**DRAFT:**

**Memorial to Enslaved Laborers Community Engagement Committee Recommendations**

February 2020

The Memorial to Enslaved Laborers Community Engagement Committee (MEL-CEC) was formed in October 2018. It has been the understanding and expectation of the committee that its regular meetings would come to an end after the Memorial is dedicated in April 2020. The committee met in early December 2019 to discuss institutionalizing some of its efforts, with a clear understanding that the community engagement process that was so fundamental to the Memorial’s conception and design must continue once this space is open to the public as a living and breathing space. These recommendations are all in response to the important question of “How can we institutionalize this work?”

**Critical and Immediate Needs:**

* **Develop a website for the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers**, which will be live and functional by early April 2020.
  + **Why**: The Memorial to Enslaved Laborers is a public work of art, designed to stand alone. There is a brief outline of the history of slavery at UVA on the timeline/bench area of the Memorial. It will be necessary for visitors and the public to have access to a more robust source of information.
  + **What**: By April, the website should have the following content:
    - History of the Memorial at UVA (how it came to be).
    - Design process.
    - Resources on the history of slavery at UVA.
    - Photos/timeline of the construction.
    - Upcoming events at the MEL.
    - Partners/acknowledgements.
  + **How**: Budget (approximately $5,000) to contract with UVA ITS-CACS to develop the website. A sub-group of the MEL-CEC is willing to lead this effort.
  + The MEL-CEC will work with UVA Communications and Howeler + Yoon to determine and roll-out a communications plan around the Memorial in spring 2020.
* **Determine an office and supporting personnel to steward the ongoing work around the Memorial.**
  + The MEL-CEC recommends that the new Community Engagement office be tasked with this work, in the form of employing a programs person who would serve as the main contact for the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers.
    - Additionally, the group recommends that student interns/assistants be engaged as partners in this work, perhaps with the formal establishment of a student MEL fellowship.
  + **The ongoing work includes**:
    - Educational programming and tours
      * Educational programming and tours centered on the Memorial could be carried out with a combined approach, utilizing the U-Guides as well as a trained group of non-student volunteers (community members, UVA faculty/staff).
      * Designated MEL “point person” provides ongoing support to U-Guides.
    - Development of instructional material (K-12, university-level).
    - Development of criteria and management of requests for scheduling public and private events.
    - Development of training around trauma-informed language and presentation of programming, publications, and curricula.
    - Engagement with the Reflections Oral History Project as a component/collaborator in this work – direction TBD based on other oral history efforts (PCUAS).
    - Maintaining/updating of MEL website.
    - Updating and reprinting as needed the Enslaved African Americans at UVA Walking Tour Map and the new MEL brochure that is in development and will be available at the Memorial by April.
    - Annual Needs/Events
      * Adding names to the Memorial
        + As further research is conducted, it will be important to have a budget and process for adding newly-discovered names to the Memorial, as was conceptualized in the design.
      * Planning/hosting “Descendants’ Day”
        + Make April 10th an annual day for descendants of UVA’s enslaved community to be welcomed to Grounds. Provide opportunities to connect and share research.
      * Planning/hosting Liberation and Freedom Day event (March 3rd).
      * Planning/hosting annual Reunions/Black Alumni Weekend events.
        + Continued engagement of alumni, including the UVA IDEA Fund.
      * Planning/hosting events to continue to engage the local community around the Memorial.
* **Extend Descendant Project Researcher position**.
  + The President’s Office has graciously agreed to fund the Descendant Project Researcher position beyond the initially agreed-upon six months, to carry through April 2020. It is the recommendation of the MEL-CEC that this position become a two-year position beginning in April 2020, with the ability to renew based on the ongoing work and determined needs.