

William Starr
for the County
of New Haven

Know all men by these Presents that we Hooker Bartlett Samuel Bartlett
Nathl Bartlett and John Elliot Jun^r all of Guilford in New Haven
County and State of Connecticut, being jointly & severally Masters and
owners of a certain Negro Woman named Candace a Slave for life
and being disposed to Emancipate and make her free and being fully
impowered for the Purpose by one certain Act of the Law of said State Antithet
an act in addition to the attestation of an act concerning Indian Mulattoes
& Negro Servants Slaves having thus far conformed to said Act and previously
obtained a Certificate from under the Hands of two of the Civil authority
within and for said County as required by said Act Now we the said Hooker
Bartlett Samuel Bartlett Nathaniel Bartlett and John Elliot Jun^r
do by this present writing or letter of Emancipation from the date
of these presents give her after Emancipation and make for our said Negro
Woman Candace and for our selves our Heirs Executors & Administrators do
renounce give up and from this time all right and Title to the whole or
any part of her Services, ^{Earnings} & Emoluments also all right to Control the Person of
her the said Candace either directly or indirectly in ^{any} matter whatsoever

WITNESS STONES PROJECT, INC.

ANNUAL REPORT

2021



OUR VISION

Communities committed to learning their history,
dismantling current inequities, and building a just future.

OUR MISSION

To restore the history and honor the humanity of the
enslaved individuals who helped build our communities.

OUR BELIEFS

We believe that slavery was critical to the development of our country.

We believe that slavery shaped the beliefs about race in our country.

We believe that slavery was the main cause of the Civil War.

We believe that the enslaved resisted their bonds and contributed
to the cultural, social, and economic growth of our country.

We believe that telling the truth about the history of slavery is
the first step toward racial reconciliation and addressing inequality.

OUR PROJECT

I was introduced to the Witness Stones Project in its earliest days when middle school teacher Dennis Culliton and psychotherapist Douglas Nygren were contemplating an idea to uncover and acknowledge the humanity and contributions of enslaved people who had helped to build their town of Guilford, Connecticut.

Dennis described his work guiding his students at Elisabeth C. Adams Middle School to use documents, such as wills, property records, probate inventories, and census records, to piece together forgotten lives. He was teaching his students to know their own town in ways they had never done before and to read between the lines to imagine the lives of enslaved people. He told me how students worked together to piece together history like a jigsaw, teaching each other their knowledge, writing biographical sketches, and uncovering paths of history. They found my ancestors along one of those paths.

In all my years of schooling, I had never been taught the things these students were learning. I had never been taught about the existence of enslaved people in the North, the true nature of slavery and its economic contributions to our nation's wealth, the truth that Native Americans were also enslaved, and the fact that thousands of Black people lived in every American colony. I certainly never learned that more than 10,000 Black men had fought in America's revolution. Or that my fifth-great-grandfather was one of them.

When I learned this new knowledge, it reoriented me. It made me appreciate my true place in the country. America wasn't an accident that I fell into. She wasn't my country by default. She was my country because nearly 300 years of my ancestors' blood, sweat, and tears had earned her for me. My ancestors didn't inherit America; they shaped and fought for her existence and her freedom at a time when their own was denied.

The Witness Stones Project is a critical necessity for our country. The effort is not critical solely because it restores the humanity that was stolen from the enslaved. It is critical because it can change a student's empathetic orientation to the hard facts of our country's past. It is critical because we need a truthful telling of America's history that acknowledges the contributions of all Americans.

Our history is not without pain. Neither is our present. Nor will our future be unless we own our history and grow from it together. Our real history is our children's right. It is their legacy. And it must be their truth. And if we do this right, the ability to discuss, understand, acknowledge, and reconcile our collective history will be our children's power.



Pat Wilson Pheanious, JD, MSW
Co-Chair of the Board of Directors
Witness Stones Project, Inc.

OUR WORK

Inspired by the *Stolpersteine* project in Germany, and with their blessing, the Witness Stones Project began in Guilford, Connecticut, in 2017. Our mission is to restore the history and honor the humanity of the enslaved individuals who helped build our communities.

We do this work through teacher workshops, engagement with students and the larger community, and, finally, memorializing enslaved individuals through the installation of Witness Stones.

The Project provides research assistance, teacher development, and curriculum support to help middle and high school students study the history of slavery in their own communities. The students explore the lives of enslaved individuals through primary source documents, including account books, wills, probate inventories, church and town records, indenture contracts, manumission deeds, obituaries, and other surviving archival material.

Documents from centuries ago come alive in the twenty-first century classroom. Students learn to identify the dehumanization and paternalism of slavery; the economic and legal framework that supported slavery; and the agency, resistance, and contributions of the enslaved. The students then create biographical sketches of the forgotten enslaved men, women, and children and share those stories through many mediums, including art, poetry, essays, and films.

Finally, the students bring their communities together to place Witness Stones: permanent brass markers that memorialize enslaved individuals where they lived, worked, or worshipped. At public installation ceremonies, students, faculty, administrators, historians, public officials, local clergy, and the larger community remember and honor the forgotten through music, poetry, oration, and reflection.

Our hope is that the students' work and the public memorials inspire communities to learn their true history, dismantle current inequities, and build a just future.



Witness Stone Installation
for Pink Primus
at the Pardee-Morris House,
New Haven, Connecticut



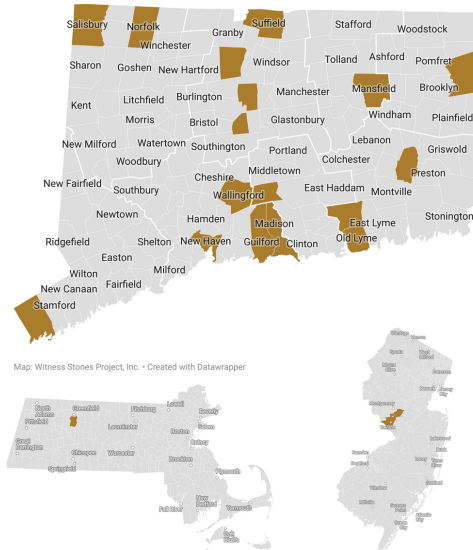
Witness Stones
for Phillis & Montros
at the Guilford Savings Bank,
Guilford, Connecticut



Witness Stone Installation
for James Mars
at First Church of
Christ Congregational,
Norfolk, Connecticut

OUR COMMUNITIES

Connecticut Witness Stones Communities



Map: Witness Stones Project, Inc. - Created with Datawrapper

Connecticut

Bush-Holley House, Central Connecticut State University, Cold Spring School, Conard High School, The Country School, Elisabeth C. Adams Middle School, First Church of Christ Congregational Norfolk, First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, The Foote School, Frank Ward Strong Middle School, Greenwich Academy, Greenwich Historical Society, Henry James Memorial School, Hyland House Museum, Killingly High School, King Philip Middle School, Kingswood Oxford School, Leffingwell House Museum, Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School, Mansfield Middle School, New Haven Museum, Noah Webster House, Norfolk Historical Society, North Congregational Church, Norwich Free Academy, Old Lyme Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library, Pardee-Morris House, Renbrook School, Sacred Heart Greenwich, Salisbury School, Sedgwick Middle School, Solomon Schecter Day School of Greater Hartford, Suffield Academy, Suffield Historical Society, Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust, Westfield Congregational Church, Witness Stones Old Lyme, Witness Stones West Hartford, Witness to History: Slavery in Guilford.

Massachusetts

Historic Deerfield

New Jersey

Stoutsbury Saurland African American Museum, Timberlane Middle School

4820 students who have explored and shared the history of slavery in their communities

72 individuals whose stories have been restored and whose lives has been honored with a Witness Stone

42 affiliated institutions in **3** states

OUR IMPACT

"We have an obligation to teach students history—the good stuff and the not so good stuff—in America's and in Connecticut's past..... This is the perfect program for what we would like to promote at the State Department of Education."

—**Connecticut Department of Education Social Studies Coordinator Stephen Armstrong**

"By sharing a more complete and complex history, you've shined a light on a path to the future."

—**National Green Valley Heritage Corridor Executive Director Lois Bruinooge**

"This [installation ceremony] is such a beautiful event for us not just to embrace our history, but to do it in such a way that it brings hope and promise to our future."

—**Connecticut House Republican Leader Vincent Candelora**

"The Witness Stones Project has been a rewarding experience this year. Having the opportunity to learn about Hester has opened my eyes to the stark reality of American history and has made me think more critically about what has been recorded and what has been omitted from the records."

—**Greenwich Academy student Eliza Carroll**

"I applaud the Witness Stones Project and its partners for bringing together the community to learn, to heal, and to grow."

—**Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro**

"We hope that the Witness Stones partnership continues to engage us in ongoing and involving conversations, crucial and hard conversations, compassionate conversations."

—**First Congregational Church of Old Lyme Associate Pastor the Reverend Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager**

"Our children are going beyond their role as student and are embracing the role of historian. That they are embracing that history critically and honestly makes me proud of Guilford students."

—**Superintendent of Guilford Public Schools Dr. Paul Freeman**

"We hope that these people will not be forgotten and these histories will be revealed."

—**Old Lyme First Selectman Tim Griswold**

"Rich and robust history is made up of many stories. The only way that we can move forward is to tell the truth about those stories."

—**Congresswoman Jahana Hayes**

"The students are learning and thinking deeply about topics that we didn't learn about until we were adults.... We owe it to the history of our town and to our students for them to have the full history."

—**Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School teacher Olivia Hersant**

"I am proud of a community and school district that teaches history as it really was, not as we wished it was."

—**Guilford First Selectman Matt Hooey**

OUR IMPACT

"I am grateful that we can acknowledge the tragedy of our history while also celebrating the life of a special, unique human being."

—**Madison First Selectwoman Peggy Lyons**

"It makes me feel proud to be able to tell these stories. We are giving a voice back to these people."

—**New Haven Museum Education & Engagement Director Khalil Quotap**

"These young men and women will be much better off having worked on the Witness Stones Project."

—**Connecticut State Representative Sean Scanlon**

"By placing a Witness Stone, we witness it. We see it. When you see, you cannot unsee."

—**West Hartford Board of Education Vice-Chair Dr. Lorna Thomas-Farquharson**

"The work on the Witness Stones has just been fantastic.... History needs to be told, and that's what you're doing."

—**West Hartford Town Councilor Ben Wenograd**

"This project had an effect on me. We can't move forward unless we understand the past."

—**Chief Deputy Connecticut Senate Republican Leader Kevin Witkos**

"Learning about the fact that there were slaves in West Hartford, an area that I have been in my whole life, is profound. As an African American living in West Hartford, Peleg's story struck me deeply."

—**Kingswood Oxford student Isais Wooden**

—SELECTED MEDIA—

New Haven Register, July 31, 2021, "Look at the Whole Story: Connecticut Educators Rethink Lessons on Racism, Slavery"

WFSB-TV Channel 3 Eyewitness News, June 10, 2021, "West Hartford Holding Juneteenth Celebration"

WNPR-Radio Where We Live, May 21, 2021, "Commemorating the Lives of Enslaved People in Connecticut"

WTIC-TV Fox61 News, June 4, 2021, "Honoring the Forgotten"

WTNH-TV News 8, June 14, 2021, "Witness Stones' School Project Highlights Lyme-Old Lyme's History of Slavery ahead of Juneteenth"

WVIT-TV NBC Connecticut, June 5, 2021, "Old Lyme Installs Witness Stones"

WVPR-Vermont Public Radio, September 17, 2020, "New England's Abolitionist History At Odds With Racist Realities"

OUR GROWTH

Statement of Activity

June 30, 2021 and 2020

	2021	2020
REVENUE		
Workshop & License Fees	\$78,925.00	\$15,250.00
Donations	\$10,499.97	\$10,059.45
Pro Bono Services	\$3,225.00	\$12,095.42
Grants	\$4,500.00	\$0.00
Lecture Fees	\$2,050.00	\$0.00
Total Revenue	\$99,199.97	\$37,404.87
EXPENDITURES		
Employee Compensation	\$33,261.20	\$0.00
Program Materials	\$5,912.10	\$145.00
Legal & Professional Services	\$3,275.00	\$12,575.42
Office Supplies & Software	\$1,247.21	\$615.21
Advertising & Marketing	\$883.19	\$4,626.74
Payroll Services	\$745.95	\$0.00
Total Expenditures	\$45,324.65	\$17,962.37
Net Revenue	\$53,875.32	\$19,442.50

Statement of Financial Position

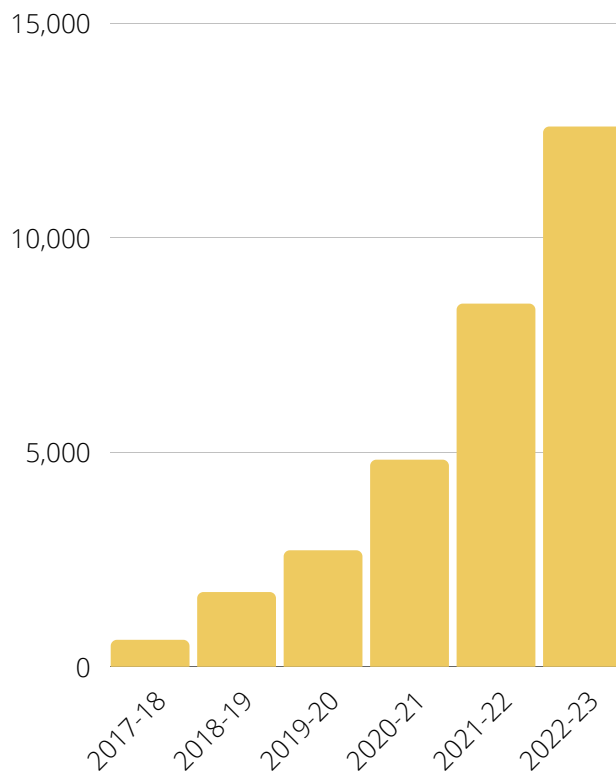
June 30, 2021 and 2020

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Cash	\$34,366.82	\$13,292.50
Accounts Receivable	\$38,126.00	\$6,150.00
Total Assets	\$72,492.82	\$19,442.50
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$675.00	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$675.00	\$0.00
NET ASSETS		
Retained Earnings	\$62,770.51	\$14,868.19
Net Revenue	\$9,047.31	\$4,574.31
Total Net Assets	\$71,817.82	\$19,442.50
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$72,492.82	\$19,442.50



Students, teachers, and honored guests at the Witness Stones Ceremony in Greenwich. This ceremony was one of ten Witness Stones installation ceremonies held during spring 2021. (Courtesy of the Greenwich Historical Society)

OUR POSSIBILITIES



Projected Students Reached

In our first four years, the Project reached more than 4,800 students in 18 schools. When the school year begins in autumn 2021, we will be working in 28 schools.

During fiscal year 2021, 82% of our revenue came directly from affiliated schools and historic institutions. Donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations contributed a critical 18% of our resources. We spent 86% of our resources on our core work of research, teacher development, and student programs.

We believe that the Witness Stones Project's impact is only limited by the receptiveness and support of our communities.

The Project's Board of Directors has approved a [2021-2024 Strategic Plan](#) which includes three primary objectives: to expand the number of schools and standardize the curriculum to reach a broader group of students by age, geography, and racial composition; to strengthen communications and increase network engagement for schools and research affiliates; and to build organizational capacity to scale and meet the demand for its programs.

The Witness Stones Project is incorporated in Connecticut and is designated a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Audited financial statements are available upon request.

OUR SUPPORTERS

The Witness Stones Project is made possible through the support of its affiliates and the generosity of the Friends of the Project. You can become a Friend by visiting our website.

Platinum

Giudice Family Foundation
Pro Bono Partnership
Rogers Family Foundation
William Casper Graustein
Memorial Foundation

Gold

Guilford Savings Bank
Kevin Brett Jennings
Terry and Sandy Kensler
Carl and Grace Zimmer

Granite

Elizabeth Allen
Chittenden Family
Connecticut Explored
Corvette Family Foundation
David Knapp
Mary Beth Forshaw and Thomas G. Merrill

Courtney King Murphy
Elizabeth Norman
Pat Wilson Pheanious
Blake Ruddock

Stone

Sarah Antine
Rita Coté
Pauline MacLeod Farley
Erin French
Sylvia Gafford-Alexander
Barrie and Maggie Grove
Lazette Jackson
Heather Mackenzie
Marketplace at Guilford Food Center
John Mills
Alice Ridgway
Eric Sejourne
Bruce Sylvester
John Tully
Keith Wilson
Ador Yano

Brass

Susan Benjamin
Dennis and Linda Culliton
Lauren Cutuli
Susan Hedgpeth
Melissa Houston
Kay Matthews-Sussman
Estelle Nussbaum
Sarah Torff
Doris Uzanias

Student/Senior

Kerry Erlanger
Katherine Frydenborg
Kate Klein
Robin Whitney

Sponsorship Levels: Platinum \$2,000, Gold \$1,000, Granite \$500, Stone \$100, Brass \$50, Student/Senior \$15.00. List reflects annual donations received through June 30, 2021

We would also like to thank the following supporters for their contributions to the Witness Stones Project this year.

ABAR Suffield
Atlantic Black Box Project
Anti-Racist Teaching & Learning Collective
Rebekah Beaulieu, Director, Florence Griswold Museum
David Blight, Sterling Professor of History of African American Studies, and of American Studies, Yale University
Kelly Bridges, teacher, Sacred Heart Greenwich
Antoinette Brim-Bell, poet
Lois Bruinooge, Executive Director, The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor
John B. Buck, President, Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum

Joy Burns, Physician Assistant, Smilow Cancer Center; Member, Amistad Committee & Yale and Slavery Working Group
Thomas Bushnell, teacher, Elisabeth C. Adams Middle School
Heather Butler, teacher, The Country School
Fred Camillo, First Selectman of Greenwich
Sheri Cantor, Mayor of West Hartford
Central Connecticut State University
Jonathan Chapman, Pastor, Westfield Congregational Church
Church of Christ Congregational, Norfolk

Connecticut Association of Independent Schools
Connecticut's Old State House
Judith Cooke, Pastor, North Guilford Congregational Church
Michael Craig, teacher, Killingly High School
Denise deMello, Co-Director, Witness Stones West Hartford
Liz Devine, Co-Director, Witness Stones West Hartford
Kristen Erickson, teacher, Sacred Heart Greenwich
Tammy Exum, Connecticut State Representative
First Congregational Church of Madison

OUR SUPPORTERS

First Congregational Church of Old Lyme
 Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager, Associate
 Pastor, First Congregational Church
 of Old Lyme
 Florence Griswold Museum
 Robert Pierce Forbes
 Paul Freeman, Superintendent of
 Guilford Public Schools
 Anna Marie Greco, Director of
 Education, Greenwich Historical
 Society
 Tim Griswold, First Selectman, Old Lyme,
 Elise Guari, Principal, Killingly High
 School
 Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of
 Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at
 Yale University
 Cleo Graham, Pastor, Faith
 Congregational Church
 Guilford Free Library
 Jahana Hayes, U.S. Representative
 Maria Horn, Connecticut State
 Representative
 Katie Huffman, Director of the Old Lyme
 Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library
 Kella Kandra Hughes, Director of
 Community and Creativity, Church of
 Christ Congregational, Norfolk
 Indigo Arts Alliance
 Frederick-Douglass Knowles II, Hartford
 Poet Laureate
 Tamara Lanier
 Last Green Valley National Heritage
 Corridor
 Sheila Lavey, teacher, Foote School
 Skye Lee, teacher, Foote School
 Leffingwell House Museum
 Joseph Lewerk, Teacher, Killingly High
 School
 Liz Lightfoot, Teacher, The Country
 School
 Kristin Liu, teacher, The Country School
 Heather Lodge, Manager of Youth and
 Family Programs, Greenwich
 Historical Society

Katie McCarthy, Teacher, Kingswood
 Oxford School
 Jumoke McDuffie-Thurmond
 Debra Mecky, Executive Director,
 Greenwich Historical Society
 Rockley Miller
 Rhonan Mokriski, Teacher, Salisbury
 School
 Angaza Mwando, Co-founder, Our
 Culture Is Beautiful
 Effie Mwando, Co-founder, Our Culture
 Is Beautiful
 Michael Negrón
 New Haven Museum
 Marilyn Nelson, former Connecticut
 Poet Laureate, Professor Emerita,
 University of Connecticut
 Thomas Nins, Pastor, First Baptist
 Church, Greenwich
 Noah Webster House
 Norfolk Historical Society
 Norwalk Historical Society
 Kaitlyn Oberndorfer
 Sean O'Connor, teacher, Conard High
 School
 Old Lyme Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library
 Erick Olsen, Pastor, Church of Christ
 Congregational, Norfolk
 Jerrad Pacatte
 Pardee-Morris House
 Beth Payne, Director, Dudley Farm
 Museum
 Phelps-Hathaway House
 Dennis Powell, President, NAACP
 Berkshire County Branch
 Preservation Connecticut
 Khalil Quotap, Director of Education
 and Engagement, New Haven
 Museum
 Michael Regan, Principal, Elisabeth C.
 Adams Middle School
 Susan Ruddock
 Kate Rushin
 Hallie Sorensen, Choir Director, North
 Guilford Congregational Church
Stolpersteine

Stoutsburg Sourland African American
 Museum
 Suffield Historical Society
 Bill Sullivan, Teacher, Suffield Academy
 Lynn Thomas, Retired OB-GYN; Member,
 West Hartford African American
 Social & Cultural Organization
 Lorna Thomas-Farquharson, Vice Chair,
 West Hartford Board of Education
 Margaret Anne Tockarshewsky, Executive
 Director, New Haven Museum
 Jon Van Epps, North Guilford
 Congregational Church 300
 Committee
 Teresa Vega
 Laura Ventres, Director, Old Lyme Middle
 School Chorus
 Sarah Vetter, Minister of Community Life,
 First Congregation Church of
 Madison
 Todd Vetter, Senior Minister, First
 Congregational Church of Madison
 Rhonda Ward, New London Poet
 Laureate
 Carolyn Wakeman, Chair, Witness Stones
 Old Lyme
 Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust
 Margaret M. Weaver, Municipal Historian,
 Killingly
 Westfield Congregational Church
 Lisa Williamson
 Tracey Wilson, Co-Director, Witness
 Stones West Hartford
 Kevin Witkos, Connecticut State Senator
 Witness Stones Old Lyme
 Witness Stones West Hartford
 Witness to History: Slavery in Guilford

OUR TEAM



Dennis Culliton, MAT, CAGS
Founder & Executive Director
Retired teacher and local historian.



Rita Coté, MLS, MAT
Secretary
Retired teacher and librarian.



Pat Wilson Pheanious, JD, MSW
Co-Chair.
Former Member of the Connecticut House of Representatives and Connecticut Commissioner of the State Department of Social Services.



Grace Zimmer
Treasurer
Former editor and publisher. President Emerita, Hyland House Museum.



Lauren Cutuli
Co-Chair.
Educational and non-profit consultant.

Sylvia Gafford-Alexander, MSW
Director
Retired, UCONN School of Social Work, Organizational and Skill Development (DSS), Executive Program Director.



Kevin Jennings, MAT, MBA
Vice-Chair
Executive Director, Lambda Legal Defense Fund, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education 2009-2011.



Courtney King Murphy
Director
Independent Social Impact and Corporate Social Responsibility Consultant; Director, Strategic Partnerships and Development, Social Venture Partners CT.

Cover credits:



The word Sankofa, from the Asante Twi language of the Akan people of Western Africa, means "to return and get it." The Sankofa symbol is associated with the proverb "*Se wo were fi na wosankofa a yenkyi*," which translates to "It is not wrong to go back for that which you have forgotten." Our rendering was created by Cathi Bosco.

The cover features the 1793 manumission document for Candace (1751-1826). Guilford Town Property Records, Vol. 14, p. 233.

Contact Us

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WitnessStonesProject.org



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