

Freedom's Frontier

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



2020 ANNUAL REPORT





What is Freedom's Frontier?

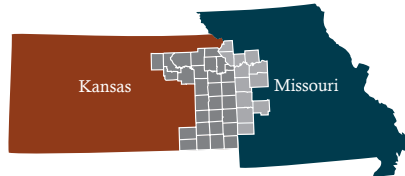
If you live along the Missouri-Kansas border, how you tell the story of freedom often depends on where you call home.

Along this border, a new nation set out in a long trek across the ancestral lands of Native Americans to settle the frontier and, in the process, hoped to find economic and religious freedom.

Along this border, the nation violently disputed expanding definitions of freedom based on skin color and gender.

Along this border, millions of Americans fought—over school segregation, over Native-American rights, over suffrage, over the right to choose how to live and love—in the enduring struggle for freedom.

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area brings together the stories that started here but grew to change the course of history for the entire country. Whether it is the story of the settlement of the frontier, the Border War and Civil War along this western frontier, or the enduring struggle for freedom,



Freedom's Frontier knits these stories together into one American fabric. Its threads contain the remarkable stories from partners at more than 165 historical sites and museums. Our mission is furthered through 100 additional partner organizations, such as convention and visitor bureaus, educators, and support societies. Each is deeply invested in telling these stories.

More than three million people call Freedom's Frontier home. More than 30,000 square miles fall into the 41 counties that define Freedom's Frontier along both sides of this border. As we enter our thirteenth year of operation, even more counties, in both Missouri and Kansas, are making plans to join Freedom's Frontier.

How do we tell the story of freedom? Read on to find out.



The Value of History

Creating Lifelong Learners and Everyday Explorers

Freedom's Frontier engages with learners of all ages, from underserved elementary students to high schoolers investigating the roots of today's challenges, to curious adults who never stop learning. Our summer youth camps, bus grants, lectures, symposia, and partner programs like the KC Race Project encourage critical thinking, develop engaged citizens, and inspire tomorrow's leaders.

Learn more about the value and relevance of this work by accessing the Value of History Statement at historyrelevance.com.

Investing in the Future of Our Past

Freedom's Frontier invests in historical assets and organizations across our 41 counties. We bring together public and private support to conserve, preserve, and restore significant landscapes, historic buildings, and sites. Our strong partner network raises the level of professionalism among heritage organizations in our communities. We believe this investment pays off by creating vibrant communities and stimulating economic development that result from heritage tourism.

Telling a Story of National Significance

Freedom's Frontier centers on a frontier that is like no other in American history. The porous border between the United States and Permanent Indian Territory, and later, between slave state and free state, lacked a geographic barrier. That led to cross-cultural exchange, frequent armed conflict, and an ongoing struggle for equal freedoms. We work to share this contentious history because it comprises not only our **identity**, from which others can learn, but also our **legacy** to preserve for future generations.



Youth Camps

Youth Camp benefitted Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area in a variety of ways as fourth- and fifth-grade students from the Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Front Porch Alliance, explored the heritage area's nationally significant stories from Civil War to Civil Rights.

Students experienced cultural, natural, and historical activities at museums, historic sites, nature areas, and through a day in canoes and Kayaks with Friends of the Kaw. Freedom's Frontier and the sites visited introduced young visitors—and through them, their friends and families—to local history. Boys and Girls Clubs and the Front Porch Alliance received assistance with history programming and lesson plans.

Through our partnerships, campers experienced archives, museums, nature preserves, and historic sites where they were asked to think and journal about their experiences. On the local waterways they learned about water safety, environmental stewardship and teamwork.

One hundred and sixty-four students explored history and developed lifelong connections. Twenty-six adults supported our "everyday explorers" and become explorers as well.

The Boys and Girls Clubs units this year were in Kansas City, and Independence, Missouri; Olathe, Lawrence, Tecumseh, and Topeka, Kansas. The Front Porch Alliance students were from Kansas City, Missouri.

Bus On Us!

School field trips are more and more often left out of the curriculum because of transportation expenses. When our Bus on Us! program contributes up to 75% of the bus costs, and schools provide the other 25% and admission fees, students of all ages get to experience quality programming at museums, historical sites, and nature areas throughout the heritage area. To assist educators as they plan history field trips, Freedom's Frontier staff has a list of sites with programming that matches both heritage area themes—the shaping of the frontier, the Missouri-Kansas Border War/Civil War, and the enduring struggle for freedom—and the educational standards in Missouri and Kansas. Bus on Us! provides educational experiences, and a greater connection between educators and the history professionals at heritage area sites.

Sites Participating In Youth Camp

Kansas

Black Jack Battlefield and Nature Park – Wellsville
 Brown v Board National Historic Site – Topeka
 Constitution Hall State Historic Site – Leocompton
 Dole Institute of Politics – Lawrence
 Friends of the Kaw – Mission
 Ivan L. Boyd memorial Prairie Preserve – Wellsville
 Johnson County Museum – Overland Park
 Kansas Museum of History – Topeka
 Kansas Riverkings Museum – Lawrence
 Lanesfield Historic Site – Edgerton
 Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm Historic Site – Olathe
 Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie – Wamego
 Old Prairie Town at Ward-Meade Historic Site – Topeka
 Ritchie House – Topeka
 Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site – Fairway
 Shawnee Town 1929 Museum – Shawnee
 Territorial Capital Museum – Leocompton
 Tonganoxie Community Museum – Tonganoxie
 Wakarusa River Valley Heritage Museum – Lawrence
 Watkins Museum of History – Lawrence

Missouri

Alexander/Madison Chapter Buffalo Soldiers – Kansas City
 American Jazz Museum – Kansas City
 Atkins-Johnson Farm and Museum – Gladstone
 Battle of Lexington State Historic Site – Lexington
 Black Archives of Mid-America – Kansas City
 Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center – Kansas City
 Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum – Independence
 Harry S. Truman Visitor Center & Home National Historic Site – Independence
 Lexington Historical Museum – Lexington
 Lone Jack Civil War Battlefield, Museum, and Soldiers' Cemetery – Lone Jack
 National Frontier Trails Museum – Independence
 Negro Leagues Baseball Museum – Kansas City
 Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art – Kansas City
 Nile Valley Aquaponics – Kansas City
 Shoal Creek Living History Museum – Kansas City
 William Klein (Cave Spring) Park – Kansas City
 Wornall Majors House Museum – Kansas City

Grants

Since the Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grant program began in 2012, more than 133 grants of up to \$5,000 have been awarded to help fund a variety of projects connected to the heritage area's rich history. Projects selected for funding through this peer-reviewed program interpret stories that inspire new generations of heritage area learners. Recent grant projects:

The **City of Fountains Foundation** recognized Native Americans who lived and traded in the Kansas City region. A bronze statue depicting Native Americans was added to a fountain honoring Kansas City founder Francois Chouteau. A community event, "65th Anniversary of Brown v Board: An Unfinished Agenda" provided forums, and a visitor experience of the environment leading up to the 1954 Brown v. Topeka Board of Education decision. **The Brown v. Board Summer Legacy Trust** curated the event, which included conversations about the present environment, and discussions for the future.

Interpreters at **Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm Historic Site** will wear period clothing created by women in the Topeka Correctional Facility. Clothing construction classes for the residents taught valuable sewing skills and allowed the facility's residents to enrich their own lives, and the experiences of visitors to the historic site.

Flint Hills Discovery Center Foundation On September 17, 2019, Clay County Historical Society and the Clay County Museum premiered a short **documentary of the Battle of Liberty**, Missouri. The audience filled a B&B Theatre in Liberty, and included descendants of some of the soldiers in the battle at Mills Landing, on September 17, 1861.

Professional Development Scholarship Quotes

Some sites in Freedom's Frontier have small budgets, few employees, or perhaps only volunteers. This may mean that there's no funding to send staff and volunteers to conferences, seminars, and classes. Our Professional Development Scholarships helps provide training, new skills, and professional networking opportunities. Scholarship recipients share their experiences with others in Freedom's Frontier as guest speakers at partnership meetings, or guest columnists for the weekly emailed newsletter, the Monday Minute.

Here's what some scholarship recipients said about the program:

"The Midwest Archives Conference raised my awareness of archival issues I had little experience with and I returned home enthusiastic to implement these new ideas...I left MAC Detroit feeling energized and excited about the work we are doing at the library and eager to explore new partnerships." Anne Lacey, Kansas City, Kansas Public Library

"The American Association of State and Local History Annual Conference made me a stronger Freedom's Frontier partner by keeping me up to date on the latest trends and issues within the history and museum field." Erica Layton, Atkins-Johnson Farm and Museum



Expanding FFNHA & Reauthorization

As 2020 approaches, several county governments are asking that they be added to the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area map. Three counties in Missouri (Henry, Saline, and Jasper) and four in Kansas (Doniphan, Lyon, Morris, and Dickinson) have formally passed resolutions asking Congress to include them in the boundary.

If all are included, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area there will be 48 counties in the heritage area.

In order for the addition counties to become part of Freedom's Frontier, Congress must approve the boundary change, since the heritage area was defined in the 2006 legislation that created Freedom's Frontier. Such a change will be part of reauthorizing the legislation for the heritage area.

Map | App | Website

In 2018, staff began a conversation with the board of trustees, and the partnership—representing historic sites, museums, historical societies and archives, libraries, nature centers and parks, and other stakeholders—to discuss the map and website.

As Freedom's Frontier held focus groups and planning sessions, we learned that our map is popular with visitors to our partner sites, and that our website needs to be more accessible and mobile-friendly. Our research led us to OnCell, a company that has created mobile apps for many units of the National Park Service.

For the past few months, staff has worked with OnCell to create the Freedom's Frontier travel app. When downloaded to a mobile device, our app provides information useful to travelers about every partner site in the heritage area. In addition, once we have created a new web site, the app will be embedded there as well, so all of the information will be available online as well.

The app features a series of tour itineraries. To plan your trip to the places to see in Freedom's Frontier, you can find all the sites in a region, or city, or choose a themed itinerary that will plot your tour—to just the Civil War

battlefields, or to the Harry S Truman sites, or Brown v. Board and other sites about desegregation and Civil Rights, and other tour options.

As we continue to work on the app, we will also have information about lodging, dining, and shopping along the tour itineraries.

Download the app today from the Apple or Google Play stores, choose a tour itinerary, and start planning your next daytrip or vacation to Freedom's Frontier.

Or if you would rather have a print brochure in hand as you plan, call Freedom's Frontier at (785) 856-5300, or email us at info@freedomfrontier.org and request our map. We'll mail it to you.

The map shows the location of 150+ sites that have partnered with Freedom's Frontier since the heritage area's beginnings. We have grown since then, and are looking to add seven more counties to our 41 eastern Kansas and western Missouri boundaries. As that happens, we'll be updating our map to include more sites.



Quindaro

On March 12, 2019, Congress designated an area in Kansas City, Kansas, the Quindaro Townsite National Commemorative Site, only the third commemorative site in the nation. This place in Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area has a rich history, and many advocates who want to see it preserved.

Quindaro Townsite National Commemorative Site was dedicated in a ceremony on April 23, 2019, sponsored by the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas (UG), Kansas City Kansas Convention Visitors Bureau, and Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.



Speakers at the Ceremony:

Reverend Stacy Evans, Allen Chapel AME Church and the Western University Association
Chief Janith English, Wayandot Nation of Kansas
Mayor David Alvey, UG
Secretary Brad Loveless, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism
Regional Administrator Jim Gulliford, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Kevin Yoder, Former U.S. Representative, Kansas Third District
U.S. Representative Emanuel Cleaver, Missouri Fifth District
U.S. Representative Sharice Davids, Kansas Third District
U.S. Senator Pat Roberts, Kansas
Marvin Robinson, Quindaro Community Advocate

Executive Director Jim Ogle, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area

Judge Duane Benton, U.S. Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals and Chair, Freedom's Frontier Board of Trustees

In 2018 Freedom's Frontier and other Quindaro stakeholders applied to the National Park Service (NPS) to name Quindaro a National Historic Landmark. The designation as a national commemorative site is a stepping stone to the goal of elevating the site to National Historic Landmark status.

Now that Quindaro Townsite is a national commemorative site, there are more opportunities for assistance from the NPS, the EPA, and other federal agencies. Quindaro stakeholders continue to work

toward not only preserving the historic townsite ruins, but also the stories of people who lived in Quindaro. The Kansas City, Kansas Public Library has held several sessions to record oral histories from Quindaro neighborhood residents.

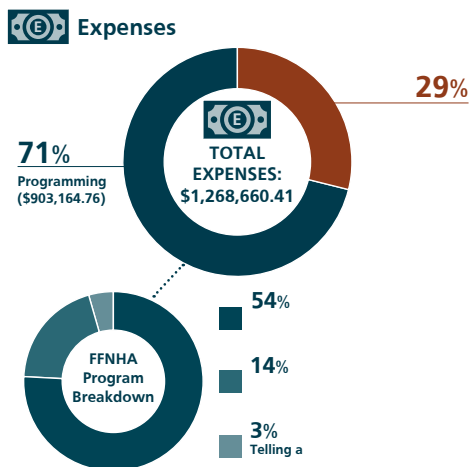
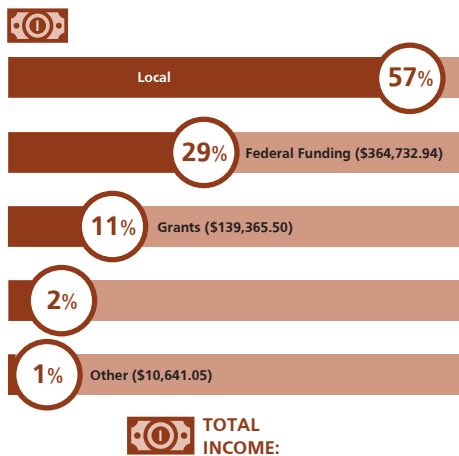
As awareness of Quindaro Townsite grows, private donors and local businesses are also stepping up with ideas for partnerships. Quindaro advocates are looking forward to the site's future, which could include interpretive signs on walking trails through Quindaro, a visitors center, renovations and other improvements to the two museums nearby, the Old Quindaro Museum, and the Quindaro Underground Railroad Museum.

Disorder on the Border

On August 22, 1863, William Clarke Quantrill rode into Lawrence, Kansas, with other bushwhackers. The men killed more than 150 men in free-state Lawrence, and burned much of the city to the ground. This event, one of the bloodiest of the Civil War era, is known as Quantrill's Raid.

In August 2019, a handful of presenters, and 90 registered participants came to the building that offices Freedom's Frontier, the Carnegie Building in downtown Lawrence. They were there for the Disorder on the Border Symposium. The symposium was a joint project of the Watkins Museum of History in Lawrence, the William Clarke Quantrill Society, and Freedom's Frontier. It was held as part of the Watkins Museum's annual programming for Civil War on the Western Frontier. Attendees at the symposium listened to scholarly presentations about both sides of the conflict that resulted in raids and killings on both sides of the Missouri-Kansas state line. The symposium was funded with a grant from...? The two-day event concluded at the Lawrence Arts Center with a keynote address by local author Tom Rafiner, and a vocal performance by the singers of Lawrence Opera Theatre.

Financials



“One of the things that makes our area unique, is the important contributions of our predecessors to America’s continuing struggle for freedom, evidenced in the many stories that Freedom’s Frontier partner sites strive to tell. Freedom’s Frontier has the important job of helping coordinate and encourage the telling of these stories in a way that is relevant to contemporary events and in a manner that makes visitors excited to attend and participate. By doing so, we help instill the pride of our children and citizens in this important place and help encourage others to visit us to understand and celebrate our Heartland’s heritage.” *-Author*



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Angel Tucker, Kansas City, Missouri
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Kristen Zane, Overland Park, Kansas

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Member-At-Large – Larry Pfautsch, Harrisonville, Missouri
Member-At-Large – Kristen Zane, Overland Park, Kansas
*Elected by Partner Advisory Group to represent Kansas or Missouri.
+Left the Board in December 2019.



GuideStar is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area was awarded the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency, achieved by less than one tenth of 1% of nonprofits.

Partnership

Our partners are a vital part of Freedom's Frontier and we work hard to build a professional community to benefit all of our partners. We connect institutions and organizations to work together on joint promotions, field trips, artifact loans, special tours, and research projects. Our Partner Advisory Committee works throughout the year to provide vital input to the staff and Board of Trustees.

Advisory Committee Members

Erica Layton Atkins-Johnson Farm and Museum	Lecompton Historical Society
Caitlin Eckard Jackson County Historical Society	Alinda Miller Lone Jack Historical Society
Marcia Rozell Visit Manhattan	Enimini Ekong Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site
Larry Short Santa Fe Trail Association	Steve Nowak Watkins Museum of History
Alexis Woodall Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm	Karen Griffin American Jazz Museum
Suzanne Dennis , Museum of Deaf History, Arts & Culture	Peggy Buhr Bates County Historical Society
Alana Smith Westport Historical Society	Cheryl Collins Riley County Historical Society
Paul Bahnmaier	



Staff

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Sonia Smith <i>Communications and Marketing Manager</i> ssmith@freedomfrontier.org (785) 856-5304 (785) 840-5499 (cell)	Doug Pickert <i>Signage Coordinator</i> dpickert@freedomfrontier.org (785) 856-5081 (913) 669-6595 (cell)	An Sasala <i>Hall Center for the Humanities Fellow</i>

Looking Forward

Reauthorization

Federal support through the National Park Service attracts private investment and national interest in our stories. To continue this public-private investment partnership, Freedom's Frontier will join our partners to ask Congress to renew our authorization in 2019. We will ask our congressional delegation to support reauthorizing Freedom's Frontier as part of a larger effort to create a program of National Heritage Areas within the National Park Service.

Want to keep up-to-date on Freedom's Frontier opportunities?

Go to freedomfrontier.org and sign up for our newsletter, or text FFNHA to 22828.

How Do You Tell the Story of Freedom?

If you support freedom, we hope you will support Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area. During 2019, we will start our first-ever membership program. Through membership, you will receive special programming and tourism options before those available to the general public.

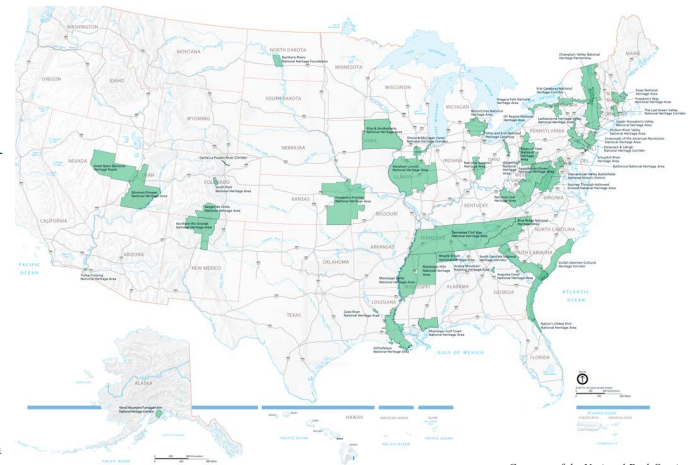
What are National Heritage Areas?

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress for their unique, nationally significant qualities and resources. They are places where natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources have shaped a nationally distinctive landscape.

National Heritage Areas employ a partnership approach to heritage development involving collaborative planning around a theme that influenced the nation's culture and history. This planning strategy encourages residents, government agencies, nonprofit groups, and private partners to prioritize projects that recognize, preserve, and celebrate many of America's defining landscapes.

National Heritage Areas leverage an average of \$5.50 for every \$1.00 of federal investment to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism.

The National Park Service works closely with the 49 designated National Heritage Areas—representing every region of the United States.



Courtesy of the National Park Service.

Freedom's
Frontier
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



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