



New Jersey Department of State

The Amistad Commission

PROJECTIONS FOR

FY2008

FY2009

Fiscal Goals

Budget

and

Statement of Progress and Expenditures

1. Overview:

Mission The new Jersey Amistad Commission was established by the Amistad Bill (A1301), which became law in 2002. The mandate requires that all New Jersey schools incorporate African- American history into their Social Studies curriculum. This legislation also created the Amistad Commission, a 23 member body charged with ensuring that African American's history, contribution and experiences are adequately taught in the state's classroom within the auspices of a holistic presentation.

This state level Commission surveys, designs, and promotes the implementation of public educational awareness programs in New Jersey concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the vestiges of slavery in our country and contributions of African- Americans in building our country. Primary focus of the Amistad staff for the remainder of fiscal year 2007 - 2008 is the continued development of the Amistad curriculum, culminating with the dissemination our curriculum materials to every school in the state will ensure that every teacher has access to our lesson plans, primary source documents and the Amistad mandate by September 2008. In addition, this Commission is responsible for the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the state which provide the appropriate memorialization of events concerning the African Diaspora contribution and their descendants in America, especially in relation to educational initiatives and curriculum development.

2. Amistad Commission Budget for Fiscal 2008 and Goals for fiscal year 2009:

In monthly meetings and consultation among it Commissioners, and through the work of its staff, the Amistad Commission staff has been able:

- A. Continue the creation and coordinate the development of the comprehensive Amistad web based Curriculum which via the utilization of the Amistad Social Studies lesson and unit plan template developed in partnership with the Department of Education. This web based curriculum will be available to all Educators in September 2008, in the interim all

Educators that wish to may utilize sample lessons prior to our large scale distribution of the Amistad web- based curriculum in September 2008. The creation of a body of lesson plans (over 300 lessons) via the Amistad Summer Institute (August 2007) and continuing throughout the year via the Curriculum committee, will serve as the basis for the Amistad curriculum. This will chronicle the K-12 Social Studies curriculum for the state, inclusive of African American influence, history, accomplishments, and history. This curriculum will be beta tested in various school district throughout the state and revised for the web as well as for printing during the Summer of 2008. The Amistad Commission has received proposals for the construction an interactive web based curriculum that would focus on the contributions of African Americans from Jamestown to the present day holistically integrated into a K-12 Social Studies course as specified in the Core Curriculum Content Standards put forth by the New Jersey Department of Education. The web based curriculum will include several units dealing with historical events in Africa, prior to Africans arriving in British North America. The web based curriculum would consist of no less than twelve units of study, broken down by time periods as specified in the New

Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Social Studies; and would include lesson plans, PowerPoints, Biographies, Primary Source Documents and Classroom Activities for students. Later phases will include Videos, Interactive Maps, Interactive Timelines, Audios, and Music. All of these elements would be laid out in a consistent, user-friendly format. The Amistad Commission will provide course pacing for k-12, lesson plan templates, sample lessons plans, rubrics for replication, , and complete oversight. The company selected for this web-based curriculum would assemble the relevant documents, write the lessons and activities and produce the videos using top professors from around the country as well as historical re-enactors. The activities and resources should be used in all Social Studies classes K-12 as well as interdisciplinary courses and will be infused into elementary, middle school and high school American History courses, Language Arts courses, Art courses, Music courses, etc. in all 596 school districts.

This comprehensive password-protected web resource would be available to every teacher in New Jersey, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week absolutely free of charge and will be the property of the Amistad Commission.

This project would be an extremely large undertaking and could require breaking the complete production into multiple phases over approximately 12 months or longer. However, it is imperative that the baseline lesson plans as well as web links, primary and secondary sources, rubrics, course pacing, assessment for varied grades, and course overview must be ready for distribution by September 2008. **Cost of creation of web based curriculum \$200,000, plus an additional budgetary investment of \$20,000-\$30,000 yearly beginning in Fiscal 2010 to maintain the site for updates and addendums.**

1. Beta testing for the curriculum is a necessary step in the success the full integration Utilizing cross sampling of schools throughout New Jersey, which represent varied demographics of students and teachers we will begin curriculum prototyping exercises during the late Spring of 2008 immediately following state testing, within the classrooms of our state. Teachers who participate will be asked to answer questions regarding their content knowledge of African American history, their familiarity with the lesson subject matter, their comfort with the delivery of the lesson, and any identifiable hindrances or advantages to their delivery of the lessons. We will provide teachers with five lessons which constitute a unit of study that fits within their instruction timeline (thereby guaranteeing that the students will be provided seamless instruction with no gaps in curriculum coverage the week we will be substituting the lessons). These lessons will be submitted to department chairs and Principals so that all involved are aware of what lesson will be delivered within the classroom. We will ask the Classroom Educator to teach the lesson verbatim, in their own style but without any major deviation for the lessons. Amistad Curriculum Evaluators will then spend that one week in observation of lesson plan delivery, effectiveness, usability and functionality. Teachers will also have a self reporting assessment of their

students, the delivery of content, the integration of content knowledge into their current curriculum and their suggestions for revisions to the Amistad lesson plan template. Amistad Evaluators will also assess student participation, content knowledge acquisition, lessons effectiveness and lesson flow. The integration of the Amistad sample lesson plan content will be asked to be included within the next assessment activity and/or assignments that the Teachers will be given the students and we are asking that teachers provide us with the grades and copies of the assessment for our records.

2. We are asking participating school district and schools to allow us the flexibility to have autonomy over the test classroom for one week. We will make sure that all Curriculum chairs, department chairs and Administrators are aware of everything that will be taught within the classroom. We will meet with the Teachers and the Administrators so that each of us is comfortable with expectations, classroom presentation, and evaluative outcomes. There will be no right or wrong way to deliver the lesson, we simply ask that the Educator follow the lesson plan format as closely as possible so we might be able to look closely at the effectiveness of the lesson. Qualitative analysis data which will be collected by the evaluator will be allowed to speak for itself. This evaluation will not go towards nor against teacher's performance evaluation; it is simply a method for the Amistad Commission to be able to assess the functionality of the curriculum materials.

- B.** In addition, the Amistad mandate requires the necessity for extensive professional development opportunities for teachers, in partnership with the presentation of the Curriculum. Over the last several years, the Amistad Commission has offered continuous professional development opportunities and trainings for Teachers in their respective districts as well as conferences, Civic, Community, and Public events. The Amistad Commission will extend its offerings of face to face professional development opportunities for Educators throughout the state in beginning in early Fiscal year 2009, in partnership with the roll out of the Curriculum; in addition the Amistad will begin the development of a web-based professional development tutorial for teachers that will provide a much-needed solution to help teachers fulfill this new curricular requirement. As we all know, Amistad mandate requires the integration of African American history into the social studies curriculum in K-12 public schools, to provide a more inclusive and accurate record of American history. We also are aware that majority of history and social science instructors, as well as K-8 teachers, have never taken related courses and are not trained or sufficiently knowledgeable to teach African American history. The Amistad tutorial, which will align with the curriculum and be developed out of the Curriculum Committee simultaneously with the completion of our curriculum, will be accessible to users at no cost, and will be able to be a self-administered electronic resource for teachers that will provide primary and secondary materials, lesson plans, and instructional notes. It will be designed as a unique multimedia resource for teachers in the state, where they

can receive professional development credit hours to enhance their knowledge and ability in teaching African American history and will assist the Commission in their ability to provide professional development training to the more than 140,000 K-12 Educators. **Cost of Creation of web-based professional development tutorial in addition to the face to face County by County professional development opportunities throughout 2008-2009 school year- \$ 25,000 (approximately \$1000 per county program and \$500 for the additional portal on the web based curriculum)**

- C. We are pleased to announce that the Amistad Digital Resource database for Educators, created in partnership with Dr. Manning Marable and the Columbia University Department of History, and the Electronic Publishing Initiative at Columbia (EPIC) and Columbia's Center for Contemporary Black History (CCBH) is currently up and running. The prototype for a new Web-based multimedia resource was funded by Ford Foundation. The Amistad Digital Resource, is available and accessible to users at no cost, will provide a much-needed solution to help teachers fulfill this new curricular requirement. It will be designed as a unique multimedia resource for secondary school teachers to enhance their knowledge and ability in teaching African American history. The resource will combine rare and iconic photographs, audio recordings, film clips and excerpts of oral history interviews with a descriptive narrative text explaining significant themes and key events in African American history from slavery to the 21st century. With customized features to meet teaching requirements for all 50 states, Amistad Digital Resource will be designed for national use, New Jersey will serve as the first portal. A grant from the Ford Foundation directly to Columbia University funded the development of a prototype module for the period covering the modern Civil Rights and Black Power Movements (1954–1975). We have chosen this time because it is an especially exciting and engaging period for students. The prototype will include curricular materials and an interactive timeline demonstrating major events in African American history during this period. It will suggest innovative ways to teach African American history curriculum to high school students at a variety of skill levels, advanced placement (AP) and non-AP, in public or private schools, as well as give teachers access to a directory of links to selected teaching resources (archives, historical societies, libraries and museums) and professional development sites such as teacher training workshops and institutes. The prototype launched in December 2007 the linked can be reached at www.amistadresource.org.
- D. To ensure that New Jersey teachers are equipped to effectively teach the revised social studies core curriculum content standards via the Amistad curriculum and to provide funding and programmatic and support to teachers through the Amistad Annual Exemplary Awards. Up to 10 recipients are selected each year to receive the \$5000 grant to enhance their programmatic initiatives in the classroom. 2007-2008 fiscal year, five (5) awards were distributed. The 2008-2009 Grant applications are due to the Commission in March of 2008 and notified of their award at our annual

ceremony in June 2008 for the 2008-2009 grant period. At this time we currently have four (4) semifinalists for the 2008-2009 Exemplary Awards program. **Cost for the Exemplary award program as well as the awards ceremony (\$5,000 budget for the ceremony) - maximum of \$55,000 annually - 10 awards at \$5000 each (Because of the criteria established for evaluation this is a highly competitive award - the Amistad has to date never given out all 10 awards in any fiscal year)**

- E. As stipulated in our bylaws, institutional professional development offerings for the Amistad Commission center around the continuation of the week long residential Summer Curriculum Institute for Educators. This Institute helps to continue the development of primary/ secondary/ higher education partnerships with Universities and colleges throughout the state. The week long residential Annual Summer Curriculum Institute in August of 2008 will be at Montclair State University. Forty Educators will be eligible for this residential Institute each with a \$500 stipend, the production of lesson plans for submission to the Commission is the requisite for payment of the stipend. The Summer Fellows will be immersed in methodology and technique which integrate African American history into the social studies curriculum this intensive week is designed specifically to give primary and secondary teachers an opportunity to study the latest scholarship and research that will extend their content knowledge of African American history. Last year we had forty five (45) teachers in attendance at Montclair State University. The application for next summer is due back to the Amistad office in June 2008.
- F. In addition, as per initial legislation, as stipulated in our bylaws, the institutional offerings of Summer institutions will be expanded this year to offer a course for Educators that will immerse them in historiography. The Amistad Commission is entering into talks with Drew University to negotiate a week long graduate seminar course that will be open to all Educators via an application process directly to Amistad Commission. This course will provide graduate level credits for Educators and will be limited in spacing. The Commission will organize the course requisites, plan the course, and pay for graduate credits, room and board for a very limited number of Educators following the NEH model for Summer Educational opportunities for teachers. In subsequent years Amistad will apply to various grants in partnership with Drew University, to underwrite this graduate course. **Cost for the two Summer Institute program - \$30,000 (includes , housing, stipends, meals, honorariums for professors, and University fees) Drew University consortium course for graduate credit - \$ 30,000 (includes housing, Drew University tuition, meals, honorariums for the instructor)**
- G. As stipulated in our bylaws, the Commission is responsible for the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the state which provide the appropriate memorialization of events concerning the African Diaspora contribution and their descendents in America, especially in relation to educational initiatives and curriculum development. In fulfillment of this requisites the Commission will hold an

annual statewide Conference open to all Educators. This year, the Amistad Commission held its annual state-wide conference on February 23, 2008 at the Liberty Science Center, the Amistad professional development conference theme for 2008 was "Race - A Justification for Segregation". This conference was open to the public. Educators will always receive professional development credit for their attendance. This year's conference highlighted the acclaimed museum exhibition on Race by the American Anthropological Association that is currently traveling throughout the country. Keynote speakers were Dr. Lillie Johnson Edwards, Drew University and Dr. Saundra Collins, Montclair State University. Subsequent professional development programming will commence in September 2008 with a series of ongoing workshops in each of the 21 counties in support of the Amistad curriculum in addition to the web based electronic methodologies. **Cost \$ 5,000**

- H. The Amistad Commission will enter into negotiations with Montclair State University regarding the development of a *Amistad Resource Center for Educators* on Montclair University's campus as a pilot to open in Fiscal 2010 in concert with our full curriculum roll-out. The concept is a direct replication of the Holocaust Commission's Resource Centers that are housed at various universities and community colleges throughout the state. Within this Center the Amistad Commission would supply all of the ancillary and research materials that would be included in the Amistad curriculum as well as any and all addendum materials that would help provide the content knowledge acquisition for teachers that will be the practitioners of this curriculum. We plan to equip and open this *Amistad Resource Center* throughout the year. Montclair State University has a long history of a pedagogical resource for Educators in the state and housing one of the two Centers for Pedagogy and Research for Educators in the country. It seems to be the perfect match for a launch of this kind. **Cost for pilot Resource Center in FY 2010 - \$ 10,000.**

Submitted by: Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director