
eastern Kansas and western
Missouri

Area: 31,021 square miles

Population (2013): 2,938,665

Mission

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is dedicated to building awareness of the struggles for freedom in western Missouri and eastern Kansas. FFNHA inspires respect for multiple perspectives and empowers residents to preserve and share these stories. We achieve our goals through interpretation, preservation, conservation and education for all residents and visitors.



Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is affiliated with the National Park Service.

Raising the banner for freedom: 10 years of Freedom's Frontier

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area celebrates its 10th year in 2016.

Following a grassroots effort to organize a heritage area, Kansas Representative **Jim Ryan** and Senator **Sam Brownback** introduced legislation in 2005 to the U.S. House and Senate, respectively, designating 29 Kansas counties as *Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom National Heritage Area*.

The Senate bill reached the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, on which Missouri Senator **Jim Talent** served as a member.

He, the late Missouri Representative **Ike Skelton**, and the **Missouri Department of Natural Resources** amended the bill to include 12 western Missouri counties. They also changed the heritage area's name to **Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area**.

This legislation became law October 12, 2006.

Since its creation, Freedom's Frontier has worked in our 41 counties to improve preservation, interpretation, education, and promotion of our interconnected histories. We offer several programs to assist our partners in their efforts.

Join us in our celebration as we spend 2016 looking back on our shared history and accomplishments while embarking on special programs to celebrate 10 years of

"raising the banner for freedom."

Photos:

Right: Intern Lexi Ray staffs a table at the 10-year celebration kickoff at Johnson County Library's Antioch Library, January 9, 2016.

Below: Jim Ogle, Executive Director, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.



Executive Director Jim Ogle's message to Freedom's Frontier

Everyone loves a good story.

We've gathered around the fire, at the dinner table, in front of a movie screen, or even the tube looking for good stories to experience. **Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area** is fundamentally about good stories.

We are about the stories that shaped the western expansion, the Border

War that led to the Civil War, and the enduring struggle for Freedom.

Throughout this report you will find evidence of the progress we have made to tell these stories and the progress we hope to make in the coming years.

Come gather around our table! *Tell us your story!*

Jim Ogle



Congressional Delegation

Senators

Roy Blunt, MO
Claire McCaskill, MO
Jerry Moran, KS
Pat Roberts, KS

Representatives

Vicky Hartzler, MO 4th District
Emanuel Cleaver II, MO 5th District
Sam Graves, MO 6th District
Tim Huelskamp, KS 1st District
Lynn Jenkins, KS 2nd District
Kevin Yoder, KS 3rd District
Mike Pompeo, KS 4th District

2016 Board of Trustees

Honorary Co-chairs

Governor Sam Brownback, KS
Governor Jay Nixon, MO

Ex-Officio Members

Jennie Chen, Executive Director,
Kansas State Historical Society
• Gary Kremer, Director, State
Historical Society of Missouri

Executive Committee

Jody Ladd Craig, Chair, Leawood
KS • Duane Benton, Vice-Chair,
Kansas City MO • Deb Barker,
Secretary, Ottawa KS • Kent
Glasscock, Treasurer, Manhattan
KS • John Dillingham, At-Large,
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Tacha, At-Large, Lawrence
KS • Kevin Wood, At-Large,
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Kay Barnes, Kansas City MO •
Peggy Buhr, Butler MO • Jan
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Ford, St. Joseph MO • Henry
Fortunato, Overland Park KS •
Grant Glenn, Topeka KS • Stan
Harris, St. Joseph MO • Mary
Hunkeler, Mission Woods KS •
Jeremiah Morgan, Kansas City
MO • Gary Nevius, Overland
Park KS • Craig Patterson, Kansas
City MO • Larry Pfautsch,
Harrisonville MO • Jim Rankin,
Topeka KS • Don Scott, Kansas
City MO • Luther Smith, Kansas
City KS • Kala Stroup, Lawrence
KS • Bill Tempel, Lexington MO
• Nancy Thellman, Lawrence
KS • Bill Wagnon, Topeka KS
• Alexis Woodall, Olathe KS •
Walter Wulf, Humboldt KS

Board of Trustees hired heritage area's first *full-time Executive Director

Jim Ogle joined the Freedom's Frontier staff as Executive Director on December 1, 2015. Jim is dedicated to raising the profile of Freedom's Frontier and excited to tell great stories of the heritage area and how our past relates to the present.

According to Jim, "For me, history isn't a dusty book sitting on a shelf. Sometimes forgotten. Sometimes gathering

dust. History is how we got where we are today and what is open to us in our future. One of my chief goals is to help find ways to let the general public know the enthusiasm our partners share for our unique story."

Now a Kansas resident, Jim was born in Kansas City, MO, and graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Jim has

worked for television stations across the country including nine years as General Manager at WIBW in Topeka.

**Previously, the Freedom's Frontier Executive Director also served as the Director of Destination Management, Inc., and eXplore Lawrence (formerly known as the Lawrence Convention and Visitors Bureau).*



Photo
Clockwise from left front at the annual luncheon: Board of Trustees members Mary Hunkeler and Bill Tempel, Davoren Tempel, Executive Director Jim Ogle, Bill Craig and Board of Trustees Chair Jody Ladd Craig, Board of Trustees member Luther Smith.

Interpretive Grants fund projects that bring our shared story to life

Since 2012, the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area **Interpretive Grant program** has funded more than 45 projects helping partners better tell their stories. In 2015, fifteen grants received funding.

A few of the interpretive projects funded:

- **Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm Historic Site** purchased an original mudwagon. The mudwagon helped to better showcase different types of

coaches as part of the site's 1860s living history activities.

- **Fort Scott National Historic Site** presented an educators' workshop and symposium: *Freedom, Equality, and Democracy: Civil War to Civil Rights*. The workshop brought experts to Fort Scott for a day of discussion and education. One teacher who attended said, "The workshop raised awareness and has piqued my interest of this period in history."

- **Humbolt Historic Preservation Alliance** received funding for a mural in the **Orcutt Living History Museum**. Now completed, the project is receiving local press coverage.

- **Pony Express National Museum's** new outdoor interpretive signage will use graphic standards proposed within the 2014 comprehensive signage study to provide a prototype for Freedom's Frontier interpretive signage.

2015 Donors

Anonymous	Megan Gilliland	Saralyn Reece Hardy
Deborah Barker	Kent Glasscock	Eileen Robertson
Aaron & Diane Barnhart	Charles Glenn	Donald Scott
Judy Billings	Grant Glenn	Jan Shupert-Arick
Carol Bohl	Liz & Jeff Hobson	Sandra Slusher
Paul Bahnmaier	Mary Hunkeler	Iona Smith
Kay Barnes	Marla Jackson	Luther Smith
Duane & Sandra Benton	Sheila Lampe	Sonia Smith
Willard Bolinger	Norman & Patricia Lenger	Kala Stroup
Peggy Buhr	James Maag	Deanell Reece Tacha
Charles Clark	Julie & Tim McPike	William & Davoren Tempel
Cheryl Collins	Chris Meinhardt	Nancy Thellman
Joanne Collins	Elsie Middleton	Clara VanDraska
Jody & Bill Craig	Chad & Ann Milton	William Wagnon
John Dillingham	Gary Nevius	Lynn Ward
Harold Draper	Jim Ogle	Beverly Wittenborn
Janith English	Craig Patterson	Kevin Wood
Beth Fager	Regina Polok	Alexis Woodall
William Fischer	Jeff & Kathleen Quigley	Walt Wulf
Bob Ford	James Rankin	
Henry Fortunato	Marynell Reece	

Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Charitable Trust
 Center for Midwestern Studies, University of Missouri-Kansas City
 City of Lawrence, Kansas
 Douglas County, Kansas
 Frazier Family Fund
 Kansas Humanities Council
 Lowell Milken Center
 Missouri Humanities Council
 Riley County Kansas Historical Society

Advisory Committee

Cheryl Collins, Chair, Riley County Historical Society • Paul Bahnmaier, Leocompton Historical Society • Peggy Buhr, Bates County Museum • Bill Fischer, Fort Scott National Historic Site (non-voting member) • Lisa Irle, Johnson County (MO) Historical Society • Kristi Lee, Leavenworth Convention & Visitors Bureau • Alinda Miller, Lone Jack Historical Society • Marcia Rozell, Manhattan Convention & Visitors Bureau • Alana Smith, Westport Historical Society • Steve Nowak, Watkins Museum of History • Erica White, Atkins-Johnson Farm & Museum • Alexis Woodall, Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm

Guiding Principles

1. We will be tolerant and respectful of diverse stories from multiple perspectives.
2. We will respect property rights.
3. We will focus on authentic and engaging experiences.
4. We will honor the region's peoples, past and present.
5. We will appreciate unique cultural and historic assets within the nationally important landscape.
6. We will invest in community engagement, education and empowerment.
7. We will sustain and grow a sense of place.
8. We will value and protect the natural environment.
9. We will consider future generations in everything we do.

Tacha Freedom Award winner studied Civil Rights activist Lucille Bluford



The **Tacha Freedom Award** is an annual award intended to help students learn about issues, ideas, people, and events that contribute to the themes of Freedom's Frontier. The award is presented to an 8th-11th grade student who develops a project using heritage area themes.

The 2015 award was presented to **Hannah Scott**, Odessa (Missouri) High School. Freedom's Frontier founding board chair, **Deanell Reece Tacha**, for whom the award is named, presented Hannah's award at the Freedom's

Frontier Annual Luncheon in October.

Hannah's exhibit about Kansas City journalist and Civil Rights activist **Lucille Bluford** advanced to the National History Day competition, and received the Outstanding Senior Entry from Missouri award.

Harry S. Truman Library and Museum Education Director **Mark Adams**, said, "Hannah became the educator through the incredible amount of research on her topic and displaying it in such an amazing exhibit."

Achieving our goals in 2015

In 2015, staff, trustees, and friends in Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area:

- Hosted a workshop on interpreting slavery, supported by the **Kansas Humanities Council** and **Missouri Humanities Council**, in partnership with the **University of Missouri-Kansas City's Center for Midwestern Studies** and the **Tracing Center**. Sixty-
- two people attended from 35 Freedom's Frontier partnership organizations.
- Approved fifteen Interpretive Grants to heritage area partnership organizations for a total of \$47,613 granted.
- Completed outreach events for 875 teachers to provide them with information about our history and tools to teach local history in the classroom, including implementing Bus on Us transportation scholarships and providing 75% of transportation cost for 11 educational trips since August 1.
- Promoted our significant history and heritage sites through our Heritage Traveler website, *Heritage Traveler Insider* e-newsletter and a series of articles showcasing our region's history in the **Topeka Capital Journal**.
- Completed a pilot Youth Corps project to provide summer work experience in heritage development for underserved youth.

Freedom's Frontier Youth Camp provides history experience for Boys and Girls Clubs

Freedom's Frontier's Youth Camp provides 4th and 5th grade students from local **Boys and Girls Clubs** an opportunity to explore history from Civil War to Civil Rights, experiencing cultural, natural, and historical resources in the heritage area's 41 counties.

In addition to our usual week long camps, in 2015 we also coordinated two day-camps. In 2015 Youth Camps served about 200 students!

The camp continues to thrive and grow through dedicated work of staff and interns. Summer interns **Adam Newhard** and **Kendyl Siebart** are University of Kansas graduate students.

Both collaborated with **Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site** staff and interns on entertaining programming that challenged students.

Groups of students from the **Boys and Girls Clubs of Topeka, Kansas City, KS, Kansas City, MO, Independence, MO, and Lawrence, KS**, visited sites throughout the region, learning the significance of history, and the power of place, as they traveled.

As much as camp provides for the student, it provides twice as much for those observing.

It's rewarding to watch students learn and hear them discuss local history. As summer intern Kendyl said, "I now know the power of history connecting to students."

Photos

Top: Campers learning how to read primary sources at Atkins-Johnson Farm and Museum, Gladstone, MO.

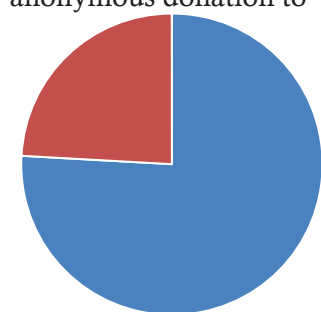
Bottom: Campers at Oak Hill Cemetery in Lawrence, KS.



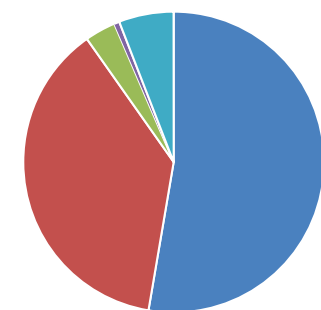
Banking on our past to build a bright future

For many Freedom's Frontier partners, a small investment goes a long way. Freedom's Frontier operates with the same mindset as our partners, working to ensure every investment in Freedom's Frontier returns a maximum benefit for area youth, partners and heritage area visitors.

In 2015, Freedom's Frontier received a large anonymous donation to



■ Program Expenditures	\$519,160.61
■ Administration Expenditures	\$164,905.36



divide between operations and the **Freedom's Frontier Endowment**. The heritage area also received a \$15,000 donation from the **Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Charitable Trust**. This investment supported:

- expansion of youth camp programming.
- **Mt. Mitchell Prairie Guards'** efforts to preserve historic

prairielands near Mount Mitchell.

- **Lecompton Historical Society's** cataloging of artifacts in the Territorial Capital Museum.

Thanks, in part, to staff efforts to raise awareness of opportunities to give to Freedom's Frontier and our partners, Freedom's Frontier expanded its donor base on **Giving**

Tuesday. In its second year of participation, the organization exceeded our Giving Tuesday goal by more than double.

With the addition of our new Executive Director, **Jim Ogle**, the Freedom's Frontier Board looks forward to a successful 2016.



Photo: Lecompton Historical Society cataloged – diligently entered the measurements of, photographed, provided a description and provenance of – its 1,000th item, a painting of Jim Lane.

■ Restricted Grants	\$423,104.80
■ Heritage Partnership Program	\$301,416.77
■ Private	\$ 26,521.21
■ Program Revenue	\$ 4,680.92
■ State, Local, Partners, Other	\$ 47,300.86

Board of Trustees launches 10-year anniversary campaign: Raising the banner for freedom

At the Freedom's Frontier Annual Luncheon in October, 2015, **Board of Trustees** Chair **Jody Ladd Craig** launched the Freedom's Frontier 10-year anniversary campaign.

In 2016, Freedom's Frontier will challenge its current donor base and reach out to new potential donors to help

the heritage area fund new initiatives.

The board identified three potential project areas for the campaign:

- **Youth programs.** Freedom's Frontier has established several outstanding pilot projects to engage youth in explorations of the heritage area.
- **Signage.** Freedom's Frontier is kicking off a multi-year project to install signage to raise awareness of the history of Freedom's Frontier and our partner historic sites, museums, and interpretive centers.
- **Historic interpretation.** Freedom's Frontier partners do an amazing job of telling their

significant history. In order to allow more visitors to learn about that history, Freedom's Frontier will produce tools like thematic travel guides and a mobile application to share are important and interconnected history with more residents and visitors.

2015 Partner Spotlights

Under Protest: Emigrant Tribes in Franklin County, Kansas was an exhibition developed by partners **Watkins Museum of History**, in Lawrence, KS, and the **Franklin County Historical Society**, in Ottawa, KS, with an institutional grant from the Kansas Museums Association. The exhibition explored the history and fate of emigrant tribes with historic photographs, maps, and artifacts drawn from the collections of both historical societies. It was seen by more than 2,000 people. Opening and closing events were presented in partnership with **Haskell Indian Nations University**.

Freedom's Frontier Managing Director **Julie McPike** joined Watkins Museum of History Director **Steve Nowak** at the **Watkins Museum of History** to welcome for a museum tour the visiting Australian Ambassador to the U.S., Hon. **Kim C. Beazley**, AC, and a party from the embassy in Washington, D.C., on July 17, 2015.

Deborah Barker, Director of **Franklin County Historical Society** and the **Old Depot Museum** in Ottawa, KS; the 2015 President of the **Kansas Historical Foundation**; and a member of the Freedom's Frontier Board of Trustees; traveled to Louisville, KY, to accept an Award of Merit from the **American Association for State and Local History** (AASLH) for *Native Neighbors from Freedom's Frontier's Past*, a



Photo

Above: The Australian Ambassador, Kim C. Beazley, visited Lawrence, KS, in July. Pictured are (second from left) Julie McPike, (fourth from left) Beazley, (next to the ambassador) Watkins Museum Director Steve Watkins, and those who accompanied the ambassador on the tour.

Below

A teenaged dancer educates and entertains an audience at the Neosho County Community College Ottawa Campus during the 2014 Native Neighbors event. Native Neighbors will next be held at Fort Scott National Historic Site in October 2016.

program developed with a Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grant. Heritage area staff nominated the program and shared in the award. Deborah also presented a Native Neighbors poster session for the AASLH conference.

The **Old Depot Museum** mounted an exhibit called *From Ottawa to Over There*, which focused on young men from Franklin County who went to France during World War I, and incorporated archival materials, photos, and additional



information on local boys. Another display included a National Archives exhibit about Fred Harvey. During the exhibit, an overflow crowd at Ottawa's historic Plaza Theater saw Judy Garland in *The Harvey Girls* – just as when it first played there in 1946.

The **Jesse James Farm & Museum** hosted the traveling exhibit *A State Divided: The Civil War in Missouri*, which was seen by 18 tour groups. The museum also hosted six speakers and a family fun day with Civil War-themed activities for children including a storyteller, and sing-along featuring songs sung by Union and Confederate soldiers, and period songs about Abraham Lincoln. Families who participated received free children's books from *READ from the START*, a **Missouri Humanities Council** early literacy program.

Historic Mt. Gilead School's three "Mt. Gilead Mondays" (homeschool programs) featured themes from the exhibit *A State Divided: The Civil War in Missouri*. Participants learned about Abraham Lincoln, Freedom Quilts that slaves used to navigate the Underground Railroad, and Civil War Soldiers. Civil War reenactors came into the classroom to talk about the lives of the soldiers they portray, and what it's like to be a reenactor. *READ from the START* provided books to the children attending programs.

2015 Partner Spotlights

The Constitution Hall Topeka restoration group has been educating city government leaders about Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area and the benefits of partnering. Several heritage area partners in the Topeka area came together to plan a July 4, 2016 event downtown and around the Kansas riverfront. The **Downtown Topeka Rotary Club**, is celebrating the regional stories of freedom by funding a downtown Topeka pocket park with interpretive assistance by **Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site**.

The Territorial Capital Museum also collaborated with **Constitution Hall State Historic Site**, volunteers, and **Lecompton Elementary school**. With research help from the museums, 15 community volunteers worked with 4th graders to create short videos on 15 Lecompton historic sites and buildings. Videos were posted on YouTube, then were made into QR codes. The codes and colorful "quilt blocks" were added to **Historic Lecompton** walking tour post signs. The codes are a valuable addition for tourists, and the students know more about historic Lecompton.



Lecompton Historical Society used a Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grant for an inventory project at the **Territorial Capital Museum**. A temporary project curator was hired to work with volunteers on entering artifact information into the PastPerfect database.

Shawnee Town 1929 had attendance of 140,000. Every single day that the site was open for school field trips in the spring and fall was full. Two new buildings – Garrett's Grocery Store and an undertaker – opened in Shawnee Town. Crowds came for five new

Photos

Above: Shawnee Town 1929 has a working farm – one of the reasons that the site's field trip days are so popular. The site's outreach "staff" includes chicken Henny Penny.

Right: Freedom's Frontier Annual Luncheon attendees had a chance to ride in the mudwagon that Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm Historic Site purchased with a Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grant.



Photo

Above: U.S. Representative Kevin Yoder visits Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm Historic Site during Freedom's Frontier Day Camp.

1920s-themed events, including a farmhouse fried chicken dinner with 65 people and a big tent, and the town's first ice cream social with ice cream churned by *Churn of the Century* with a 1922 gas-powered, Amish-built engine.

Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm Historic Site

served over 40,000 people through historical programs, events, rentals, and outreach. This includes 8,200 children engaged in curriculum-based programs or summer activities. Mahaffie volunteers donated 7,003 hours. Mahaffie's *Open-Late Thursday nights* were named a "Best Free Activity for families in

Kansas City" by *KC Parent Magazine*, while a *Commemorate Olathe 1865* program with the cemetery was cited in two national publications and covered by the *Kansas City Star*. U.S. Rep. **Kevin Yoder** visited Mahaffie this summer to experience Freedom's Frontier Day Camp. Mahaffie was also the host for more than 100 guests at Freedom's Frontier's annual meeting/awards luncheon, held at the **Olathe Community Center**. Mahaffie employee and Board of Trustees member **Alexis Woodall** was the emcee. At the luncheon, **Kerry Altenbernd** was named the 2015 **Billings Most Valuable Partner**.



Contact

Freedom's Frontier
National Heritage Area
PO Box 526
200 W 9th St.
Lawrence KS 66044

Phone: (785) 856-5300
Fax: (785) 856-5303
www.freedomfrontier.org

Jim Ogle, Executive Director
jogle@freedomfrontier.org

Julie McPike, Managing Director
jmcpike@freedomfrontier.org

Elizabeth Hobson, Education
and Interpretation Manager
ehobson@freedomfrontier.org

Kathleen Quigley, Partnership
and Development Coordinator
kquigley@freedomfrontier.org

Sonia Smith, Marketing and
Community Outreach Manager
ssmith@freedomfrontier.org

Vision for 2028

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is an internationally recognized region in western Missouri and eastern Kansas where a young nation's diverse definitions of freedom collided. Through sharing authentic and honestly interpreted stories, residents respect multiple views of freedom. Compelling learning experiences, interpretation and preservation offer visitors and residents of all ages an understanding of the region's importance. Historically aware citizens collaborate to build diverse economies for current and future generations.



Freedom's Frontier Youth Corps students learned history while working

This was the first year for the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area **Youth Corps** program. For four weeks, students and trained staff traveled the heritage area, working at designated sites with specific projects.

Students visited 12 partner sites and completed projects. Their adventures included:

- inventorying photographs at the **Atkins Johnson**

Farm and Museum in Gladstone, MO.

- staffing a weekly program at the **Watkins Museum of History** in Lawrence, KS.
- camping overnight in Humboldt and Fort Scott, KS.

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site Education Technician **Lisa Nagurny** supervised the six students.

Partner sites loved having Youth Corps help with summer projects. One site reported, "Wish we could have them all summer!"

Franklin County Historical Society Director **Deborah Barker** was so impressed with the Youth Corps kids, "They were hard-working, quiet and a very useful crew. It was a good experience for us, and we talked with them a bit about Franklin county history."

"Don't be afraid to broach the subject," says satisfied workshop attendee

What is the best way to talk about slavery at sites in the heritage area?

This was the topic of a day-long **Interpreting Slavery Workshop** held at **Alexander Majors Barn** in Kansas City, MO, on May 11, 2015.

Freedom's Frontier, received grant support from the **Kansas** and **Missouri Humanities Councils**, and support

from **UMKC's Center for Midwestern Studies**, and the **Wornall/Majors House Museums**.

The workshop provided attendees new perspectives on addressing the history of slavery and issues of race at historic sites and museums.

Sixty-two participants represented 35 different cultural and historical organizations.

Each attendee got books written by presenters **Kristin Gallas** of the Tracing Center for the Legacies and Histories of Slavery (*Interpreting Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites*) and Dr. **Diane Mutti Burke**, history professor at **University of Missouri-Kansas City** (*On Slavery's Border: Missouri's Small Slaveholding Households, 1815-1865*).