



DEDICATION & UNVEILING AUGUST 24, 2025 BRISTOL MEMORIAL SCULPTURE

The Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project seeks to acknowledge the history and memory of Bristol's participation in slavery and the Transatlantic Human Trade and its resounding effects on African and Indigenous peoples by erecting a memorial to honor those affected by this history and their contributions to our nation, and to serve as a site for educating people on this history and for hosting reconciliation and healing ceremonies.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bernard Freamon - PRESIDENT

Mattie Edwards-Kemp - VICE PRESIDENT

Stephen T. O'Neill - SECRETARY

Peter Dorfman - TREASURER

Stephan Brigidi

Dr. Sherri V. Cummings

Ruthann DeLong

Charles Edwards

E. Keith Maloney

Susan C. Maloney

Ayo Osimboni

Michael Proto

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Tracey Dancing Star Brown
Holly Fulton
Victoria Johnson
Elizabeth Sturges Llerena
Charles Roberts

<u>HONORARY</u> Jody & Billy Andrade



The Sankofa logo, which is the symbol representing the Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project, is an ancient African symbol which portrays a bird holding its egg, moving forward while looking backwards. It represents our project's theme of remembering the past while moving confidently into the future, bringing healing and understanding through an honest understanding of our history.

We acknowledge that our community is part of Sowams, the ancestral homeland of the Pokanoket Tribe, and the place of Metacom's Seat, at the base of Potumuk (Mount Hope). This memorial serves as a reminder of our ongoing responsibility to recognize, honor, and partner with the Pokanoket Tribe people for the benefit of the lands and waters of Sowams.

PO Box 871 Bristol, RI 02809 - https://bmppmp.org - info@bmppmp.org

Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, incorporated May 2023.

SPEAKERS PROGRAM

Rose Weaver

A Song of Greeting & Peace

Stephan Brigidi

Introduction of BMP Board-President Bernard Freamon

Bernard K. Freamon,

Professor of Law & Director of RWU Institute for Race and the Law Opening Remarks

Sachem Tracey Dancing Star Brown

& Sagamore Winds of Thunder William Guy Land Acknowledgement of the Pokanoket Nation

Mrs. Victoria Johnson, Newport Middle Passage

Elizabeth Sturges Llerena & Holly Fulton, DeWolf Family Descendants

United States Congressman Gabe Amo

Dr. Sherri Cummings

Importance of Alliances & Introduction

Prof. B. Anthony Bogues,

Director of Brown Ú. Simmons Center for Slavery & Justice Memorials As Calls for Action: Reflections on Slave Memorials in our Times

Prof. Spencer Evans, Artist

Our Ancestors Come With Us

<u>Unveiling of the Sculpture</u> with Artist Spencer Evans, joined by Tracey Dancing Star Brown, Victoria Johnson, and BMP Board Members Charlie Edwards & Mattie Edwards-Kemp

Fanfare & Celebration with Pokanoket Tribal Drum

BRISTOL MIDDLE PASSAGE: A Brief History

More than a dozen years ago, two cousins who grew up in Bristol began a dialogue about how to encourage Bristol residents in acknowledging the town's role in the history of slavery. Both Elizabeth Sturges Llerena and Holly Fulton are descendants of the DeWolf family of Bristol, which was the largest human trafficking slave-trading family in US history. Led by another family member Katrina Browne, they were part of a group of ten DeWolf descendants who travelled in 2001 from Bristol to Ghana and then to Cuba completing the triangular trade route. They documented their experiences, producing a PBS film called Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North which aired in 2008. Both Elizabeth and Holly became committed to act on their experiences with the group of engaging historians and community members throughout the journey. In 2013 they learned about the national movement known as the Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project that was forming a network of identified ports of entry along the eastern and southern coasts of the US from Maine toward the Gulf of Mexico and finishing in Galveston, Texas. Catherine Zipf, a local scholar of history, was one of the people who assisted them in organizing a small group of people in Bristol to begin a long discussion about possible reparations and efforts toward reconciliation.

The perseverance of Elizabeth and Holly gave birth to the local chapter of what was to become the Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project. In 2020 the death of George Floyd mobilized the Black Lives Matter movement and several citizens from both Bristol and Warren decided on a course of action as a peaceful gesture of healing. As examples from the ninety sites designated as having involvement in the Middle Passage became established, some Bristol-based citizens decided upon a path of marking the town with a unique memorial sculpture to honor the African and Indigenous people harmed by slavery. The official Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project became incorporated in May 2023 as an autonomous non-profit group affiliated with the national organization while gaining recognition as a Site of Memory associated with the UNESCO Slave Route Project of Resistance, Liberty, and Heritage.

Today's Bristol Memorial Sculpture, being unveiled and dedicated, is the result of years of work by our determined committee of local citizens and many more volunteers and supporters - all joined by the common purpose of acknowledging Bristol's history, and most importantly of honoring the memory of all of those harmed by the trans-Atlantic human trade.

The Memorial Site

With the advice of Charles Roberts, of RI Slave History Medallions, and approval from Bristol Town Council, Bristol Middle Passage selected a site within Bristol's Independence Park. In February 2023, BMP dedicated the site of the memorial in a small ceremony with Mrs. Victoria Johnson of Newport Middle Passage, Tracey Dancing Star Brown of the Pokanoket Tribe, and Bristol Town Councilman Tim Sweeney.





With funding support from the Andrade family, Bristol Middle Passage put out a statewide Request-for-Proposal for a sculpture to become the Bristol marker.

In September 2023, an independent jury of community professionals: Keith Stokes, Simona Simpson Thomas, Conor Moynihan, Len Cabral, and Tracey Dancing Star Brown; chose from the many submissions received, three finalists: Deborah Baronas with Greg Speiss, Deborah Spears Moorehead & Allison Newsome, and Professor Spencer Evans.

The finalists were each granted a stipend, by the generosity of the Andrade family, with which to further develop their proposals and to produce models to be displayed in Bristol's Rogers Free Library to solicit public commentary. More than 200 people submitted comments about each model to assist the Board of Bristol Middle Passage in choosing an artist for the commission.

Finally, in January 2024, each team made oral presentations to the Board of BMP. After much deliberation, the Board commissioned Professor Spencer Evans to create a three-figure sculpture, depicting an Indigenous Woman, an African Man, and a Child, to be cast in bronze; announcing their decision in an event at Bristol's Pivotal Brewery, led by Board President Bernard Freamon, alongside US Congressman Gabe Amo.



The Sculpture



To fulfill the commission, the BMP Design Committee needed to find a foundry capable of matching the artistry and vision of Spencer Evans, ultimately selecting Buccacio Sculpture Services. Artisan Jeff Buccacio has closely collaborated with Spencer Evans to bring his work to life.





The Casting Process





The Funding Process

In the Fall of 2023, the Board embarked upon a campaign of ongoing letter writing, applying for numerous grants of all sizes, and making personal contacts with various members of the community. It was a twenty-month process to acquire the funding so needed to meet the substantial expense to fabricate and install the Memorial Sculpture.





Spencer Evans: Our Ancestors Come With Us

My concept for the memorial is based in the love and respect for my ancestors who endured the middlepassage as well as a life in bondage long enough to be emancipated, which resulted in generations of descendants being able to live and thrive on this land today. For ethnic context, the majority of enslaved Africans in the Bristol area were descendants of the Akan Peoples, from the area now known as Ghana. My concept is also rooted in the same respect for the ancestors and descendants of Pokanoket people who lived in harmony with this land before any of us. Due to this love and respect, this sculpture does not depict trauma. Our people are much more than stories of suffering. Each of these groups have rich cultural identities without the lens of oppression and in spite of it. The context of the hardships endured reveals itself through the layers. The ancestors are depicted with their true identity intact. The monument includes 3 bronze figures-two adults and one child. Both adult figures have their bodies turned toward Bristol Harbor, the first being a woman. The position of her body serves as a metaphor for the Pokanoket women who stood at the Cliffs of Sorrow waiting for their stolen families to return. The second figure, a man, symbolizes every African ancestor and

descendent who possessed the viscerally sensational reminder that we are not in our homeland. However, both their gazes are fixed toward the child as the second adult points inland in the direction that the child is moving. The dynamically twisted posture of the adult figures also symbolizes the task of circumstantial endurance while possessing a radical love and hope for future generations, despite their reality of living in bondage, displacement, and oppression. The child figure also has a dynamic pose which is seemingly almost weightless in the movement, symbolizing the future generations who are carrying their ancestors with them as they are able to make constant attempts at living their dreams. The final element of representation is a reference of the land itself. The



Pokanoket people share the oral history of their land being formed on a turtle's back (North America is known as Turtle Island to some Indigenous nations). The concrete stones under the figures resemble an approved symbolic design representing the land as the Pokanoket People see it. The permanence of a people's relationship with their land undoubtedly serves as evidence of a thriving



existence despite all attempts to destroy it, especially when we see it through the expression of a child. This type of thriving existence of a people is only possible through the strength, wisdom, and innovation of the ones who came before them. That same strength, wisdom, and innovation is necessary for the descendants of enslaved Africans and Indigenous people to thrive today-this is one of the many ways in which our ancestors remain with us at every moment. This monument is meant to depict the spirit of those who were brought here against their will as well as those calling this land "home" before colonization. I regard this shining spirit as one that remains bright enough for us to still feel its warmth today. The clothing designed for the adult male is influenced by traditional Akan clothing. The clothing designed for the child is a nod to Afrofuturism, which is the essence of seeing Black life beyond the present day. The figure closest to the Bristol Harbor is representative of a Pokanoket woman referencing the close relationship of both communities during their shared time in bondage in New England after King Phillip's War. The child is representative of both communities' reclamation of freedom, of identity, and life on this land. Every monument in existence offers a striking notion, no matter the story: a depiction of an idea that will stand the test of time and inform every generation that sees it. The aim of this monument is to offer a glimpse at the undying wisdom, strength, and beauty of two groups of people who were the foundation of this community by way of the land itself, and the hands that were used to transform it. It is a fact, these ancestors and their descendants carried marvelous identities that existed before, during, and after subjugation. It is my hope that this fact aids in granting peace to the community of Bristol for future generations, a reconciliation of the land that is loved by so many.



The Future

Completion of the Bristol Memorial Sculpture has been the primary goal of the Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project, as the foundation for an on-going process of healing and reconciliation in pursuit of social-racial equity.







The mission of Bristol Middle Passage is to establish truth and accuracy regarding our past, as a basis for ongoing reconciliation efforts. The focus of our efforts is not on shame, but on hope for a better future, as embodied in the Child figure of Spencer Evans' sculpture. The Bristol Memorial Sculpture is a lasting marker of this large and enduring task, which rests in all of our hands.

BMP intends to continue this process through the development of educational initiatives; including the continuation of events held for Black History Month, Juneteenth, and the annual August Day of Remembrance, acknowledging the abolition of slavery.

"Live like an Abolitionist."



"Slavery is not Black or Native History. How our
African-Indigenous Heritage Ancestors Survived and Thrived
Despite Enslavement is Black-Native History."
-Keith Stokes

Major Contributors

Jody & Billy Andrade (Graciecam Foundation)

John Andrade Insurance

BankNewport

Bristol Historical & Preservation Society

Town of Bristol

Buccacio Sculpture Services

1829 Legacy Fund

DaPonte's Landscaping Services

Discover Newport

Fast Coast Construction

Felicia Fund

Friendship Foundation

Howe Stein Fund

Topeka Community Foundation

Pare Corporation

Papitto Opportunity Connection

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

T-Mobile USA

Warren Monument

Rhode Island Foundation

Middle Passage Ceremonies

& Port Markers Project

Supporters

Pokanoket Tribe Archive Books & Snackery Pivotal Brewery Bay Magazine Beehive Cafe Blake, Lee Botelho, Alyssa Bristol H&P Society Brown U. Simmons Center;

Prof. B. Anthony Bogues Chinn, Ann

Cobb, Ann DeLong, Travis

East Bay Printing

Explore Bristol Fenwick & Oliver Field, Audrey Brito

Folklore

Guild Brewery, Co. Hilario, Mario

IO Labs: Ted Peffer Johnson, Victoria

Linden Place Matrone, Mark

Medeiros, Paul

Montage Media

New England Tent Co.

RISD Alumni Magazine RI Slave History Medallions; Charles Roberts Rogers Free Library; Eileen Dver St. Michael's Church; Richard Simpson, Michael Horvath, Loretta Francis

Perfect Sweet Shop

Stokes, Keith Sweeney, Timothy Vieira, Carol Lin

Watrous, Alex & MHHS Film Students

Watson, Marcie Idalia C. Whitcomb Charitable Trust

Iournalists

Christy Nadalin Richard Dionne Jr. Scott MacKay

Major Donors

Aubrey Atwater & Elwood Donnelly Iulia & Stephan Brigidi

Eileen Collins & Brandt Heckert

Lisa Howe Colt

Alyda & Joseph Dewhirst

Nancy Jane & Samuel Duncan

Donna & Charles Edwards

Donna & Edward Giblin

In Honor of Willie A. & La Verne E. Edwards, and their Ancestors & Descendants

Neile & Frederick Hartman

The Laflamme Family

Susan & Keith Maloney

Juan Mariscal

The Michaels Family

Ellie & Steve O'Neill

Maureen McDonald; In Memory of Charles J. McDonald MD

Karen & Russell Pet

The Osimboni Family; In Memory of Victoria Oladunni Osimboni

Tracy & Adam Ramos

Jacqueline Savoie & Dennis McCool

Maryanne Ziegler

Former **Board Members**

Rickey Brightman Holly Fulton Elizabeth Sturges Llerena Shenita Perry Mike Simpson

Lynn Smith Nancy Soukup Yulianna Torres Sarah Weed Catherine Zipf

Artist Finalists

Spencer Evans Deborah Baronas & Greg Spiess Deborah Spears Moorehead & Allison Newsome

Artists Jury

Len Cabral Tracey Dancing Star Brown Conor Moynihan Keith Stokes Simona Simpson Thomas

With thanks and appreciation for the generosity of our many donors

Akinfolarin, Muraina

Aldrich, Robert W.

Allen, Elizabeth

Allen, William M

Allen, John

Allen, Richard B.

American Online Giving Foundation

John Andrade Insurance Agency

Andrade, Anne

Antinucci, Janice

Archive Book & Snackery

Arruda, Linda

Ashton Properties LLC

Austin, Suzanne

Barney, Maria

Barona, Deborah

Barrett, Walter

Barry, Patrick G. & Jennifer A

Beltre, Morganna

Bergmark, Jennifer

Berren, Larry & Ellen

Borkowski, Stephen H.

Bosworth, Marcia W.

Bowman, Gregory W.

Bragard, Nancy

Brightman, Dorothy L. & Nancy H. Soukup

Bristol, Town of

Brito, Elizabeth G.

Browne, Elizabeth

Burnham, Charlotte & H. Bennett III

Campbell, Diane B.

Carden, David L. & Rebecca R. Riley

Carreiro, Duarte & Donna

Carvaial, Caridad Robles

Cassells, Jennifer S

Castaldi, Michael

Caton, Peter L. & Margaret S.

Celone, Donna

Christina, Martha

Christopher, Janet

Civale, Christopher J.

Cohn, Suzanne

Colt, Elizabeth

Colt, George H.

Corcoran, Jennifer & Thomas A. Radgowski

Cordeiro, Melissa M. & Michael P. Mello

Couto, Lisa

Cristadore, Donna

Cruz Productions LLC

Cunningham, Peter Curran, Sheila & Joseph P.

Dal.uz, Tessa

DaLuz, Dann

Defeis, Elizabeth Frances

DeLong, Ruthann R. & Eric

Demopulos, Abagail

DeVecchi, Stephen Diossa, James A.

Dojny, Brooke M.

Dolan, Heather

Donovan, Glenn L. & Susan Dorfman, Peter J. & Karen L.

Dubois, Sarah McConnell Duncan, James Allen & Laura M

Dusel, John C.

Dwyer, Olivia

Edwards-Kemp, Mattie L.

Ehrfurth, Carrie

Enright, Thomas & Lisa

Fay, Peter

Feldman, C. Diane

Felicia, Fund

Fellman, Vanessa

Field, Audrey Brito

Fisher, Craig M.

Foster, Karen

Freamon, Bernard K.

Frederick, Peggy

Fulton, W. DeWolf

Fulton, Holly

Gildman, Molly

Glaser, Scott

Goldenberg, Rachel

Gordon-Sacchetti, Diane

Granites of America

Gray, Matthew

Guido, Karen A.

Guild Brewery, Co.

Gutoff, Jonathan M. & Lisa S. Wieland

Hale, Ellen

Hanson, Elizabeth G.

Harrington-Steppen, Suzanne

Haverington, Christine

Hayes, Matthew D.

Heckert, P. Brandt & Eileen S. Collins

Hertfelder, Eric K. & Sarah D.

Hewett, Frederick

Hibbit, Susan B. & Hugh D.

Holmstrom, Garry & Catherine C.

Horwitz, Andrew

Howe, William

Howe, David

Howe, Mark

Howe, Priscilla Nugent, Mary P. & Stephen P. Omisore, Renay Brooks Howe, Deborah Hughes, Michelle O'Neill, Frin Hutzler, Wendy O'Rourke, Thomas Iannuccilli, Ed & Diane Osimboni, Avo Issenberg, Sheila Paper, Packaging & Panache Isserlis, lanet Papitto Family Foundation Pardee, Emily Jacobs, Laura Jenkins, Harold D. & Hope L. Chase The Pennfield School limenez, Aileen Perry, lames locelyn, Christine Peterson, Korinne Johnson, Victoria Philbert, Ivo Johnson, Ramone Popovich, Douglas Iones, Mary Proto, Michael I. & Susan L. Puerini, Albert Jordan, Brianna Judge, L.E. & R.P. Hudson Ouinn, Katherine Redman, Sarah Keating, Celine Kloeblen, Steven J. & Kathleen A. Rennaisance Charitable Foundation Rhode Island, State of Kortchmar, Daniel Kovach, Lisa R. Rilev. Rebecca Kubas-Mever, Tania Rockwell, Timothy Romano, Pamela E Lahti, Maria & Michael Lake, Stephen & Lauren Roomes, Jason Lalli, Lorraine Root, Joshua Landay, Sandra C. Rosner, Elizabeth Landekic, Nicholas & Robyn G, Label Rude, Deborah & Robert Larson, Beverly & Gary Watros Salerius, Rebecca Laughlin, Roxana D. & Rebecca Hurlburt Scooter Hospitality LLC Scott, Allen R. & Barbara K. Leibowitz, Peggy & David E. Lennon, Diane P. Seadale, Carl & Nancy Serwer, Jeremy R. Llerena, Elizabeth Sturges Logan, David Sesin, Diane Shelton, Patrick H. & Monica Teixeira de Souza Long, Virginia Loring, Wolcott & Coolidge Trust LLC Simpson-Thomas, Simona Lynch, John J. SIS Associates, LLC MacAlpine-Belton, Christopher Skemp, Dory Ann MacKay, R. Scott Sloan, Andrea Smith, Fiona Mack Law Associates MacPherson, JoAnn Smith, Lynn Magaziner, Ira & Suzanne Smith, Mary Maloney, Shay N. Smith, John Margulies, Peter & Ellen M. Saideman Smith, Robert Marsh, Karen J. Snow, Mary-Frances McCree, Diane J. & Melissa J. Vaughn Sousa, Diane Mesagno, Jane R. & Lisa J. Spacone, Andrew S. & Carla Millard, Charles E. & Mary C. Sparrow, Katherine F. Morettini, Anthony & Susan St. Angelo, John Moscarello, Janet Stewart, Donna Mulvey, Tracey A. & Michael R. Stratton, Nancy Murphy, Colleen Sullivan, Christine Mytelka, Arnold K. & Rosalind M. Sullivan, John Nathanson, Andrew T. & Cheryl A. Sutman, Nancy T. Nelson, Tobey Sutton, Howard Nelson, Eva & Eric Blumenson Sweeney, Timothy E.

Tanga, Martina

Teitz, Louise Ellen

Thompson, Ann Marie

Newton, Charles

Noel, Margaret

Novak, Lisa R.

Toothaker, Barry & Suzanne Topeka Community Foundation Torres, Yulyana Tracy Family Fund Travers, Maura Tucker, Carlton H. & Kathleen M. Twomey, Kathleen & Robert Ujifusa, Senator Linda United Way of Rhode Island Usher, Bonnie Van Deventer, Mary Vandal, Iulia Verrecchia, Susan & Peter Voutes, Lisa Wainwright, Dessie Walsh, Thomas W. & Judith Wardwell, Carol & William Jr. Wardwell, Wendy Wark, Keir M. & Matt Waters, Rosalind S. Watson, Nathan Weed, David & Sarah Wescott, David White, Alayne

Wijnberg, Christian Williams, Shawen Winsor, Sarah Wright, MaryKae & Michael B. Wright, Alyce Yelnosky, Michael Zanfangna, Michael & Amy

Thank You!





Cultural Organization



Site of memory associated to **The Slave Route**Resistance, Liberty, Heritage

The UNESCO Routes of Enslaved Peoples: Resistance, Liberty & Heritage

Launched in 1994, the international and inter-regional project *The Slave Route: Resistance, Liberty, Heritage* addresses the history of the slave trade and slavery through the prism of intercultural dialogue, a culture of peace and reconciliation. It thereby endeavors to improve the understanding and transmission of this human tragedy by making better known its deep-seated causes, its consequences for societies today and the cultural interactions born of this history. The project is structured around five key fields of activity: scientific research, development of educational materials, preservation of written archives and oral traditions, promotion of living cultures and contributions by the African diaspora, and lastly, the preservation of sites of memory. The promotion of the memorial heritage related to the slave trade and slavery plays a decisive role not only in educating the public and young people in particular, but also in facilitating national reconciliation and social cohesion processes in societies.

It is in this perspective that *The Slave Route* project has created a label to encourage the preservation of sites of memories and the establishment of itineraries that can tell this story and ensure that this heritage receives due attention at the national, regional, and international levels. This site, the Bristol Memorial, fulfils the quality criteria set by UNESCO in conjunction with the International Network of Managers of Sites and Itineraries of Memory.







This project has received partial funding from the RI State Council on the Arts through a Project Grant for Organizations.



ORGANIZATIONAL & CORPORATE SPONSORS





Graciecam Foundation

JODY & BILLY ANDRADE







Studio10



















