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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



THE FRED SOMERSET MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONTINUES TO EXPAND OFFERINGS

SENDING STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, FARRELL CITY REPS TO AN EXPERIENTIAL VISIT OF ALABAMA AS PART OF PROGRAM OUTGROWTH

WILL VISIT HISTORIC SELMA BRIDGE, THE LEGACY MUSEUM, MEMORIAL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

FARRELL, PA_ As a continued outgrowth of The Fred Somerset Memorial Scholarship Program, which “serves black and brown students in the advancement of education/cultural awareness”, Farrell students, educators and city reps will visit historic sites in Selma and Montgomery Alabama for an experiential opportunity to learn about history and social justice.

Program founder Jermaine Somerset, 50, who is a 1991 graduate of Farrell High School, created the scholarship program in 2017 to honor his grandfather of the same name and his legacy. The program was created to give back to the City of Farrell, as well as honor Farrell residents and natives who he considered “unsung heroes.”

He was inspired to expand on the scholarship programming to include visits to historic sites of social justice significance after the death of Floyd George in the summer of 2020, calling it The Legacy Cultural Project. “I see the program as another platform of communication between police departments and residents to help some of our marginalized communities,” Somerset explained, adding that the inaugural tour will be 3 days, June 8-10.

Besides Somerset, the tour group will include 3 Farrell students from 7th-11th grades, a legal guardian from each family and 5 Farrell community leaders from both the City and the school. Stops include Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, AL., The Legacy Museum and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, AL.

“We will walk in the footsteps of Dr. Martin Luther King, John Lewis and the Freedom Riders who peacefully marched for voting rights,” said Somerset, adding that the tour guests will have lunch in Selma with local historians to learn more about that history. The next day the group will visit The Legacy Museum and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

There, according to the museum website, the tour participants will experience “interactive media, sculptures, videography and exhibits immersed in the sights and sounds of the slave trade, racial terrorism, the Jim Crow South, and the world’s largest prison system.” He added that the group will also visit a warehouse near the museum where enslaved people were sold and have a history discussion there as well.

Somerset, who is also a Systems Engineer at NCIS Quantico, believes that the visit will be a significant learning tool for the students and community members. “At the conclusion of each day, we’ll do a Q & A session facilitated by the Farrell community leaders with the students to discuss possible community actions needed to promote inclusion, police transparency, unity and positive relations among residents.”

The program is being sponsored by a variety of people and organizations including The City of Farrell, and board members of The Fred Somerset Memorial Scholarship Program. “I’m very grateful that Mr. Somerset has not forgotten about his hometown and is giving back to the community in honor of his grandfather, the late Mr. Fred Somerset,” said Farrell Mayor Kim Doss. “This trip will improve cultural awareness and help connect our Police, our youth, the parents, Public Officials (City Council), School Board and School Director.”

Somerset’s acknowledgements included Police Chief Rubano, Mayor Doss, Ben Prescott and Dr. Emily Clair of the Farrell School District, along with board members of The Fred Somerset Memorial Scholarship Program (Edward Miller; Dr. Terri Marshall; Corwin Somerset) and individual donors (Kymberly Parker, Brenessa Swain, Jacqueline Bell.)

The former Farrell resident hopes that this inaugural tour is just the first in a long line of annual or bi-annual experiential learning events. “To have them walk it and illustrate that we can work on these things together, I think overall we’ll just improve the communications between the school board, the mayor and the police department,” said Somerset.

Learn more about the Fred Somerset Memorial Scholarship program here: <https://www.fredsomersementorialscholarshipprgm.org/> or contact Jermaine Somerset at the.somerset.program@gmail.com or 9178554103

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