



SULTANA PROJECTS
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Press Release

Sultana Projects, Inc.

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**Teacher Scores Rise 30% After First Year of the “Roots of a Nation”
Teaching American History Initiative**

Chestertown, Maryland: Thirty-five teachers from seven Maryland counties participating in the “Roots of a Nation Teaching American History Initiative” showed an average 30% increase in their knowledge of critical eras of American History following the first year of this three-year program. Overseen by the Kent County Public Schools and Sultana Projects, Inc., and funded by a Teaching American History Grant from the United States Department of Education, “Roots of a Nation” is a comprehensive professional development program for select teachers from Calvert, Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s and Talbot counties. The evaluation of teacher test results and progress for the first year of the “Roots of a Nation” initiative was based on a series of pre and post program tests conducted by GEI, Inc., an independent evaluator certified by the U.S. Department of Education.

The principal goals of “Roots of a Nation” include improving teachers’ core content knowledge in American History, improving pedagogical practices in the classroom, and exposing teachers to local resources that make history instruction more pertinent and meaningful for their students. Through a series of 19 in-depth courses and conferences, teachers participating in “Roots of a Nation” have access to graduate-level instruction focusing on four areas of American History: 1) Native American History and European Settlement, 2) the Revolutionary War, 3) the War of 1812, and 4) Slavery and the Civil War. Programming partners for “Roots of a Nation” include Washington College’s C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience and Center for Environment and Society, the Calvert Marine Museum, and Sultana Projects.

“Roots of a Nation is a significant accomplishment for the Kent County Public School system and the six other participating school districts,” said Dr. Barbara Wheeler, Superintendent of the Kent County Public Schools which is serving as the Lead Educational Authority for the *Roots of a Nation* initiative. “Professional Development programs of this caliber are generally not available for smaller school systems, but through our relationship with Sultana Projects and our partnership with the other participating school districts we have been able to provide our history teachers with some world-class opportunities. The test results just confirm what we already knew was happening because of this program.”

“The teachers participating in *Roots of a Nation* are some of the finest we have ever worked with and deserve much of the credit for their accomplishments,” said Chris Cerino, Vice President of Sultana Projects which developed and administers the Roots of a Nation program on behalf of the participating school districts. “It has also been rewarding for us to work with our partners, the C.V. Starr Center, the Center for Environment and Society, and the Calvert Marine Museum, each of which has done incredible work for this program.”

Now in its second year, the “Roots of a Nation” initiative is scheduled to continue through August of 2013. For more information about “Roots of a Nation,” and Sultana Projects, Inc. please visit www.sultanaprojects.org.

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About Sultana Projects

Each year more than 15,000 students of all ages take part in a unique educational experience with Sultana Projects. Whether sailing on the decks of the 1768 schooner Sultana, exploring the world of early America with the John Smith Shallop, or paddling the Chesapeake’s waterways with Sultana Projects’ John Smith Trail Expeditions, students gain a greater appreciation of the history and environment of the national treasure that is the Chesapeake Bay.

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