



Robert Frederick Smith Summer 2020 Internships

Offsite at Stagville State Historic Site

The Robert Frederick Smith Fund

NEIGHBORHOOD ORAL HISTORY (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 interpreting the lives, families, culture, and work of enslaved people on the Bennehan-Cameron plantations. 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 our work. You will be immersed in the day-to-day operations of a small public history site dedicated to local African American history. Your work will focus on expanding the oral history archive at Stagville, to build our body of knowledge about the families who are descended from enslaved people from this plantation. The 2020 intern will focus on the Braggtown neighborhood collection, a partnership with the Braggtown Community Association and descendant residents. With guidance from site staff, you will index and time log the existing collection of interviews with Braggtown community members. You will also train and conduct at least two interviews with residents to add to the collection. Braggtown is a historically black neighborhood in Durham which includes many Stagville descendants. Like many such neighborhoods, Braggtown now faces the threats of gentrification and displacement. The intern will also train as an interpreter to teach Stagville's history to the public.

Sample of Intern Duties:

- Index descendant interviews from the Braggtown neighborhood collection
- Transcribe selected interviews for use
- Conduct two interviews to add to collection
- Train to lead guided tours of the historic site

Learning Outcomes:

- Know how to index and time log oral history interview
- Experience transcribing oral history interviews
- Understand to conduct an oral history interview.
- Learn interpretation methods at a historic site focused on the history of enslaved people

Time Frame (flexible): May 15 – August 7. Typical work week is Tuesday through Saturday, 9-5. Schedule may include some weekend days and work hours outside of the typical 9-5 block.

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 public history and/or African American history. Preference for:

- North Carolina background or history knowledge
- Familiarity with or knowledge of oral history practices
- Public speaking skills

Eligibility: Must be a United States citizen