

NEWS

Champaign County Forest Preserve District
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LAKE OF THE WOODS FOREST PRESERVE • HOMER LAKE FOREST PRESERVE • MIDDLE FORK RIVER FOREST PRESERVE
HERON VIEW FOREST PRESERVE • SANGAMON RIVER FOREST PRESERVE • RIVER BEND FOREST PRESERVE • KICKAPOO RAIL TRAIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum of the Grand Prairie hosts Robert F. Smith intern

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District is pleased to announce that DeBorah Ault is serving as a Robert F. Smith summer intern at our Museum of the Grand Prairie at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve. The museum has been awarded a Robert Frederick Smith Fund Summer Internship in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture. This collaboration provides our appointed intern the opportunity to index, catalog, and engage the community in the Doris K. Wylie Hoskins Archive Oral History Collection. The collection of oral histories was digitized in 2021 through funds provided by a bequest from former museum volunteer Frieda Mumm. These oral histories were recorded in the latter half of the 20th century by Doris Hoskins to capture the memories of prominent African American residents of Champaign County and are a treasure trove of vital information about their experiences.

Ms. Ault recently graduated from Brandeis University in Education and Business. She plans a career in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work. Ault will publish her findings on social media and facilitate a panel discussion about the oral histories at CU Days in August.

“The Forest Preserve District is fortunate to have DeBorah Ault leading this important work on the Doris Hoskins Oral History Collection at the Museum of the Grand Prairie. We are grateful to the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture and its Robert Frederic Smith Fund and the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation for their support of the internship,” said Lorrie Pearson, Executive Director.

To hear about Ault's internship and learn more about these oral histories, the Museum invites you to the following program. On Saturday, August 13, Ault will host “A Community Conversation: Exploring Local African American Oral Histories from The Doris Hoskins Collection,” at the Champaign Public Library-Douglass Branch, 504 E Grove St, Champaign, IL 61820, 2-3:30 p.m.

Come and learn about the lived experiences of African Americans in Champaign and Urbana through the oral histories found in the Doris Hoskins collection. Enjoy the premiere opportunity to listen to stories from this archival collection and have a community conversation with an engaging panel who can contextualize these historical gems.

This event is made possible with a collaboration between The Museum of the Grand Prairie, The Champaign Public Library: Douglass Branch, and The Champaign Park District.

Refreshments and air conditioning will be provided. Current public health guidelines will be followed; programs may be altered or canceled due to weather or COVID-19 related concerns. FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or museum@ccfpd.org.

About the National Museum of African American History and Culture

Since its opening on Sept. 24, 2016, the National Museum of African American History and Culture has welcomed nearly 8 million visitors. Occupying a prominent site adjacent to the Washington Monument on the National Mall in Washington, DC, the nearly 400,000-square-foot museum is the nation's largest and most comprehensive cultural destination devoted exclusively to exploring, documenting and showcasing the African American story and its impact on American and world history. For more information about the museum, visit Nmaahc.si.edu or follow @NMAAHC on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

About the Robert F. Smith Internship program

The National Museum of African American History and Culture's Robert F. Smith Internship Program seeks to build pathways for historically underrepresented individuals to grow successful careers in the cultural sector. The Museum selects and provides funding for interns located onsite with the Museum and offsite at select African American museums, art galleries and museums of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), cultural institutions and historic sites, or other related institutions with projects dedicated to the study and preservation of African American history and culture. All internship opportunities with this program focus on work related to digital imaging, media preservation, digital preservation of personal and community objects, digital content management, collections information management, recording and preserving oral histories, or digital filmmaking.

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