

SEPTEMBER 2009
Fall Edition

2009 Important Dates

SEPTEMBER
SEPTEMBER 29-
OCTOBER 1
Montana History
Conference
Helena, MT

SEPTEMBER 30-
OCTOBER 4
Association for the
Study of
African American
Life and
History Annual
Convention
Cincinnati, OH

OCTOBER
8-10
National
Organization of
Minority Architects
Annual Conference
St. Louis, MO

8-10
Alabama
Preservation
Conference
Auburn, AL

13-17
NTHP
National
Preservation
Conference
Nashville, TN

A Campaign to Raise and Build Green

Spotlight on Edward G. Udell, Sr. (DSP '08 and '09)

An ambitious capital campaign attempts to save one of Houston's finest architectural structures from decades of abandonment and neglect



**Houston Light Guard
Armory**

Photo by Jesse Hager

The architectural majesty of the Houston Light Guard Armory, designed in 1925, is marked by its interior and exterior facade and its decorated past. After serving 13 years as home of the Houston National Guard, the property was deeded to the State of Texas. For nearly half a century, the "old armory" endured harsh Gulf Coast weather conditions, vandalism, and ill-fated acquisition attempts. In 2008 the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum successfully purchased the property to serve as home of the only nationally recognized museum solely dedicated to preserving the legacy of

the African American soldier. With green building restoration plans underway, this longtime "community eyesore" may reclaim its architectural and historic grandeur - entrusting a rich preservation legacy to its new owners.

Edward "Ed" Udell serves as the Donor Development director for the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum and played a critical role in helping the museum founder, Captain Paul Matthews, raise the funds to purchase the "old armory" in April 2008. With an extensive background in fundraising and nearly 30 years of preservation experience, Udell is well suited to take on some of the financial challenges with restoring the Houston landmark. Unfazed by the downward spiraling economy, Udell, Matthews, museum board members, and friends of the museum are now helping to raise \$4.1 million to renovate and preserve the historic site. Many key people, including Mayor Bill White and Tracye McDaniel of the Greater Houston Partnership are also helping with this effort.

To date, the museum has received cash and pledges from major foundations and corporations such as The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation, Houston Endowment, Marathon Oil, Chevron Oil, Wells Fargo Bank, CenterPoint Energy, and The Brown Foundation. It has also received in-kind contributions from Comcast, Continental Airlines, and members of the African American Press in Greater Houston. The National Trust for Historic Preservation provided funding to help with the initial design work. Udell is also involved in the "Leave A Legacy...Buy A Brick" paver program to raise at least \$2 million. He intends to work closely with the museum founder to develop additional programming to raise another \$2 million to meet the funding goal for full renovation.

Udell performs much of his museum development and fundraising work for the armory on a volunteer basis.

It was his combined passions for preservation and community activism that landed him slots as a 2008 and a 2009 Diversity Scholar. His goal in attending the Tulsa National Preservation Conference in 2008 was to work alongside the National Trust “to help connect to the resources of people and financial resources to make the effort with the armory a stronger reality.” Udell will represent the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum and exhibit a poster presentation that features the old armory at the 2009 National Preservation Conference in Nashville, Tenn.



Edward Udell, Sr.
DSP '08 and '09

For more information about the restoration of the Houston Light Guard Armory and the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum, visit <http://offcite.org/2009/03/26/houston-light-guard-armory-buffalo-soldiers> or www.buffalosoldiermuseum.com.

The Conference Corner

Plan to Attend the National Preservation Conference in Nashville!
Sustaining The Future In Harmony With Our Pasts, October 13-17, 2009



The National Preservation Conference is the premier conference in the United States for preservation professionals, dedicated volunteers, and serious supporters. It is the single best source for information, ideas, inspiration, and contacts. The conference brings together

experts and practitioners in the diverse specialties that contribute to preservation including architecture and cultural landscapes, historic sites and heritage tourism, heritage education, smart growth and regional planning, downtown and neighborhood revitalization and housing, organizational management, public policy, real estate development, and more all within the context of a national advocacy movement. Come prepared to meet leaders in preservation, participate in informative sessions, and gain a fresh perspective on preservation's role in sustainability, the new economy, and in telling everyone's stories - *Sustaining the Future in Harmony with our Pasts.*

Here's a sampling of the 2009 Diversity-Related Sessions:

- Tribal Heritage Federal Grant Program
- Rosenwald Schools Initiative Information Session
- The National Trust's African-American Historic Places Initiative
- What if the past wasn't harmonious?
- Building Historical Contexts for African-American Schools
- Latino/Hispanic-American Historic Places Initiative
- Outreach to African American and Latino Communities

For more information about the National Preservation Conference, visit www.PreservationNation.org/conference or call toll-free 866-988-1188. Send email inquiries to conference@nthp.org.

Asian Pacific Islander Caucus & Diversity Scholarship Program Reception

The API Caucus and DSP will team up with the National Trust Western Office and the Latino Caucus to host a joint reception after the Preservation Honor Awards ceremony. Guests will have the opportunity to network, share wisdom, and catch up with old friends.



*2008 Diversity Scholars
Tulsa National Preservation Conference*

2009 Nashville National Preservation Conference
Thursday, October 15 7:30pm-9:30pm
(Following the preservation awards)

Become a DSP Mentor!

Just as scholarship recipients have a lot to gain from attending the conference, they also have a lot to offer. As a mentor you will help them recognize that!

The Diversity Scholarship Program introduces new preservation leaders to the historic preservation community at the National Preservation Conference. A primary objective of this program is to enable participants, reflecting the diverse nature of America, to participate in the conference.

Each year we ask National Trust Advisors and Trustees, staff or board members of statewide or local organizations, SHPO staff, commission members, and previous scholarship recipients to be volunteer mentors. Scholarship recipients are matched with established preservation leaders to provide practical advice and facilitate important networking during and after the conference.

Eligibility

Mentors must have attended at least one National Preservation Conference and be willing to share their knowledge with someone new to preservation and/or to the conference.

Simply select the option **I would like to volunteer to mentor a diversity scholar at the conference** on the conference registration form. Or, send an email to scholarships@nthp.org to receive additional information. In the subject line, reference **I would like to volunteer to mentor a diversity scholar at the conference**.

How I Became a Preservationist

AN INTERVIEW WITH MELISSA JEST (EPL '00 and '01)



*Melissa Jest is the Neighborhood Preservation program coordinator for the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia through **Partners in The Field** with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. As program coordinator, through this partnership, Melissa serves the National Trust as a field representative and endeavors to visit every quadrant of the "magnificent city" of Philly. She has found that most people are open to hearing about preservation. Her next step is to get them to talk about preservation and what it means to them.*

DSP: How did you become a preservationist?

MJ: When my mother moved me and my two sisters back to Savannah, Georgia from Harlem, N.Y., she bought a c. 1910 Colonial Revival "fixer-upper" in the Eastside neighborhood. She enlisted us girls to help her patch plaster, scrape walls and sand woodwork. We crawled under the house to help with plumbing; we held 20-ft ladders for my mother as she scraped clapboard; and we crawled out onto porch roofs to patch the metal sheathing. This tinkering helped us quickly learn to love our new home. And with the idyllic backdrop of tall pecan and live oak trees, wide brick-lined streets, and front porches alive with evening chats and running feet, I could not help but fall in love with my historic turn-of-the-century neighborhood. These experiences all fostered an appreciation for "old stuff." As a geechee (of the Gullah-Geechee culture), I was always taught to repair rather discard.

DSP: What is the value of diversifying the preservation movement?

MJ: Truly, preservation has something to offer everyone. Preservation has an element of art, of the building arts, of history, of culture... and as an active member of this movement, I endeavor to bring that understanding to my neighbors, friends and associates. I believe the preservation movement also offers us a chance to heal as a society. Through the exploration, documentation, and preservation of a site, we will always find that a variety of people from different generations and cultures touched (or have been touched by) the site. Here, we can further confirm our interconnectivity as a community and as a country and give credence to every group's presence and participation.

DSP: How did you become familiar with the National Trust?

MJ: I learned of the Trust during my first paid position with a local historic preservation organization. It gave me great pride and assurance knowing that we/I was connected to such a large and well-respected organization. I quickly learned that the Trust actively supported its local and state-level partners. Today, I am still learning about all that the Trust has to offer.

DSP: What did you think of your experience as a diversity scholar?

MJ: It was the perfect introduction to the annual conference. I could not imagine coming to such an enormous event without mentors to guide me. It allowed me to connect with other preservationists from around the country, some of whom I am still in contact with today. As a Diversity Scholar, I received a very warm welcome to the preservation movement.

DSP: Final thoughts?

MJ: My outreach focuses on three main groups: community organizations/neighborhood associations, steward-congregations of historic African American churches, and small African American sites/museums. I am fortunate to have a great staff here at the Alliance and at the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Northeast field office to provide contacts and insights as I uncover opportunities to take "the movement" to predominately African American areas that have not utilized historic preservation in their communities.

During the Nashville National Preservation Conference, Melissa will co-facilitate an education session that addresses techniques, programs and challenges to reaching out to African American and Latino communities to involve them in preservation efforts and projects.

Preservation Resources and Opportunities

Looking for ways to publicly acknowledge your favorite place, fund your next preservation project, or learn about historic sites throughout the country? Visit the following websites for preservation resources and opportunities.

The **Dozen Distinctive Destinations** program recognizes unique cities and towns that are working to preserve their historic character, promote heritage tourism, enhance their community and encourage others to enjoy all they have to offer. Nominate your community and be recognized as one of the most distinctive places in America!

Application Deadline: Thursday, September 10, 2009

Financial Times will feature stories about the effect of the recession on historic houses. Willing to talk either on the record or off? Have data and/or anecdotal information regarding this? Know of specific houses that have closed? Email **Brooke Mason** of *Financial Times* to share your stories.

National Park Service Historic Places and Resources -

http://www.nps.gov/history/crdi/places/nps_places_list.htm

National Trust for Historic Preservation Funding Resources -

<http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/>

This Place Matters Photo Contest! The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Fireman's Fund Insurance are proud to announce the start of the Summer 2009 Places that Matter photo contest. Simply submit a photo of a place that matters to you. You could win one of three digital cameras! **Photo Submission Deadline: Tuesday, September 15, 2009**

Staying Connected to Historic Preservation

Become a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Or if you're a preservation leader, you'll find **Forum membership** an ideal resource. Join today and become part of a growing movement of

individuals and organizations dedicated to saving America's historic places and cultural heritage.

Heritage Travel, Inc. offers the premier online community presenting the broad range of heritage destinations, sites and events that define our collective past and enrich our lives. The company's innovative website Gozaic.com provides a powerful travel planning resource for heritage and cultural travelers, an online community where people can find and share heritage and culture-rich experiences, and a professional forum where participating destination partners can network and share best practices. Based in Washington, D.C., Heritage Travel is a for-profit subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For information, www.gozaic.com.

Join the NTHP Diversity Scholarship Program on Facebook! Share and connect with fellow alumni and committed community leaders dedicated to increasing diversity in the preservation movement.

DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Richard Moe, President

Tanya Bowers, Director for Diversity

Valecia Crisafulli, Director of Center for Preservation Leadership

Lori Feinman, Associate Director for National Preservation Conferences

Jacqueline S. Johnson, DSP Coordinator and Newsletter Editor

The Diversity Scholarship Program Alumni E-Newsletter informs you of the happenings at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We also want to hear from you. Tell us what you are working on. How may we help? Share your stories and ideas or send us article suggestions, address/email updates and any other thoughts about this publication to: scholarships@nthp.org **OR** **DSP-NTHP, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036.**

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