

F22.035: Preserving Historical Legacies of Route 66's Green Book and the Southside Neighborhood

Faculty mentor: Ricardo Guthrie

Overview

This research/creative project builds upon the faculty mentor's experience developing the Historic Southside Mural at the Murdoch Center (2011/2021), and developing research on "Green Book Motorist" sites in Flagstaff, AZ. The intern will help create online learning tools for residents and visitors to Flagstaff's Southside neighborhoods and to explore how Black motorists were welcomed to the area. Using oral histories, original videos and audio clips, GIS mapping, virtual walking tours, transcripts and lesson plans, the student intern will assist the faculty in preparing materials for interactive webpages, linked to sites and historic leaders associated with Route 66 and the Murdoch Community Center (e.g, Cleo Murdoch; Wilson Riles; Black Churches; Our Lady of Guadalupe Church; Dunbar School; South Beaver School; and Green Book Heritage sites: Black Elks Club, Pearl Polk's Boarder Home and Ice Cream Parlor; Dubeau Motor Inn, El Rancho Grande and other former sites). The student will perform multimedia work, update sonic and visual mapping, create digital materials and QR codes, upload pictures and audio, and help research historic issues related to Southside, the Green Book, and African Americans' legacy in community development, amidst the shifting demographics within Flagstaff's neighborhoods.

What the student will DO and LEARN

For this internship, the student will help develop digital archives, update an interactive Website related to Route 66 and Southside heritage sites. They will help gather historical information from archives and collect information from Special Collections and Museums in preparation for exhibits and events at the Murdoch Center, assemble research materials and resources that are being collected by residents and researchers; work with community partners, historic preservation officials, and help implement a Strategic Plan that has already been approved by the City of Flagstaff. Students will learn about community development in the Southside, examine how gentrification and market forces change neighborhoods; learn to update websites and develop social media platforms for the Murdoch Center; help create and update QR codes, design historical plaques, and participate in community celebrations and "art walks" highlighting Route 66 / Green Book sites throughout the Southside neighborhoods.— which includes NAU. Assembling and distributing digital lesson plans and oral histories will allow the student to see how "historiography" (biography, geography and Black history) impact current and future designs for making a more welcoming, diverse, and livable city. Course credit will also be available.

Additional benefits

The student intern will learn about how culture and media depict conditions affecting social planning and racial reconciliation. Researching and implementing elements from the Southside neighborhood plan and the Green Book Motorist heritage sites will provide opportunities to apply real life skills to solve social problems, and acquire knowledge that can be used for job-readiness in historic preservation, community planning, archival research methods, historical analysis, content analysis, and use of demographics to examine how media and digital arts impact communities in transition. The student may contribute to Zoom webinars and installations that tell the story of how diverse racial communities

strengthen urban environments and contribute to racial understanding. This project can help students interested in community service and future careers in art/culture, and community planning. It is open to students of all majors and backgrounds.

Additional qualifications

This is an exciting time to be living and working in Flagstaff, as the city determines how it will develop for the future: Overcoming historical underdevelopment, addressing racial inequities, and figuring out how to combat gentrification, build affordable homeownership, and solve transportation problems are all related to this research project on Route 66 and the historic Southside. Unlike most cities, Flagstaff and Southside provide walkable, accessible neighborhoods that can benefit from examining legacies of resilience found in the Green Book and in the history of the Murdoch Center.

Time commitment

6 hrs/week for 30 weeks