

Call for Descendants of Oakwood Cemetery's "Historic Colored Grounds" for National Endowment for the Humanities Grant

The Oakwood Cemetery Chapel staff seeks descendants of African American, Mexican American and European American heritage to participate in a visioning session. The goal of this project is to construct a digital model of the "Historic Colored Grounds" to honor and recognize unmarked burials, many of which consist of people of color. Those buried in the 1800s were segregated due to race and class and less than 300 monuments exist in this three-acre area that holds thousands of burials.

The final project will create a 3D model of monuments to add the potential burial locations of thousands of graves that people cannot "see." Our model of this area combines historic photos, video, exhibits and legacy maps with lidar to complete the 3D representation. This is funded by a [Digital Humanities Advancement Grant by the National Endowment for the Humanities](#).

Participants will be asked to attend small group meetings to discuss the project and provide ideas via a recorded Zoom meeting. Descendants are also invited to record an oral history about their family and provide photos and documents to be scanned for use in the project. Recorded discussions will take place between February and April 2022. Scans of photos and recordings will be made available to families as keepsakes, free of charge.



Oakwood staff member [Greg Farrar](#) has created a list of all known individuals buried in this area. Some of the family names from burials dating back to the 1860s include **Anderson, Banton,**

Brown, Butler, Carrington, Coleman, Davis, Dedrick, Dodson, Freeman, Green, Gregg, Hamilton, Harris, Harrison, Hill, Holland, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Madison, Moore, Owens, Pollard, Ramey, Robinson, Scott, Shaw, Stewart, Taylor, Thomas, Thompson, Washington, White, Williams, Wilson, Wright, and Yerwood.



Community engagement and facilitation will be coordinated by Cortez Consulting. The organization is led by Dr. Laura Cortez who has been involved in engagement efforts throughout Austin since 2011. Her background is in environmental studies,

business and education.



Dr. Tara Dudley is a member of the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin's School of Architecture with expertise in Architectural History and Historic Preservation. Her research methodology includes creative utilization of archival resources and conducting oral histories.



Diana M. Hernández is an educator and researcher on issues of language, diversity and preservation. She is currently pursuing her doctorate degree in Historic Preservation at the University of Texas School of Architecture, documenting

Mexican American cemeteries.



Dr. Maria Franklin is a professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin. She is a historical archaeologist who works on African diaspora sites. Franklin's current research focuses on the post-emancipation experiences of Black Texans.

If you are a descendant of someone buried in this section of Oakwood Cemetery, or have information on those individuals, please contact Museum Site Coordinator, Jennifer Chenoweth at 512-978-2310 jennifer.chenoweth@austintexas.gov.

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. For assistance please contact (512) 974-3914 or Relay Texas 7-1-1.

OAKWOOD CEMETERY Chapel

