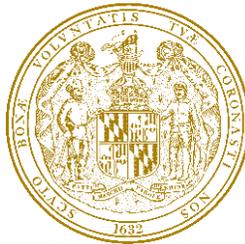


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CONTACT: Chris Haley (410) 260 6478

MARYLAND STATE ARCHIVES RECEIVES US DOE GRANT FOR UNDERGROUND RAILROAD RESEARCH

Annapolis, MD, October 8, 2010 --- The Maryland State Archives has received a grant of \$738,935 from the US Department of Education Office of Post Secondary Education's Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program. The goal of the three-year project, called *Beneath the Underground: the Flight to Freedom*, is to explore the legacy of the Underground Railroad using the primary documents available at the Maryland State Archives and to discover unknown "heroes" of slave flight and resistance.

The research supported by this grant will focus on records relating to five of Maryland's Eastern Shore counties: Caroline, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, Talbot, and Kent. This research will be the major research project under the auspices of the newly reconstituted Commission to Coordinate the Study, Commemoration, and Impact of Slavery's History and Legacy in Maryland chaired by Professor Larry Gibson.

The Underground Railroad was a loose organization of abolitionists, anti-slavery societies, and vigilance committees based in the Northern states that aided fugitive slaves once they had escaped the Southern slave states. The Underground Railroad, however, could only offer very limited support to fleeing slaves while they were still in the South; fleeing slaves had to rely on their own sources of aid and information to escape, with only the hope of further assistance once in the free states. This story of slave flight, and how the geography, laws, and communities of Maryland as a slave state aided or hindered escape, is the story *Beneath the Underground: the Flight to Freedom* seeks to reclaim.

The research will result in a searchable database of stripped records, online scans of original documents, biographical case studies, and interactive mapping for Maryland's Eastern Shore and will be freely available on the project's dedicated website <http://www.mdslavery.net/ugrr.html>. It will also be made available to K-12 teachers, undergraduate and graduate faculty and students, museum professionals, historic site preservationists, and the general public, both online and through guided presentations, lectures, and special events hosted by the Maryland State Archives' staff

For further information, contact Chris Haley, Director of the Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland, Maryland State Archives, 350 Rowe Boulevard, Annapolis, MD 21401 or by email at chris@mdsa.net.