

## **Curator of Black History**

After completing the Museum Assessment Program's self-study on Audience and Community Engagement, the McKinley Presidential Library & Museum began focusing on ways to reach members of its community who do not traditionally visit museums. The Museum has partnered with a grassroots committee in our community to work on creating the proposed Stark County Black History Museum and hire a Curator of Black History to begin this important work. The vast majority of African American historical materials are in private collections, which are at risk to not be preserved for future generations to enjoy. Recognizing that the current staff would not be able to incorporate a project of this magnitude into their current workload, the Museum is seeking to hire someone who will focus their work on this institutional priority.

The Curator of Black History will be instrumental in making sure that African American stories are included in all of the Museum's existing and future exhibitions, including McKinley's relationship to African American Congressman George Henry White, African American James Benjamin Parker's role in attempting to stop McKinley's assassin, and the members of the African American community who traveled to Canton to help construct the McKinley National Memorial.

This brand new position will collect African American artifacts, archival materials, and oral histories; create public programs and special events to promote this new inclusive focus; and assist with the content, development, and design of temporary and permanent exhibitions focusing on local African American history. This position is funded by a grant with the possibility of becoming a permanent position. The Curator of Black History reports to the Executive Director. Annual reviews will include input from members of the Committee to Preserve Stark County's Black History.

The Curator of Black History will:

- Strengthen and expand the collecting and interpreting of Stark County's African American community to preserve their history.
- Conduct research and plan engagement activities with and for Stark County's African American community. The successful candidate will be present and use listening as a means to connect, understand, and build trust within the community.
- Conduct oral histories to capture living memory of local African American history, with a focus on documenting the culture, history, achievements, and contributions of African Americans throughout Stark County.
- Find ways to incorporate African American history into exhibitions, tours, programs, and events at the McKinley Presidential Library & Museum to provide a more inclusive examination of our community's history.
- Share the region's African American history through video and audio presentations, blog posts and written articles, media interviews, online initiatives, public presentations, and more.
- Utilize collections in innovative ways to engage teachers, students, community stakeholders, and the community at large.
- Build and oversee a team of community volunteers that includes founding members of the Committee to Preserve Stark County's Black History, other interested volunteers, and student interns to assist with this work.
- Write grants, seek sponsors, and prepare funding proposals for community-based programs and events.
- Create content for social media, e-newsletters, and print newsletters to promote activities related to this position.

- Work with all Museum departments, including Collections, Education, and Archives, on collaborative projects that enhance the telling of African American stories through exhibitions, tours, programs, and special events.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred, in history, African American history, American culture studies, African American studies, urban studies, anthropology, museum studies, or a related field.
- 3+ years of experience in a public history setting desired.
- Experience in community organizing, activism, engagement and community development or education.
- Knowledge of Black/African American history and cultural heritage, American history, cross-cultural sensitivity, and an understanding of museum ethics and best practices. Familiarity with the experiences of Black communities in Ohio, past and present is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience in collections management, community engagement, public programming, and project management.
- Good communication skills, both written and oral, including evidence of writing and presenting public programs for a variety of audiences.
- Ability to work both independently with minimal supervision and collaboratively in a team environment.
- Knowledge and experience with serving as a lead developer of content for exhibits.
- Experience with information management techniques and database systems used in museums.
- Oversight of departmental operations, including good organizational skills, time management, budget management, facilitating meetings, and professional objectivity.

Salary and Benefits:

The salary range for this position is \$35,000 to \$40,000. The position includes a generous health care and PTO package, life insurance policy, and 401k retirement plan. Candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to Executive Director Kimberly Kenney at the following address:

McKinley Presidential Library & Museum  
800 McKinley Monument Dr NW  
Canton OH 44708

Application deadline is October 31, 2024