



RHODE ISLAND COUNCIL for the HUMANITIES

ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM: AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE IN R.I.

A WORK IN PROGRESS - PLANNING A NEW PROGRAMMING INITIATIVE

THE RHODE ISLAND COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES

385 Westminster Street
Suite 2
Providence, RI 02903
Voice: 401-273-2250
Fax: 401-454-4872
info@rihumanities.org
www.rihumanities.org

***The Rhode Island
Council for the
Humanities inspires and
supports intellectual
curiosity and
imagination in all Rhode
Islanders.***

**For more information
about *On The Road To
Freedom* contact:**

Risa Gilpin
Program Director
273-2250 x203
risa@rihumanities.org

PROJECT VISION: Reintegrating Our Histories

On the Road to Freedom will explore our collective memories to highlight the many accomplishments and contributions made by individuals and organizations of African American descent in Rhode Island. These stories include the history of the slave trade and emancipation; pacifism and military heroism; pioneering artists and the creation of nationally recognized cultural and educational institutions; the realization of the American Dream as well as the legacy of racism and oppression.

PROJECT STRATEGIES: Council Investments

The Rhode Island Council for the Humanities initiative ***On the Road to Freedom*** will serve *all* Rhode Islanders in the following ways –

- **Special Grants Initiative** – the Council will offer financial support to organizations and individual researchers involved in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of RI's African American heritage through a special grants initiative launching September 2008.
- **Council Conducted Programs** – the Council's existing programs will focus on Rhode Island African American history and culture, including *EnRICHment Opportunities* Speaker's Bureau, *Justice Talks* and *Action Speaks*
- **Partnerships** – the Council will work collaboratively with statewide partners to plan public events and exhibitions highlighting African American contributions to Rhode Island's cultural heritage

WHY NOW? – Building Off the Momentum:

- 2008 Presidential election
- 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (1808)
- Brown Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice
- *Traces of Trade*, the Sundance Festival recognized this film about Rhode Island's DeWolf family and their role in the slave trade
- Formation of the National Museum for African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.
- Numerous local projects from organizations including RI Black Storytellers, Slater Mill, Gamm Theatre, RICJ, Providence Black Repertory Company, Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, Touro Synagogue, Newport Historical Society, RIHS and many, many others!