



Robert Frederick Smith Summer 2019 Internships

Offsite at Stagville State Historic Site

The Robert Frederick Smith Fund

ORAL HISTORY AND DIGITIZATION (1 POSITION)

Stagville State Historic Site – Durham, North Carolina

Stagville is the former site of one of the largest plantations in North Carolina. Today the site is dedicated to teaching and sharing the history of the thousands of people who experienced slavery on this property. The site is in the process of broadening its interpretation to include the history of sharecropping and the legacy of slavery, using oral histories and descendants of enslaved people.

Position Description: Join Stagville's small, tight-knit office and dive deeply into its work. Immerse yourself in the day-to-day operations of a small public history site dedicated to community African-American history. Work will focus on preserving and expanding the oral history archive at Stagville, to build the body of knowledge about the families who are descended from enslaved people from this plantation. With guidance from site staff and from documentary artist Phyllis Dooney, help transcribe, index, research, and prepare for oral histories with descendants. A candidate with a strong background in oral history may be able to conduct interviews as well. Interns will also train as interpreters to teach Stagville's history to the public.

Sample of Intern Duties:

- Transcribe descendant interviews
- Create finding aids for existing oral histories
- Identify oral history material for a future temporary exhibit at Stagville
- Research museum practices for adding audio in exhibits
- Update existing genealogy database to reconcile with new research
- Shadow experienced interviewer during visit with descendant and recording
- Train in how Stagville interprets the lives of enslaved people

Learning Outcomes:

- Know how to write a finding aid, transcribe, and prepare for oral history interviews
- Learn how to be an interpreter at a historic site focused on the lives and work of enslaved people
- Understand how to maintain and use an archive for oral history audio, transcripts, and photographs at a small historic site

Time Frame (flexible): May 15 – August 7. Typical work week is Tuesday through Saturday, requiring occasional work outside typical Tue-Sat, 9-5 schedule

Work Culture: The selected intern will be comfortable meeting new people, ready to listen closely, and have the ability to think creatively about preserving and sharing stories. Successful interns will have the ability to talk candidly and sensitively with different audiences about the difficult, emotional history of slavery.

Prerequisites: Interest and background in African American history and culture studies. Preference for Durham or North Carolina background or history knowledge. Preference for prior experience with interviews, audio recording, oral history work, or with public speaking.

Eligibility: Must be a United States citizen

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