2018 Upstate Institute Summer Field School Fellowship

**Title:** Assessing A Crusade for Social Reform  
**Community Partner:** National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum

*Survey research on visitor perceptions to a museum on abolition that will be used at local, state and national exhibits for a student interested in history and activism.*

**Project Description:**
The National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum in Peterboro, New York, wants to learn how to best influence museum visitors to increase their moral conviction to end racism. A Fellow working with NAHOF this summer will help the organization to gauge the statements, questions, images, displays, activities, etc. that have been found to have the greatest impact at their museum and in classes on the Colgate campus through a survey. This survey will measure NAHOF’s accomplishment of its mission to complete the second and ongoing abolition, and will assist an individual's assessment of one’s racism and ways to decrease racist words and acts. The survey will initially be paper-based, though NAHOF intends to develop an electronic version that would process information in swift and useful formats at a later date.

The data gathered from the survey will help NAHOF create future museum installations and activities. This information will also be useful in grant applications for the programs and exhibits necessary to increase NAHOF’s contribution toward ending racism. The data generated will also be used at a thirteen day Crusade for Social Reform during the 2018 New York State Fair in Syracuse, at an exhibit mounted by the Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark, NAACP Onondaga, John Brown Lives, and NAHOF. This project is a long-awaited step for NAHOF that, according to the caliber of the work, will be put to use at this state exhibit immediately, and possibly at a new NYS Equal Rights Center, and most probably at a national conference in June 2019. A fellow interested in developing and presenting a scholarly contribution for the local, state, and national abolition cause will find satisfaction in this project.

**About the Community Partner:**
The National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum honors antislavery abolitionists, their work to end slavery, and the legacy of that struggle, and strives to complete the second and ongoing abolition – the moral conviction to end racism. NAHOF is located in Peterboro, New York, which was the home of Gerrit Smith. Smith’s commitment to both the abolition and temperance movements led to Peterboro becoming a stop on the underground railroad. Peterboro and the Gerrit Smith estate served as an important meeting place for abolitionists from both New York and other parts of the country, such as Frederick Douglass and John Brown.

**Required Skills:**
The Fellow needs to be eager to learn about the abolition movement and its important center close to the Colgate campus, a self-starter with motivation to be productive throughout the day according to the NAHOF project, and comfortable working alone and with a team. A background in research methods, attention to detail, and strong writing skills are essential. Technological ability to move the project into electronic format would be an asset.

**Logistics:**
This is a full-time paid research position (35 hours per week) to last approximately 10 weeks, conducted under the joint supervision of the Upstate Institute and the National Abolition Hall of Fame. Supervision for this project will be provided by NAHOF president Dot Willsey, with additional supervision from the
chair of the NAHOF Ongoing Abolition Committee, Jeff McArn of Hamilton College. The Fellow will be working at the Smithfield Community Center, home to NAHOF, and will also serve as a museum docent to allow NAHOF to add more open hours for the museum over the summer.

Field School Fellows receive a research stipend of $4500 plus reimbursement for any costs associated with transportation for this project. A car is not required for this project, but may be helpful. A Fellow will need a U.S. drivers’ license to complete this work.