

CONNECTING THE  
*Heart & Soul*  
OF AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

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*Resilience*



# ANHA Resilience

In April 2022, I paddled a canoe on the Mississippi River with my National Heritage Area colleagues. The wind was strong, and the water was choppy. At one point, following a hundred hard strokes, I turned to the bank and saw we had made no progress. We found shelter in an eddy, and then tried again, only to end up even further downstream. Tired, but stubborn, we struck out once more, our guide reading the currents to find a better path, and eventually our paddling paid off. We were rewarded with a picnic, campfire, songs, and stories on a midstream island. My arms were sore, but my confidence was boosted.

These past couple of years have challenged every community across our country in ways that have not been experienced in generations. And while it seems the worst of the pandemic may be behind us, we are still experiencing its seismic impact along with a very divided country and a planet in crisis.

Today and every day throughout the pandemic, National Heritage Areas outstretched our hands to the people and communities we serve. Not only do we witness daily the vulnerabilities that are evident in our communities, healthcare, volunteers, partners and education system, we respond. We respond because our roots and resiliency are woven in every chapter of America's history. The stories National Heritage Areas steward are grounded in struggle, in purpose, and in rising to surmounting odds. Time and again, history reveals people and communities that persevered in response to crises and to fight systemic injustices. We feature 14 of these stories in this edition of Heart & Soul, a small but inspiring sample of the work we do.

National Heritage Areas exemplify resiliency. We have weathered many storms and continue to do so with steady and experienced hands that bridge our communities, building partnerships to face whatever lies ahead. If we fail to preserve our stories, we lose our nation's greatest examples of resiliency. If we fail to connect the next generation to these stories and the sites where history happened, we fail to pass along the blueprint of America's resiliency. The current may be strong, but we won't stop paddling.

Sara Capen | Chair, Alliance of National Heritage Areas



## The Wildflower Energy Project

Louisiana industry is predominantly characterized by energy twins: oil and gas. For better or worse, the industry has been the economic driver in the state for decades — St. Mary Parish prefers to see it as “for better.”

Oil pipelines cut through Louisiana's natural environment, interrupting the ecosystem. However, Shell Corporation and the Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge are aiming to change the narrative with the Wildflower Energy Project along the Zydeco pipeline right-of-way which is 5 feet above sea level. The pipeline cut through a cane field in Centerville, LA. With the help of Shell, volunteers, and heritage area partners, 20 acres were planted with 25 wildflower species and 11 grass species in spring 2022.

Seeding the field with native wildflowers is the first step in having the pipeline corridor go carbon neutral. The field will help with carbon sequestration, while eliminating motorized mowing and saving on fuel. The

planting reintroduces wildlife lost including pollinators, small mammals, and native birds. In the future, the field will be developed into hiking trails. It will also serve as a model for Louisiana's many miles of pipeline.

The oil and gas industry are still major job providers in the area. The people of St. Mary Parish, along with Shell, are changing the narrative in relation to the industry. Native wildflower plantings introduce environmental stewardship, and the land will be more usable for tourists. The area is showing resilience in a changing world — one transitioning to a healthier environment while also paying homage to the petroleum industry.

■ **ATCHAFALAYA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
LOUISIANA | [ATCHAFALAYA.ORG](https://www.atchafalaya.org)



## Baltimore's Resilience is in Its People



BALTIMORE, MARYLAND IS LIKE MOST CITIES TODAY — HOLDING ON TO ITS GREAT PAST WHILE ALSO TRYING TO CARVE OUT THE PLAN FOR ITS FUTURE.

As we face the realities of poverty, violence, shrinking population, and educational challenges, the city champions things that traditionally made it a city unlike any other and one which more than 600,000 people choose to call home.

Those of us who work on the behalf of the city see Baltimore's resilience lies not in the negative, but in the positive future of its residents. Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA) is one of many key organizations that works daily with Baltimore youth and its diverse populations to expose them to natural beauty of this area and ways we can all help change the narrative.

As BNHA does this work, we have seen neighborhoods plant trees, repair historic churches and open their doors to the community, and renovate notable homes into cultural institutions. Diverse stories of past and present residents are being told in more inclusive ways to more accurately reflect a city that often was at the center of change for the United States. Resilience is a character builder and a lesson teacher.

Baltimore National Heritage Area works on initiatives which aid in Baltimore's resilience with an eye to educating Baltimore's youth about the heritage of their city and making sure that our residents, historic neighborhoods and cultural institutions continue to have access to resources that will guarantee their ability to thrive for many years to come.

■ **BALTIMORE NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
MARYLAND | [EXPLOREBALTIMORE.ORG](http://EXPLOREBALTIMORE.ORG)



## Montana's Emerging NHA Fosters Partnerships

As Big Sky Country NHA Inc. (BSCNHA) perseveres in efforts to create the first NHA in Montana, a modest Partner Project Fund modeled after Freedom's Frontier NHA has started. Five projects in three municipalities highlight heritage restoration, community recovery and shared cultural exchange.

**1** With BSCNHA's help, the historic city-owned St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Fort Benton produced an interpretive brochure about its magnificent stained-glass windows and provided a glass cutting demonstration during their annual Fort Benton Summer Celebration.

**2** Through a partnership with the Monarch-Neihart Historical Group, the rural mining town of Neihart is fabricating a replica fire tower and reinstalling their historic 128-year-old fire bell. It had been fifty years since the bell rang on Main Street.

**3** BSCNHA is partnering with Great Falls Business Improvement District to finance a Native American artist mural in downtown Great Falls as part of the annual ArtsFest event. The mural will beautify the neighborhood and showcase the living legacy of Montana's First Peoples.



**4** A Tribal Elder from the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe will join the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana at their annual powwow in Great Falls to foster a mentorship between both tribes and preserve their tribal native identity and shared heritage.

**5** BSCNHA is helping fund Fort Benton Community Improvement Association renovate their historic Mandan Keelboat, a replica of the Lewis and Clark Expedition boats and interpretive attraction along the Missouri River levee walking path. This keelboat was originally built for a film production about the Corps of Discovery.

■ **BIG SKY COUNTRY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
MONTANA | [BIGSKYCOUNTRYNHA.ORG](http://BIGSKYCOUNTRYNHA.ORG)

## Interpreting History in the Digital Age

How does a historian reach history lovers when venues are shut down, museums are closed, and gatherings are restricted? 2020-22 was a time to examine these challenges.

The Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area (a.k.a. Looking for Lincoln) in Illinois is tasked with sharing the stories and times of our nation's 16th president, and that job was typically done through the methods noted above. Initially, challenges seemed insurmountable, but surprising solutions resulted in dramatic new results.

First, Looking for Lincoln looked to the resources available. Social media, which had previously played a small role, provided valuable audience inroads. Online video services were explored, which revealed to be inexpensive and easily accessible.

Second, action was taken to transition in-person events to online live events, including lectures, music presentations, plays, and more. Traditionally, these were presented within the heritage area, reaching local audiences up to 100 people. With some smart technology and a bit of online promotion, events reached much larger audiences; often 1,500+ views or more.

The audience was no longer restricted to those in our local communities. Regular viewers came from across the United States and international countries. Plus, they could now interact in real-time using online commenting and social media posts.

Finally, even as events slowly return to "normal," Looking for Lincoln has continued to produce programming online to this new larger audience. The challenges forced the organization to examine its methods; and as a result, we discovered ways to spread connections among an even wider world.

■ **ABRAHAM LINCOLN NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
ILLINOIS | [LOOKINGFORLINCOLN.ORG](http://LOOKINGFORLINCOLN.ORG)



## Demonstrating Educational Resilience During COVID

Everyone faced numerous struggles throughout the pandemic, but teachers experienced some of the most difficult challenges while serving their students' needs amidst disruptions and uncertainty. Many educators went above and beyond to help their pupils feel a sense of normalcy and even empowerment.

Essex Heritage saw examples of this resiliency among instructors and youth involved with our Park for Every Classroom (PEC) program. PEC supports Massachusetts teachers who develop projects utilizing Heritage Area assets to create civic engagement opportunities for students in a "real world" context. During the pandemic this was especially difficult, yet teachers in our program persevered.

One middle school teacher created ways for students to conduct fieldwork outdoors in a safer environment. They monitored and studied their school campus's green infrastructure while learning about climate impacts and mitigation strategies like rain gardens. Working with a local environmental justice organization, students connected larger concepts of climate change to their own abilities to make a difference.

In another example, two high school art teachers helped students understand how visual depictions can give voice to those who may not feel heard in the community. After seeing example items by local artists, learners created their own meaningful works of art. When the pandemic shut down schools and their local museum, they projected their creations outside their teacher's home and held a community drive-by to help "give voice to the voiceless" through art.

We are impressed and inspired by what these resilient faculty accomplished over the past couple years despite immense challenges!

■ **ESSEX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
MASSACHUSETTS | [ESSEXHERITAGE.ORG](http://ESSEXHERITAGE.ORG)



## BLUE RIDGE: Engaging Artists with New Initiative for Handmade Craft

In March 2020, Blue Ridge National Heritage Area was poised to expand its Blue Ridge Craft Trails (BRCT) into all 25 counties of Western North Carolina. This program sought to connect craft makers with buyers, generate new heritage tourism visitation, and preserve traditional and contemporary crafts for current and future generations. Funding was secured, and we hired new staff.

But almost overnight, this project seeking to bring the public into craft studios and galleries didn't work. The next two years brought lockdowns, sickness, and general uncertainty. We waited and waited. Once the situation improved, we donned masks and hit the road to safely visit hundreds of potential craft sites. These rewarding, meaningful visits brought new challenges: full days of driving and visiting with little to no public restroom access; outdoor lunches in February; and COVID exposure. Yet, thanks to hard work and partner support, the project moved forward.

The pandemic, while devastating, provided a silver lining for our craft community. Visitors and locals alike

wanted to travel by car to areas with outdoor recreational opportunities. We seized that momentum to promote talent and diversity on the BRCT, creating infrastructure to establish Western North Carolina as a national craft destination.

In 2022 BRCT launched featuring more than 340 sites on a drivable trail across an area the size of Maryland. The Craft Trails have already garnered more than 100 placements in local, regional and national media outlets. Our focus is now on programming and evaluating the success of this initiative.

■ **BLUE RIDGE NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA** | NORTH CAROLINA  
[BLUERIDGEHERITAGE.COM](http://BLUERIDGEHERITAGE.COM)

# ANHA Spring Meeting 2022

HOSTED BY THE  
MISSISSIPPI DELTA  
NATIONAL  
HERITAGE AREA



From Monday, April 18 through Friday, April 22, the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area (MDNHA) hosted the Alliance of National Heritage Areas (ANHA) Spring 2022 Meeting. Membership Meetings for 2020 and 2021 were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly 100 MDNHA hosts and attendees from NHAs, the National Park Service (NPS), and other national partners gathered to discuss the power of storytelling, education, community engagement, and equitable economic development.

Afterwards Sara Capen (ANHA Chair and Executive Director of Niagara Falls NHA) shared this heartfelt reflection: “We experienced a resiliency of human spirit in the face of unimaginable cruelty that was unwavering and expressed in a commitment to storytelling, authentic history, music, cuisine and connection.”

MDNHA structures its work around five enduring cultural heritage themes. This overview of the ANHA Spring Membership Meeting is based on those themes.

**THE RIVER & THE LAND** On the first day, Clarksdale, MS-based Quapaw Canoe Company led the “Rolling on the River Tour” of the Mighty Mississippi. Initially, participants paddled against strong currents and cold winds. Ultimately, they reached an island. Sun broke through the clouds, wind stopped, and the ANHA group enjoyed lunch, guitar music, and a new-found camaraderie. This River Tour became a touchstone for the power of struggling resiliently as a team and attaining a collective goal.

**THE BLUES** Blues music has brought national and international recognition to the Mississippi Delta and continues to thrive in the region today. The Blues expresses an African American tradition of resilience in the face of economic and sociocultural violence embodied by slavery, sharecropping, and other forms of institutionalized racism.

ANHA members explored exhibits at the BB King Museum in Indianola and the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale. On Tuesday night, they ate and danced while George Mumford and Keith Johnson (great nephew of Blues legend Muddy Waters) performed at Catfish Cabin in Boyle. On Wednesday night, they ate and danced at GRAMMY Museum Mississippi in Cleveland. At Ground Zero Blues Club in Clarksdale, Thursday’s lunch was served up with James “Super Chikan” Johnson’s genre blurring Blues performance. At the closing dinner that night, Mississippi Valley State University Concert Choir performed gospel and spiritual selections.

**MOVING TOWARDS FREEDOM** During the week, Keena Graham (Superintendent of the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument) and Dr. Déanda Johnson (Civil Rights Historian for NPS Southeast Region) facilitated sessions on inclusive storytelling and Civil Rights heritage tourism.

How do National Heritage Areas promote programming and resources that interpret Civil Rights history honestly and justly? ANHA members pondered this question while listening to the daughter of Medgar and Myrlie Evers share her family’s story in Vicksburg, as

they walked through sites associated with Emmett Till in Tallahatchie County, and as they sat at the feet of Zee Ratliff whose parents ran the historic Riverside Hotel in Clarksdale.

**A WELLSPRING OF CREATIVITY** Food and music are enduring intertwined aspects of the Mississippi Delta’s culture of creativity. Almost every time ANHA members had food in their mouths, they also had music in their ears. The Mississippi Delta’s art takes varying forms, but it all grows from the same soil, with an undertone of resilience.

Mississippi Delta artists, writers, craftspeople, and makers express in fabric, song, drawings, pottery, and words their ability to survive, escape, and reimagine a place where they wouldn’t have to survive or escape. Attendees witnessed Delta residents building not only a place where creatives can be from, but also a place where they can be.

**DIVERSE COMMUNITIES** The contradictions that make up American society are visible in the Mississippi Delta: powerful and powerless, rich and poor, black and white, literate and illiterate, high class and low, sacred and secular. These contradictions are often visible in the diverse groups — including Native, Chinese, Italian, Jewish, Lebanese, African American, and Latinx communities — who have created distinct cultures and formed environments across this region over time.

ANHA attendees saw and learned about Mississippi’s Native American Mound Trail and sampled Delta Italian and Lebanese cuisine. In Cleveland at Delta

State University’s Capps Archives & Museum, ANHA attendees learned histories of Chinese grocery stores and the families who operated them that were once ubiquitous in Mississippi Delta communities.

Contradictions of tragedy and joy co-exist easily and uneasily in the Mississippi Delta and are integral to the region’s cultural heritage. The Mississippi Delta has been and continues to be a place where resilience is a condition of survival.

All National Heritage Areas provide resources and create spaces for resilient people to tell their own stories.

■ **MISSISSIPPI DELTA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
MISSISSIPPI | [MSDELTAHERITAGE.COM](https://msdeltaheritage.com)



# MotorCities Completes Park Project During the Pandemic, Then “Marches On”

IN AUTUMN 2019, GROUND WAS BROKEN IN SOUTHWEST DETROIT FOR THE FORT STREET BRIDGE INTERPRETIVE PARK.

Back on March 7, 1932 at this site in Michigan, during the Great Depression, about 3,000 unemployed auto workers mustered for a march from Detroit to the Ford Rouge Factory in Dearborn to share grievances with the company’s leadership. The Ford Hunger March is one of the most significant events leading to the creation of the United Auto Workers union. Five workers were killed along the way in a confrontation with Ford Security and Dearborn Police.

The Fort Street Bridge (central to the march) was decommissioned in 2013, and it was replaced with a new bridge. MotorCities National Heritage Area and other organizations partnered over the years to ensure the history of the Hunger March, the significance of the former bridge, and its importance to the region are recognized through establishing a park there.

Although park construction slowed, the ribbon was cut on October 22, 2020, because the pandemic could not hold back the resilient partners and contractors creating such an important place in an underserved neighborhood.

On March 5, 2022, people gathered at the new park to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Ford Hunger March. After a brief program, they recreated the march from the park to UAW Local 600 in Dearborn near the Rouge plant, where the fifth annual fundraiser in support of the park called “March On” commenced.

You can learn more about the park and its history at [motorcities.org/fortstreet](https://motorcities.org/fortstreet).

■ MOTORCITIES NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA  
MICHIGAN | [MOTORCITIES.ORG](https://MOTORCITIES.ORG)



Photos by Abraham Rowe Photography

## Old Town Decatur

In 2017 Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area (MSNHA) launched the [Hidden Spaces Project](#) in partnership with the University of North Alabama’s public history program and photographer Abraham Rowe. Exploring the lesser-known stories of people, places and events across north Alabama, Hidden Spaces combines historical research with photography to paint a vivid picture of history and culture in the MSNHA.

In 2021 the project focused on Old Town, a historically African American neighborhood in Decatur on the eastern edge of the heritage area. Peggy Towns (a local historian who grew up there) introduced the MSNHA to Old Town during an oral-history interview. The stories she told of a thriving community—full of black-owned businesses, doctors’ offices, a strong school system and even a lion—was at odds with what the neighborhood looks and feels like now.

Today only one business remains; vacant lots dot the neighborhood where homes and other buildings have been torn down. However, churches, houses, ballfields, and playgrounds remain and continue to play an important role retaining a sense of community. Residents still feel an incredible love for and pride in their neighborhood.



MSNHA partnered with Ms. Towns and other Old Town residents to document Old Town’s pre-desegregation history before urban renewal brought about major changes. The results are a digital walking tour of the neighborhood, an Old Town photography exhibit at the Alabama Center for the Arts, oral history interviews and, perhaps most importantly, appreciation for this exceptional community.

■ MUSCLE SHOALS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA  
ALABAMA | [MSNHA.UNA.EDU/](https://MSNHA.UNA.EDU/)

## The Resiliency of The Cuyahoga River: From Industrial Fire to American Heritage River

The rebound of the Cuyahoga River has created a place where nature and industry come together to honor the river's history and protect its future.

Oily debris on the Cuyahoga River caught fire 13 times. June 22, 1969 was the ultimate incident triggering national change in how polluted waterways were treated.

The Cuyahoga River attracted industry to Cleveland because of its connection to Lake Erie and the 1825 construction of the Ohio & Erie Canal. However, the industries which fueled growth also used the river to dump toxic byproducts.

National attention garnered by that 1969 fire ignited efforts to protect waterways. Then-Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes championed a \$100 million bond issue to clean up the river; and he called for federal action to protect waterways from dumping. The outcry resulted

in formation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970 and passage of the 1972 Clean Water Act.

Today, the Cuyahoga is designated as an American Heritage River due to its cultural, environmental and economic importance. It is Ohio's 13th designated water trail and recently was named the best urban kayaking destination by USA Today. EPA has deemed the river's fish safe to eat. You can see beaver and bald eagles while biking the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail near the river.

While still a work in progress, after more than 50 years of clean-ups, federal enforcement, changing industrial practices, and community advocacy, the Cuyahoga is a prime example of the continued resiliency of nature and a determined community.

■ OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA | OHIO  
[OHIOANDERIECANALWAY.COM](http://OHIOANDERIECANALWAY.COM)



The Ohio & Erie Canalway Towpath Trail in Cleveland



## Yoeme Unidos: A Pascua Yaqui Youth Mural

The Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area set out to raise awareness about the NHA through art in Southern Arizona. Yoeme Unidos is part of a series of Heritage Murals that celebrate the region's rich cultural, historic, and natural heritage.

Partnering with the Pascua Yaqui Clubhouse of the Boys and Girls Club of Tucson and the Sonoran Stitch Factory, seven youth from the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and two professional muralists came together to show their pride and love for their Yaqui culture in 2021 and 2022. The youth are Jennay (age 16), Erik (12), Juliette (14), Raul (15), Santi (14), Johnny (10), and Elijah (18), in cooperation with muralists Ignacio Garcia and Anitra "Yukue" Molina. Through empowering Indigenous youth, they were able to take the expressive traditions passed down from their community and their own artistic styles to depict in paint their understandings of traditional stories, cultural figures, and epic histories.



Located in the heart of Tucson, the Old Pascua community came together in support of the visions of the youth participants, bringing to life the beauty and strength of the Pascua Yaqui community on an exterior wall of the Sonoran Stitch Factory (which trains youth for careers in industrial sewing), 625 West Rillito Street in Tucson. The Pascua Yaqui Tribe has aided in the cultural foundations of the Santa Cruz Valley NHA, and their contributions to the rich history and culture of the region are immeasurable.

You can learn more about this mural and see the journey at [santacruzheritage.org/yoeme-unidos](http://santacruzheritage.org/yoeme-unidos).

■ SANTA CRUZ VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ARIZONA | [SANTACRUZHERITAGE.ORG](http://SANTACRUZHERITAGE.ORG)

## 25 Years of Sharing the American Agriculture Story

In 2021, Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area (SSNHA) launched a number of new events promotions to commemorate its 25 year milestone. The year-long celebration included a 25th Anniversary Visitor Guide, a grand opening and ribbon cutting for the new headquarters, a community picnic, social media campaigns and contests.



Travelers were invited to participate in the Silos & Smokestacks Stamp Challenge. Each heritage area site received a personalized 25th Anniversary Stamp. Visitors could get their SSNHA Guide stamped in the special two page center spread. The first 25 visitors to get their guide stamped by 25 different sites received a prize. Also in celebration of the anniversary, SSNHA staff hit the road for a series of signing ceremonies celebrating its partnerships with museums, farms and historic sites. Together, with heritage area sites, Silos & Smokestacks formally renewed memoranda of understanding (MOU) pledging to continue telling the story of American agriculture.

“Strong partnerships were the foundation of the original authorization for Silos & Smokestacks and remain no less 25 years later,” said Candy Streed, director of partnerships.

SSNHA began in 1991 as an economic revitalization program for downtown Waterloo. In 1996, this region was congressionally recognized as a National Heritage Area.

SSNHA Executive Director Cara Miller notes, “As we move into our next 25 years, we are looking to add pieces of the agriculture story that have yet to be told. We also want to work on our own sustainability as an organization, as well as that of our partner sites.”

■ **SILOS & SMOKESTACKS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
IOWA | [SILOSANDSMOKESTACKS.ORG](http://SILOSANDSMOKESTACKS.ORG)

## Robust Land Trusts are Key to Protecting Critical Woodlands

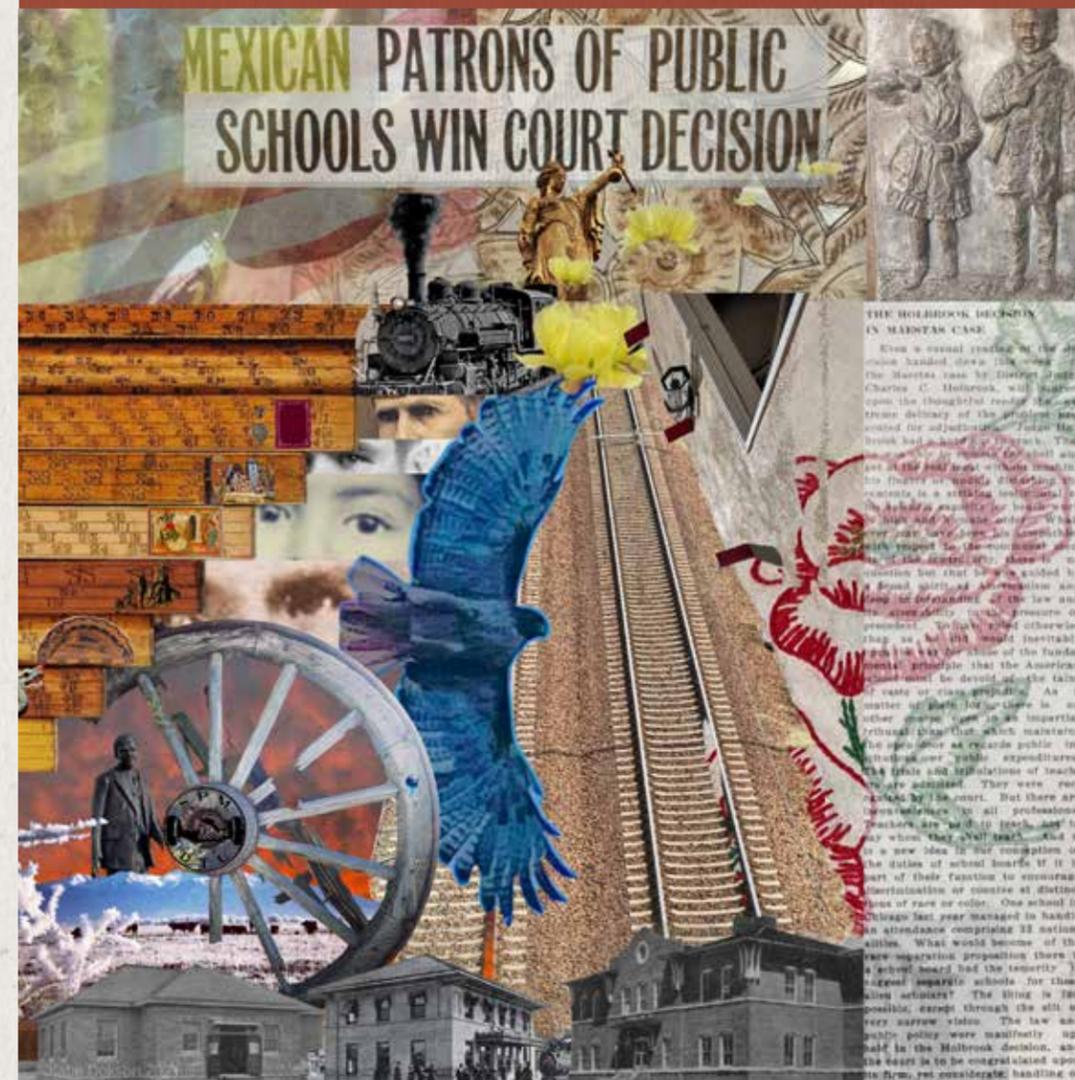
Green by day and dark by night, The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor in Connecticut and Massachusetts is a verdant oasis surrounded by some of the most densely populated areas in the United States. Still 84% forests and farms, this region provides clean air, clean water, climate change mitigation, wildlife habitat, and soul-nurturing opportunities for millions of people. Yet the future of these woodlands remains unclear with only 22% permanently protected.

To create a more sustainable and resilient future, The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) launched programs to support increased forest conservation by land trusts and private landowners. In a three-year grant-funded program led by TLGV and its partners, five land trusts enhanced capacity and resiliency by examining ways to become more diverse and inclusive while serving a wider range of community needs. Small grants allowed the land trusts to turn theory into practice.

For instance, Wyndham Land Trust conducted an exemplary project to research and memorialize enslaved Africans believed to be buried on trust property. In a deeply moving ceremony held in June 2022 at the Randall-Higginbotham Burial Ground in Pomfret, CT, a 3' X 2' memorial stone was unveiled to honor enslaved people who lived, prayed, worked, and died on that land. Together, project partners shined a light on people whose stories had previously been hidden in the shadows and gave voice to those who had been silenced.

Such collaborative projects help pave the way for a more resilient future for land trusts and land conservation.

■ **LAST GREEN VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR**  
CONNECTICUT/MASSACHUSETTS  
[THELASTGREENVALLEY.ORG](http://THELASTGREENVALLEY.ORG)



■ **SANGRE DE CRISTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
COLORADO  
[SANGREHERITAGE.ORG](http://SANGREHERITAGE.ORG)

One community never gave up.

One lawyer took a case no one else would.

One judge upheld the law.

You may think you are just one person... but it just takes one.

## It Just Takes One

At the end of the Mexican/American War in 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo made what is today northern New Mexico and southern Colorado part of the United States. An influx of Anglo Americans brought major economic and cultural struggles. One of these struggles was the fight for educational equality in Alamosa public schools, as illustrated by the Maestas Case during the early 20th century.

Francisco Maestas and other parents sought to enroll their English-speaking children into the Anglo

School but were denied. They filed a petition signed by 180 families; denied. They contacted the Colorado State Superintendent; again denied. They staged a three-month boycott. They hired attorney Raymond Sullivan, and took the school district to court in 1912.

Sullivan contended racial prejudice was a driving force behind school administration efforts. The Colorado Constitution prohibits discrimination based on race; therefore, Sullivan argued, the district could not deny ten-year-old Miguel Maestas access to the other geographically-closer school because he was Mexican.

The school district, on the other hand, argued that the Hispano students were Caucasian and therefore the district was not discriminating based on race, but rather and youth were assigned to a separate school to support their English-language deficiency.

District Court Judge Charles Holbrook ruled in 1914 that unlawful race prejudice must cease, stating “in the opinion of the court ... the only way to destroy this feeling of discontent and bitterness which has recently grown up, is to allow all children so prepared, to attend the school nearest them.”



The Alliance of National Heritage Areas is dedicated to preserving and promoting America's past to ensure a better, more perfect tomorrow.

National Heritage Areas are a proven model of shared responsibility resulting in a cost-effective approach for the National Park Service to preserve, protect, and share the significant stories of America. We accomplish this through grass-roots coordination with local jurisdictions, non-profits and other private partners to invest in nationally significant sites that in turn spur regional economic development.

Alliance  
of National  
Heritage  
Areas

For more information, visit us today at [NationalHeritageAreas.us](http://NationalHeritageAreas.us)