



Witness **STONES** Project™



2022 Annual Report

Our Community



CHOATE
ROSEMARY HALL



education that lasts a lifetime



Foote



King Philip Middle School



MIDDLESEX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT



NOAH WEBSTER HOUSE
WEST HARTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Deep River, Essex
Regional School District
Educational Excellence Pre-K-12



West Hartford



WOODSTOCK
MIDDLE SCHOOL



W



Our Project

The Witness Stones Project™ is an educational initiative whose mission is to restore the history and honor the humanity of the enslaved individuals who helped build our communities.

The Project provides local archival research, professional teacher development, a classroom curriculum, and public programming to help students discover and chronicle the local history of slavery through essays and art. The final component of the work in each community is the placement of Witness Stone Memorials™ that honor enslaved individuals where they lived, worked, or worshiped.

The Project began in Guilford, Connecticut, in 2017 and became a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation in August 2019. In five years, the Project has partnered with 86 affiliated schools and civic institutions in 45 towns in 5 states. More than 6,600 middle and high school students and their communities have participated in the Project.

From the beginning, the Project has been lauded as a rigorous and transformative program. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro praised it for “bringing together the community to learn, to heal, and to grow,” while Connecticut Department of Education Social Studies Coordinator Stephen Armstrong described it as “the perfect program for what we would like to promote at the State Department of Education.”

We have partnered with Central Connecticut State University to support our research and curriculum development, and with the New England Slavery Records Index to archive and share our research.

Our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan includes three primary objectives: to expand the number of schools and standardize the curriculum to reach a broader group of students by age, geography, and racial composition; to strengthen communications and increase network engagement for schools and research affiliates; and to build organizational capacity to scale and meet the demand for its programs.

We are now seeking support to put the Project on a growth path so that we can continue to share this important history and to create communities committed to learning their history, dismantling current inequities, and building a just future.



Our Impact

"This is the perfect program for what we would like to promote at the State Department of Education."
—**Connecticut Department of Education Social Studies Coordinator Stephen Armstrong**

"By sharing a more complete and complex history, you've shined a light on a path to the future."
—**National Green Valley Heritage Corridor Executive Director Lois Bruinooge**

"This [installation ceremony] is such a beautiful event for us not just to embrace our history, but to do it in such a way that it brings hope and promise to our future."
—**Connecticut House Republican Leader Vincent Candelora**

"Watching the students at work, the input that they had, what they learned from a civics perspective, and a history perspective...I am just very proud."
—**West Hartford Mayor Shari Cantor**

"Having the opportunity to learn about Hester has opened my eyes to the stark reality of American history and has made me think more critically about what has been recorded and what has been omitted from the records."
—**Greenwich Academy student Eliza Carroll**

"Watching the progress of the Project has been extraordinary. The ceremonies provide us with insight and a physical reminder to pay tribute to the lives that helped build this community."
—**Connecticut State Senator Christine Cohen**

"I applaud the Witness Stones Project and its partners for bringing together the community to learn, to heal, and to grow."
—**Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro**

"We hope that the Witness Stones Project continues to engage us in ongoing and involving conversations, crucial and hard conversations, compassionate conversations."
—**First Congregational Church of Old Lyme Associate Pastor the Reverend Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager**

"Our children are going beyond their role as student and are embracing the role of historian. That they are embracing that history critically and honestly makes me proud of Guilford students."
—**Superintendent of Guilford Public Schools Dr. Paul Freeman**

"We hope that these people will not be forgotten and these histories will be revealed."
—**Old Lyme First Selectman Tim Griswold**

"Rich and robust history is made up of many stories. The only way that we can move forward is to tell the truth about those stories."
—**Congresswoman Jahana Hayes**

"I am proud of a community and school district that teaches history as it really was, not as we wished it was."
—**Guilford First Selectman Matt Hoey**

"I felt like this was an amazing project. It was inspiring to actually be a historian, and to look over primary documents and connect the pieces of this forgotten figure's life."
—**Foote School student Daven Kaphar**



Our Impact

"The Witness Stones Project is important because it reminds us all that there are stories and forgotten lives hidden in the margins of recorded history."

—**Country School teacher and Director of Community Engagement Will McDonough**

"We can understand and value the lives of people who built our towns, our cities, our states, and our country."

—**Elisabeth C. Adams Middle School student Ella Montalvo**

"The more we learned, the more impressed we became with James Mars. We also began telling his story to educate others."

—**Salisbury School student Clarence Nurse**

"The students felt they had a much more tangible grasp on the past."

—**CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts teacher Kaitlyn Oberndorfer**

"It makes me feel proud to be able to tell these stories. We are giving a voice back to these people."

—**New Haven Museum Education & Engagement Director Khalil Quotap**

"Partnering with the Witness Stones is a great, concrete first step in telling these people's stories."

—**St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Rector the Reverend Marissa Rohrbach**

"It opens up the students' eyes to the world around them."

—**Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School teacher Heather Saia**

"These young men and women will be much better off having worked on the Witness Stones Project."

—**Connecticut State Representative Sean Scanlon**

"By placing a Witness Stone, we witness it. We see it. When you see, you cannot unsee."

—**West Hartford Board of Education Vice-Chair Dr. Lorna Thomas-Farquharson**

"The work on the Witness Stones has just been fantastic.... History needs to be told, and that's what you're doing."

—**West Hartford Town Councilor Ben Wenograd**

"The work that the Project is doing is critical."

—**Executive Director of the Connecticut Democracy Center Sally Whipple**

"The part of the project that was most inspirational is working with students and teachers who analyze documents and amplify the stories through poetry, art, music and reflection."

—**West Hartford Town Historian Tracey Wilson**

"This research gave me a distinct perspective and an opportunity to learn about topics I wouldn't be able to absorb as well or even at all in a textbook."

—**Foote School student Gus Witt**

"This project had an effect on me. We can't move forward unless we understand the past."

—**Chief Deputy Connecticut Senate Republican Leader Kevin Witkos**

"Learning about the fact that there were slaves in West Hartford, an area that I have been in my whole life, is profound. As an African American living in West Hartford, Peleg's story struck me deeply."

—**Kingswood Oxford student Isais Wooden**

Our Growth

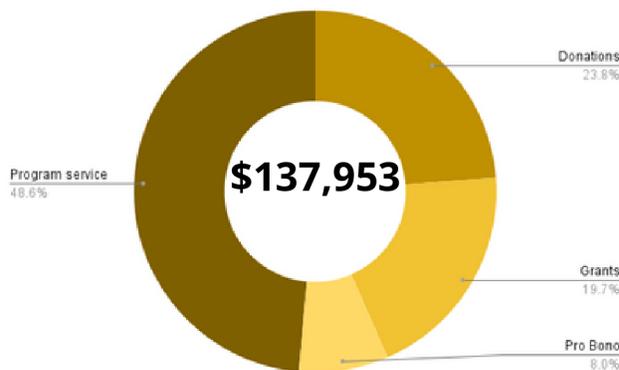
6,600+ students who have discovered and shared the history of slavery in their communities

126 individuals whose histories have been restored

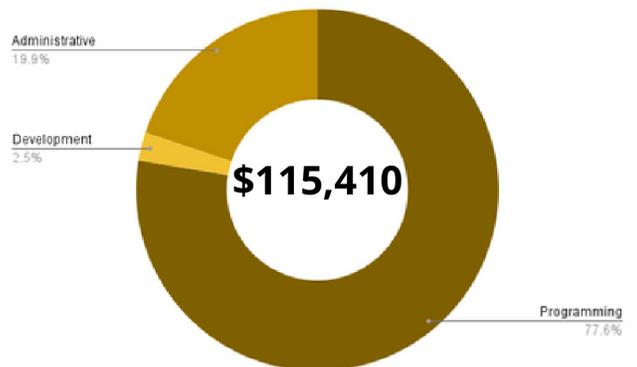
86 affiliated schools and civic institutions in **45** towns in **5** states

23 public events and **37** media stories including **8** television and **2** radio features during the 2021-22 school year

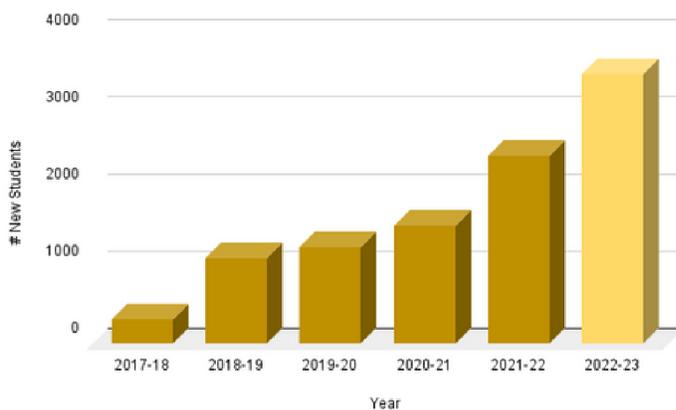
Our FY2022



Revenue

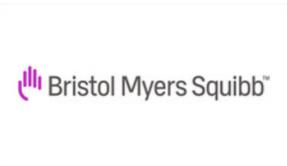


Expenditures



The Witness Stones Project is incorporated in Connecticut and is designated a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Audited financial statements are available upon request.

Our Supporters



Partners - \$5,000

BNY Mellon Community Partnership
 Central Connecticut State University
 Connecticut Humanities
 Guilford Savings Bank
 Christopher and Courtney King Murphy
 National Endowment for the Humanities
 Pro Bono Partnership
 Marfy Goodspeed and Richard Zimmer

Platinum - \$2000

Jeffry Davis and Kevin Kennings
 Terry and Sandy Kensler
 The Little-Iglesias Family
 Carl and Grace Zimmer

Gold - \$1000

Bristol Myers Squibb
 Guilford Foundation
 Guilford Rotary Club

Granite - \$500

Act II Thrift Shop
 Elizabeth Allen
 The Chittenden Family
 In Memory of Ellen Clark
 Dennis and Linda Culliton
 Philip and Marcia Giudice
 David Knapp
 Mary Beth Forshaw and Thomas G. Merrill
 Jane Pickering and Chris Norris
 Patricia Wilson Pheanious
 Ellen Saegaert
 Maggie Renzi and John Sayles
 Witness to History: Slavery in Guilford

Stone - \$100

Sarah Antine
 Peter and Catherine Boston
 David and Gail Corvette
 Ellen Cordes and Henry Haskell
 Rita Coté
 Lindsay Danckwerth
 Arline Epstein
 Pauline MacLeod Farley
 Erin French
 Friday Truehart Consultants
 Sylvia Gafford-Alexander
 Barry and Maggie Grove
 Michael and Kathryn Haggans
 Paul and Kathleen Hermes
 Bill and Judy Hopkins
 Lazette Jackson
 Allen and Ellen Katz
 Wendy Kravitz
 Liz Lightfoot
 Jean Bachman and Heather Mackenzie
 Marianne LaFrance and Megan Mangum
 The Marketplace at Guilford Food Center
 John Mills
 Nancy Mulvey
 James Nelson
 Bernard and Frederica Pitterman
 Clair Ransom
 Society of the Founders of Norwich
 Fabian Terbeck
 John Tully
 Doris Uzanas

Meghan Waldron
 John and Virgenie Weber
 Keith Wilson
 Robert Wolff
 Ador Yano

Brass - \$50

Susan Benjamin
 Maryann Bracken
 John and Elaine Buck
 Lauren Cutuli
 Elizabeth Dillman
 Steve and Amy Eppler-Epstein
 Kimberly Glassman
 Susan Hedgpeth
 Carole Holm
 Marie Lazauskas
 Estelle Nussbaum
 Dieter and Veronica Soell
 Christina Turiano-Sander
 Dawn Walnut
 Charlotte White
 Robin Whitney
 Loretta Wrobel

Student & Senior - \$15

Amy Buckley
 Ellen Creane
 Kerry Erlanger
 Katherine Frydenborg
 Beth Payne
 Sharon Elliott Sullivan
 Sarah Torff
 Deb Walsh

Our Team



Pat Wilson Pheanious

Chair of the Board of Directors
Former CT State Representative and
Commissioner of Social Services



Rita Coté

Secretary
Retired teacher and librarian



Grace Farrell Zimmer

Treasurer
President Emerita, Hyland House Museum



Sylvia Gafford-Alexander

Director
Retired Executive Program Director,
UConn School of Social Work



Lauren Cutuli

Director
Educational and non-profit consultant



Courtney King Murphy

Director
Director, Global Impact Citizenship, BNY Mellon



Dennis Culliton

Co-Founder & Executive Director



Liz Lightfoot

Director of Operations



Joy Burns

Project Advisor



Donna Dufresne

Project Advisor



Kate Klein

Fellow



John Sanzo

Fellow

Witness Stones Project

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WitnessStonesProject.org



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