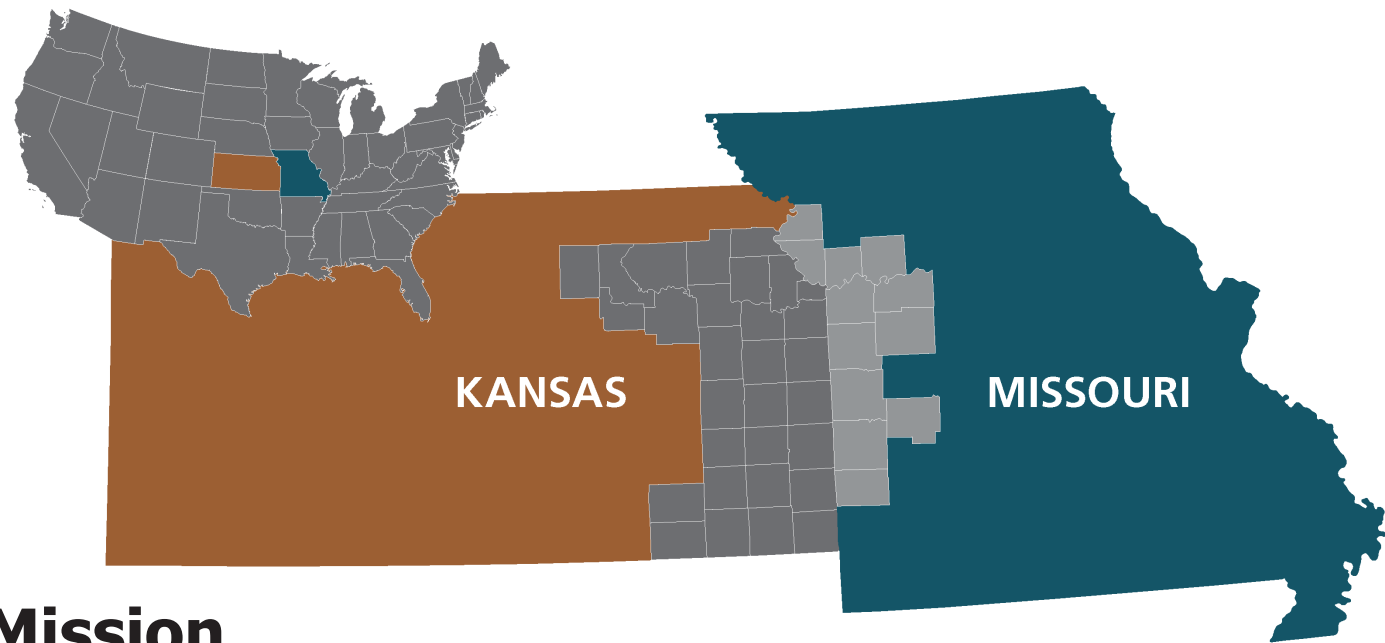




Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area
PO Box 526 • 200 W 9th St. • Lawrence KS 66044
Phone: (785) 856-5300 • Fax: (785) 856-5303
information@freedomfrontier.org
www.freedomfrontier.org





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. National Heritage Areas are places where historic, cultural, and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes. Unlike national parks, National Heritage Areas are large lived-in landscapes. Consequently, National Heritage Areas entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

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.

Missouri		Kansas		
Barton	Allen	Jackson	Shawnee	12
Bates	Anderson	Jefferson	Wabaunsee	
Buchanan	Atchison	Johnson	Wilson	29
Cass	Bourbon	Labette	Woodson	
Clay	Chautauqua	Leavenworth	Wyandotte	31,021
Jackson	Cherokee	Linn		
Johnson	Clay	Miami		square miles
Lafayette	Coffey	Montgomery		
Platte	Crawford	Neosho		2,883,526
Ray	Douglas	Osage		
St. Clair	Franklin	Pottawatomie		
Vernon	Geary	Riley		

Western Missouri Counties
Eastern Kansas Counties
2016 population estimate

Tackling new frontiers: Looking ahead to 2017

As we look forward to 2017, we will build on our strong foundation of youth program, building partnerships and grant-funded projects to accomplish our goals, including:

- Creating unique visitor experiences that highlight our shared stories
- Empowering youth to learn and interpret our history
- Establishing sustainable partnerships
- Diversifying revenue streams

In the last quarter of 2016, we received a grant that will enable us to tackle our goals for 2017. Freedom’s Frontier received a 2017 \$25,000 Active Trails Grant from The National Park Foundation to mark and interpret a heritage trail through Topeka, Kansas. Funded by The Coca-Cola Company and The Coca-Cola Foundation, this grant will engage youth in Topeka to research history along the urban trail, and create and install historically-themed mural that tell the story of Topeka’s history. Through this project, we are establishing new partnerships with Topeka Public Schools, Heartland Visioning and the Topeka Downtown Rotary club. Brett Oetting, Executive Director of Visit Topeka, said of the project, “this effort could ‘jump start’ heritage tourism in Topeka. This will be an opportunity for locals and visitors alike to immerse themselves in our city’s rich heritage, diversity and culture.”

Topeka students will be among those who explore history and shape the heritage trail.



10 Years By the Numbers

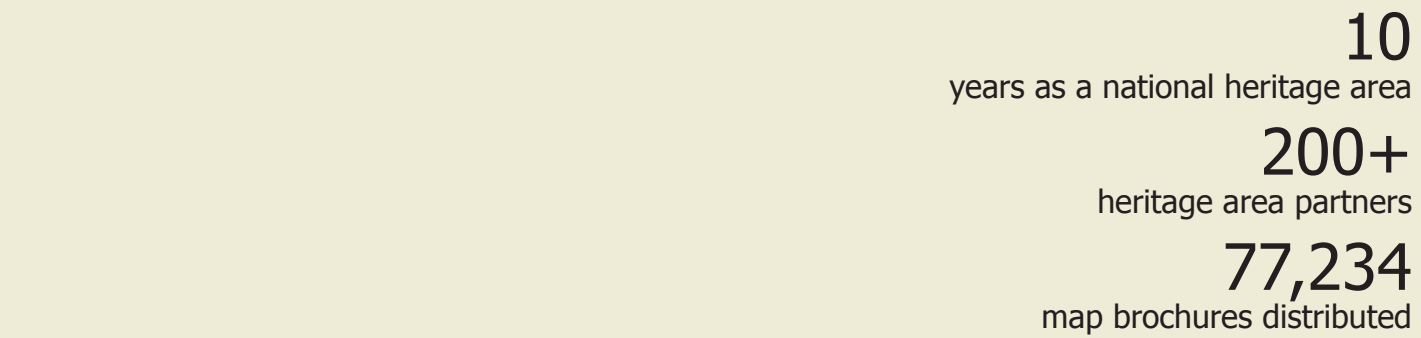
President George W. Bush signed the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006 on October 12, 2006, creating Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area.

Our partner meetings are held on the second Thursday of odd-numbered months, and are hosted by partners at museums, historical sites, and other locations. Since 2006, Freedom’s Frontier has:

- Held 75 partner meetings with a total attendance of 2,625
- Hosted 33 unique training for museums and historic site partners
- Sent 134 Partner Newsletters
- Awarded 16 Professional Development Scholarships for a total of \$10,275
- Awarded 77 Interpretive Grants for a total of \$312,098

Since we were designated a national heritage area, we’ve also:

- Facilitated summer youth camps for 1,070 Boys and Girls Club students
- Awarded 60 *Bus on Us!* scholarships for field trips to 19 partner sites for a total of \$17,300



What is a Heritage Area?

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritageareas/index.htm>

In 1984, the first National Heritage Area, Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Area, was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. In his dedication speech, Reagan referred to National Heritage Areas (NHAs) “a new kind of national park” that married heritage conservation, recreation, and economic development. NHAs are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. Through their resources, NHAs tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation’s diverse heritage. NHAs are lived-in landscapes. Consequently, NHA entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

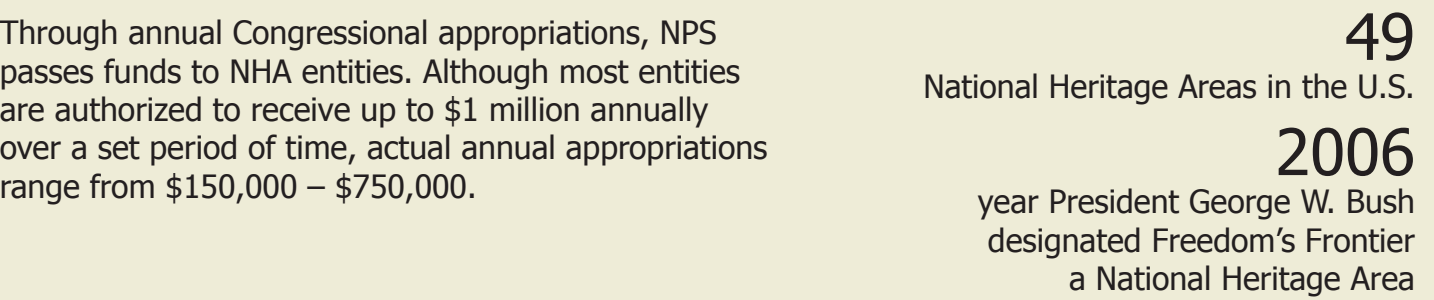
NHAs are a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage conservation and economic development. Through public-private partnerships, NHA entities support historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects. Leveraging funds and long-term support for projects, NHA partnerships foster pride of place and an enduring stewardship ethic. NHAs have long-term benefits, including:

- Sustainable economic development – NHAs leverage an average of \$5.50 for every \$1.00 of federal investment to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism.
- Healthy environment and people – Many NHAs improve water and air quality in their regions through restoration projects, and encourage people to enjoy natural and cultural sites by providing new recreational opportunities.
- Improved Quality of Life –Through new or improved amenities, unique settings, and educational and volunteer opportunities, NHAs improve local quality of life.
- Education and Stewardship – NHAs connect communities to natural, historic, and cultural sites through educational activities, which promote awareness and foster interest in and stewardship of heritage resources.
- Community Engagement and Pride – By engaging community members in heritage conservation activities, NHAs strengthen sense of place and community pride.

The NHA Program

NHAs further the mission of the National Park Service (NPS) by fostering community stewardship of our nation’s heritage. The NHA program, is administered by NPS coordinators in Washington DC and six regional offices - Anchorage, San Francisco, Denver, Omaha, Philadelphia and Atlanta - as well as park unit staff. NHAs are not national park units. Rather, NPS partners with, provides technical assistance, and distributes matching federal funds from Congress to NHA entities. NPS does not assume ownership of land inside heritage areas or impose land use controls.

Through annual Congressional appropriations, NPS passes funds to NHA entities. Although most entities are authorized to receive up to \$1 million annually over a set period of time, actual annual appropriations range from \$150,000 – \$750,000.



Jim Ogle

Executive Director

This is an extraordinary time to be part of Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area. Elsewhere in this report, you will find the stories of how we worked with our partners to new levels of success in the money we have raised and the public/private partnerships we have created.

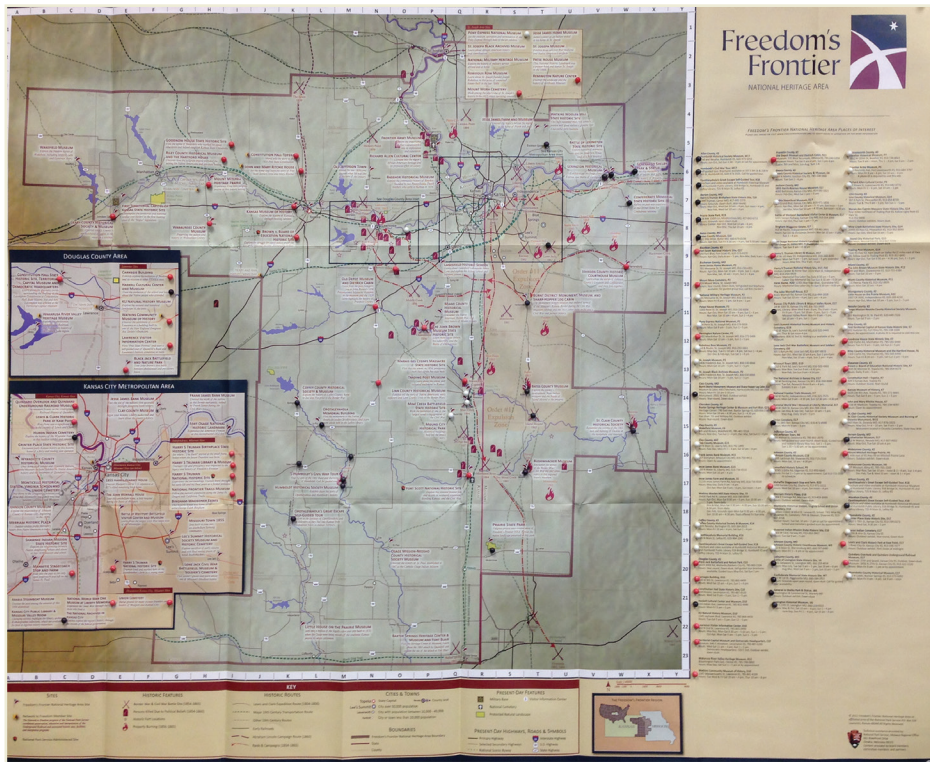
There is no better time to celebrate what makes Freedom’s Frontier so unique. Our third theme, the enduring struggle for freedom, is as fresh and vibrant as today’s headlines. Working with our partners throughout the region, we are setting new standards for the future.

Thank you for joining us in making 2016 a great year!

Jim



Butler, MO, (Bates County) and Olathe, KS, (Johnson County) are signage pilot sites.



1
year with Freedom’s Frontier

146
push pins on the map

30,990
miles driven

Enhancing a sense of place

We’re happy that across the heritage area, there are now lots of places where you can see the Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area logo, indicating a Partner Site.

There are three kinds of signs going up in the heritage area: *boundary signs* (brown signs) posted along federal and state highways at the borders of the heritage area to let you know when you are “Entering Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area”; *directional signs* to point the way to museums and other sites within counties and local communities; and *on-site signs*, like the one above, so you can identify our partners.

180
hours of work in Bates County

\$39,165
investment in signage project



Elementary students visit the Kansas Capitol.

Let's take a field trip

In the first year of operation, the *Bus on Us!* program gave students of all ages opportunities to take a field trip. We make it possible for schools to visit sites within the heritage area and experience quality programming. We contribute 75% of transportation costs; schools match with 25% of costs and admission fees.

15
partner sites visited

38
schools awarded grants

213
adults served

2,894
students served

\$8,798
awarded

Staff

Jim Ogle, Executive Director
jogle@freedomfrontier.org
(785) 856-3635
(785) 409-9943 (cell)

Julie McPike, Managing Director
jmcpike@freedomfrontier.org
(785) 856-5283
(785) 424-4453 (cell)

Elizabeth Hobson, Education and Interpretation Manager
ehobson@freedomfrontier.org
(785) 856-2333
(785) 424-5086 (cell)

Adam Newhard, Partnership Coordinator
anewhard@freedomfrontier.org
(785) 856-3634
(785) 424-4564 (cell)

Doug Pickert, Signage Coordinator
dpickert@freedomfrontier.org
(913) 583-1370
(913) 669-6595 (cell)

Sonia Smith, Communications and Marketing Manager
ssmith@freedomfrontier.org
(785) 856-5304
(785) 840-5499 (cell)



New staff members Adam Newhard and Doug Pickert

(Guiding Principles) **We Will:**

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

Jody Craig

Chair, Board of Trustees

For Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area, 2016 was a year full of achievement. With a full year under his belt, our highly engaged Executive Director, Jim Ogle, significantly impacted our operations and provided valuable leadership to an outstanding staff.

For years, it’s been a challenge to draw down our allotted federal funds. Jim established a program to encourage partners, local governments, and other funders to contribute to related programs and projects through Freedom’s Frontier. This eliminated our federal funding backlog and supported programs and activities!

While I’m on the subject of fundraising, we received nearly \$6,000 by participating in the national *Giving Tuesday* campaign. And, I congratulate our Board of Trustees for its outstanding financial support. Every board member participates in fundraising - one hallmark of a dedicated board.

Freedom’s Frontier continues to be an exemplary member of the Association of National Heritage Areas (ANHA). Our Managing Director, Julie McPike, serves as the ANHA board secretary. She was a vital member of the committee leading the group through a sensitive reorganization.

The National Park Service (NPS) also recognizes the exceptional work Freedom’s Frontier does. Liz Hobson, our Education & Interpretation Manager, worked with Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm staff to create a lesson plan for that site. *Teaching with Historic Places*, an NPS program, is using our lesson plan as a national model for how historic locations can engage with local educators.

We continue to work with more than 200 partners on projects that preserve community history and culture. One exciting project at Quindaro, in Kansas City, Kansas, is resurrecting the history of this significant early African American settlement and station on the Underground Railroad.

This spring, we are developing a pop-up exhibit at the Museum at Prairiefire, in Overland Park, Kansas. It will explore connections between the museum’s natural history focus and the human history Freedom’s Frontier celebrates. Be sure to visit the exhibit and take in the museum’s other offerings.

This year marked another Another long-awaited achievement – installation of the first signs in our signage pilot program. Our partners in Butler and Bates County Missouri worked with us to install more than a dozen markers along highways, city streets, and at historic sites. Work is underway in Olathe, Kansas, for the second pilot.

We have each of you – and your moral and financial support – to thank for our accomplishments. So in this, my fourth and final year as Board Chair, I want to say a very heartfelt thank you for making the first ten years of Freedom’s Frontier a resounding success!

There are many uncertainties for how heritage areas may fare in the future. It is also true that now, more than ever, preserving the stories and monuments that memorialize our struggle for freedom is an endeavor worthy of whatever sacrifices we can each make to ensure their continued existence and commemoration.

Jody Ladd Craig



Teens gain job skills

Fort Titus in Lecompton, KS, was one site visited.

The *Freedom Corps* provides paid employment to youths from underserved urban communities. In 2016, six high school students were selected for the program.

For a month, they traveled with a Freedom’s Frontier staff member throughout the 41 counties of the heritage area, helping partnering museums and historical sites with various projects from maintenance to interpretation. They painted fences, cleaned, landscaped, planted trees, weeded gardens, painted, hung displays and assisted with programs. One even did a radio interview with KLWN in Lawrence.

Our Freedom Corps students learn life skills, job skills, and local history while having fun. They also gain a better understanding of their role as community stewards.

6
high school student workers
\$9
hourly wage paid to students
17
partner sites served



Kayaking with Friends of the Kaw.

Campers explore history

Our Youth Camp program is for 4th-5th grade students. In 2016, we worked with Boys and Girls Clubs in Kansas City and Independence, Missouri; and Kansas City, Lawrence, Manhattan, Olathe and Topeka, Kansas. Day camps let students experience heritage area themes through cultural, natural, and historical resources in Freedom’s Frontier’s 41 counties. Friends of the Kaw took students in kayaks and canoes on local lakes; stressing safety and teamwork.

We staff and facilitate the camps to provide learning and discussion opportunities. Decision-making, collaboration, cooperation, community, stewardship and more are seen through the lens of local history.

8
Boys and Girls Club units served

25
partner sites camps visited

270
4th-5th grade students served

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Governor Eric Greitens, MO

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Gary Kremer, Director, State Historical Society of Missouri

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Duane Benton (Vice-Chair), Kansas City MO
Deb Barker (Secretary) Ottawa KS
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John Dillingham (At-Large), Kansas City MO
Deanell Reece Tacha (At-Large), Lawrence KS
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Peggy Buhr, Bates County Museum
Kristi Lee, Leavenworth Convention & Visitors Bureau
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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

12
meetings per year

42
volunteers

1,404+
hours volunteered

\$33,078
monetary value of hours served



Peggy Buhr and Michael Stubbs were the 2016 Billings MVPs.

Our most valuable partners

Judy Billings, the first Freedom's Frontier executive director, retired in 2012. During our annual meeting, the Billings MVP (Most Valuable Partner) Award is presented to partners nominated by heritage area peers. This year's MVPs were presented to Peggy Buhr and Michael Stubbs. Both actively participated before our national heritage area designation.

Peggy Buhr directs the Bates County Museum in Butler, Missouri. She was recognized for building community partnerships. She worked with Missouri State Parks to dedicate the Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site, southwest of Butler, and has been instrumental during our project to place Freedom's Frontier signage in Butler and Bates County. She serves as a partners Liaison to our board of trustees and is a member of the Advisory Committee.

Michael Stubbs, president of Mount Mitchell Heritage Gaurds, is active at Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie, a National Park Service Network to Freedom site. He's also a member of the Wabaunsee County Historical Society. Michael produced an exhibit for the historical society – *Freedom's Frontier: Stories from the Western Border*, an exhibition of photographs, maps, and images shown on the cover of this report. We purchased a second exhibition as a traveling display piece.

1
Judy Billings

6
MVPs recognized to date

200+
dedicated heritage area partners

Grant funding encourages collaboration

Four times a year, in February, May, August and November, Freedom's Frontier awards grants of up to \$5,000 for projects that interpret stories that connect to the heritage area's rich history. The grant applications are peer-reviewed by a committee comprised of staff and volunteers from partner sites. Projects align with at least one of our major themes: the shaping of the frontier, the Missouri-Kansas Border War, and the enduring struggle for freedom.

Grant projects funded by Freedom's Frontier often cross communities, counties, and even the state line, drawing together partners in Kansas and Missouri.

- Gifted photographer and archivist Mary Everhard, owned a photo studio in Leavenworth, Kansas, from 1922 to 1968. She preserved thousands of negatives. *Images from the Mary Everhard Collection for Black Archives Museum of St. Joseph, Missouri* reveals a segment of society that traditionally received limited exposure in popular culture. The curated images like the one at right are owned by the Leavenworth Historical Society.
- *Museum After Hours*, a lecture series on World War I and II topics, and a special exhibit to raise awareness of the Kansas State Historical Society Museum, Topeka, Kansas, and its commemoration of the 100th anniversary of WWI. Lectures involved other heritage area partners, including the National WWI Museum & Memorial, in Kansas City, Missouri.
- Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library's website project, *The Pendergast Era: Kansas City in the Jazz Age and Great Depression, 1918-1941*, makes available the audio from the library's *Wide Open Town Symposium*, and items in the library's "Boss" Tom Pendergast's collection. For the symposium, 17 historians presented essays about Kansas City's transformation from a rough "cowtown" into a modern city with an expanding population, a developing urban core, vibrant nightlife and jazz scene – the gilded veneer, but also the rampant corruption, and growing racial tensions. The essays will be compiled into a book.
- The *Beyond Skin* project brings together students from Shawnee Mission East and Wyandotte high schools to learn the history of racial politics in the Kansas City metro, its schools and communities, and how these issues affect us today.



32
grants awarded

190
jobs supported by grant projects

\$4,300
average amount per grant

\$137,745
grant funds awarded

\$1,649,978
leveraged funds to match grant awards

Train one; train them all

We know that our partners have tight budgets, and it’s often difficult to send employees and volunteers for training, especially when travel,or overnight stay in involved. Our Professional Development Scholarships help bridge the gap.

In 2016, professional development scholarships went toward:

- On-Site Museum Guide Training (Watkins Museum of History)
- American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) annual conference (Shawnee Town 1929 Museum); and AASLH Basics of Archiving training (Fort Scott National Historic Site)
- Heartland Byways Conference (Old Trails Regional Tourism)
- Reinventing the Historic House Museum (Shawnee County Historical Society and Wornall Majors House Museums)
- Museum Hack: Boot Camp (Watkins Museum of History)
- Financial Leadership of Nonprofit Organizations (Mid-Continent Public Library)
- Preservation of Gravestones Course (Olathe Memorial Cemetery)
- American Alliance of Museums (Jackson County Historical Society)

Scholarship awards ranged from \$160-\$2,200. Every scholarship awarded benefits more than the individuals attending the training, and the partner sites that employ them. The entire heritage area benefits.

A requirement of the award is that the individual attending the training will share the knowledge gained by writing a guest column in Monday Minute, the Freedom’s Frontier weekly email newsletter, making a presentation at a partner meeting, or contributing course books to our Little Freedom’s Frontier Lending Library.

10
sites served by scholarships
\$8,645
total awarded in scholarships

Collaborating as partner groups

We believe in the power of partnership! We can do more together than we can do separately.

Quindaro – We have convened a diverse group of stakeholders to participate in goal setting and project formation. We are providing technical assistance to move forward on preserving stories through oral history, raising the area to federal landmark status and engaging government to participate.

Topeka – Whether it is the active trails grant, the Freedom Festival or tourism development, we’ve provided technical support and organization.

Johnson County Kansas Heritage Foundation – We’ve helped this 14 member organization to coordinate and develop. Starting from scratch, the JCKHF has created and filed the necessary paperwork to develop as partners rather than just separate organizations.

Heritage Conservation Council of Douglas County – We helped convene partners throughout the county, then used our Non-Competitive Heritage Grant program to provide needed funding to get joint projects off the ground.

4
active heritage alliances

Donors

- David and Mary Kate Ambler

Parul Bahnmaier

James and Connie Banwart

Deborah Barker

Aaron Barnhart and Diane Eickhoff

Duane and Sandra Benton

Margaret and Peter Bieri

Judy Billings

Willard J. and Mary G. Breidenthal Foundation

Doyle and Kay Brown

Peggy Buhr

Kay Caskey

Jerree and Harley Catlin

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Mary Davidson, Barton P. & Mary D. Cohen Charitable Trust

Dennison State Bank

John Dillingham

Jerry Donnelly

Douglas County, Kansas

Douglas County Community Foundation

Michael Douglas

Harold and Donna Draper

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Bob Ford

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Kent Glasscock

Grant Glenn

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Saralyn Reece Hardy

Joanne Harrison

Jeff and Liz Hobson

Jeffrey and Sarah Hoffman

Mary Holdredge

Mary Hunkeler, Hunkeler Family Foundation

Barbara and Fred Ide

Sheila M Immel

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

R.W. Jacobs, DDS and Sheryl D. Jacobs

Charles and Carol Jones

Faye Jones

Marilyn Kahn
- Halley Kampschroeder

Kansas Dialogue

Pat Kehde

Barbara Kimbrough

Nelson and Judith Krueger

Pat and Norman Lenger

Mary Loveland

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Elsie Middleton

Midwest Trust

Chris Meinhardt

Rosemary Menninger

Tim and Julie McPike

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Morningstar Family Foundation, Inc.

Network for Good

David Nelson

Gary Nevius

Stifel Nicolaus

Jerry Nossaman

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Eileen Robertson

Gary Ross

Riley County Historical Society

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RiverSource Life Insurance

Margaret A Schwartzburg

Donald and Betty Scott

Chris and Iona Smith

Luther Smith

Sonia Smith

Edith Snethen

John and Linda Stewart

Kala Stroup

Michael Stubbs

John A and Deanell Reece Tacha

William and Davoren Tempel

Nancy and Scott Thellman

Topeka Community Foundation

Topeka Rotary Foundation

Lynn and Marjorie Van Buren

William Wagnon

Doug Wallace

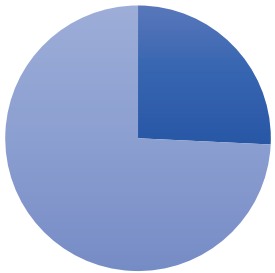
Mike and Linda Wildgen

Kevin Wood

Walt Wulf
- \$1,090,942

to match federal funds

Expenditures

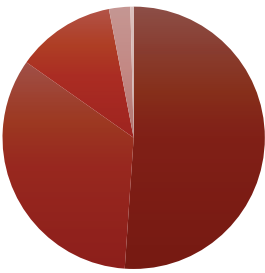


■ Administrative ■ Program

Administrative
\$424,728.42

Program
\$1,225,050.57

Funding Sources



■ Local Government ■ Federal ■ Grants ■ Friends ■ Other

Local Government	\$1,037,595.91
Federal	\$683,950.61
Grants	\$247,937.14
Friends	\$53,346.37
Other	\$8,154.80

Total Funding \$2,030,984.83

Stretching investments for miles

A small investment goes a long way. That’s why Freedom’s Frontier works to ensure every investment in our heritage area leverages additional funds and in-kind donations, and returns a maximum benefit for area youth, residents, partners and visitors. Last year, we partnered with local consultant Sunflower Republic, LLC to pilot two interpretive trail projects.

A Hike through History on the Burroughs Creek Trail in Lawrence, Kansas – What began as a Lawrence Public Library exhibit will be a 9-panel permanent installation along a 1.7 mile trail with topics like Quantrill’s Raid, the Oregon-California Trail, and Kansas railroad history.

A Hike through History on the Indian Creek Trail in Overland Park, Kansas – 13 interpretive panels along a 10-mile trail examine Native American history, the disappearance of the buffalo, and area streets named for 19th century pioneers and settlers. In late 2017, this hike will expand into Kansas City, Missouri.

Freedom’s Frontier grant funding for the *Hikes Through History* resulted in grants, donations and in-kind support from the: Cohen Charitable Trust, Douglas County Community Foundation, Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, Johnson County Community College Foundation, Johnson County Library, Johnson County Museum, Kansas Health Foundation, Kansas City Public Library, KU’s Hall Center for the Humanities, Lawrence Public Library, Lenexa Historical Society, Overland Park Historical Society, Regnier Family Foundation, Sunflower Foundation, Watkins Museum of History, and Lawrence, Overland Park and Kansas City, Kansas park departments.

2

Hikes Through History projects

\$19,500

grants from Freedom’s Frontier

\$180,500

leveraged donations