



Preserve America Summit Implementation **Progress Report**

Enhance heritage education by developing a communication strategy for providing information to the educational community about Web sites, curriculum guides, and other outreach products that promote heritage education.

Lead Agency/Agencies: Department of Education

Summit Recommendation Progress: The Department of Education established the National History Education Clearinghouse in September 2007. The clearinghouse operates under a contract the Department awarded to George Mason University's Center for History and New Media, in partnership with Stanford University and the American Historical Association. The clearinghouse serves as a comprehensive center for resources that will enhance the teaching of American history in the Nation's classrooms. Historic preservation is an important element of the clearinghouse's resources.

The Department convened an advisory panel in December 2007 to review and comment on the Clearinghouse's work products and the panel will reconvene on an annual basis. The ACHP is a member of this panel and participated in the December 2007 meeting, and provided valuable guidance to assist the clearinghouse directors on heritage education issues. Through the clearinghouse's extensive electronic and print mailing lists, key resource providers are kept up to date on the strategies for providing information to the educational community. The communications among the resource providers will take place through periodic conference calls and a list serve.

The clearinghouse web site launched in May 2008. It includes links to the Preserve America initiative on its "History Content" page, and Preserve America is also featured in a listing of "National Centers" that provide resources to enhance the teaching of American history. The web site also includes extensive links to resources for teaching history through historic places, including the National Park Service's Discover Our Shared Heritage Travel Itinerary Series and Teaching with Historic Places website to help history teachers learn from and identify local and national resources.

In June 2008 staff from the Department of Education and the National History Education Clearinghouse met with representatives of the ACHP to discuss additional ways that the ACHP and the clearinghouse might work together to implement the communication strategy for heritage education. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for the ACHP to suggest a number of resources that the clearinghouse staff could showcase on the clearinghouse web site. In addition, clearinghouse outreach coordinator Teresa DeFlitch participated at the National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma in October 2008. Ms. DeFlitch's attendance allowed her to gain a greater understanding of the preservation community and its resources, which in turn will help inform the clearinghouse's outreach and education work.

Also in June 2008, the Department of Education ran a feature story on preservation in its electronic newsletter, The Innovator. In this feature, the Department highlighted the West Morris Regional High School District in New Jersey and the Savannah-Chatham School District in Georgia for their successful

efforts to incorporate preservation into their professional development activities for elementary, middle school and high school teachers of American history. Both districts are recipients of Teaching American History (TAH) grants and are good case studies of how TAH grants can make very effective use of teaching through historic place.

In January 2009, the Department of Education's annual Teaching American History project directors' meeting took place in New York City, and there were several breakout sessions related to preservation and teaching with historic places. John Fowler, Executive Director of the ACHP, participated in a plenary session on Federal resources for history educators. He also conducted a stand-alone session entitled "The ACHP and TAH Grantees: Engaging Teachers and Students in Historic Preservation." This session discussed the importance of working together to make historic preservation an integral and meaningful part of the history classroom for teachers and students.

Next Actions: The Department of Education and the National History Education Clearinghouse will continue to work through existing programs to enhance teachers' knowledge of heritage education and help teachers incorporate historic preservation into their classroom instruction. We will also continue to improve links between the education and preservation communities.

Important Links:

National History Education Clearinghouse: www.teachinghistory.org

U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History Grant Program:
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory/index.html>

Comments or Questions? Please send comments or questions to preserveamerica@achp.gov.

February 2, 2009