

Research Interns' Racial Identity and Awareness: Impacts of an African American Studies Museum Research Internship

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Program Aims

- Summer research internship focused on African American history at museums across the country
- Open to students across disciplines
- Research on significant historical and cultural contributions of African Americans



Pilot Year

Summer 2022 Cohort

- 4 students placed at 2 Museums
- Example projects:
 - Processing and organizing manuscripts about African American historical figures
 - Digitize records to develop online content



Indiana Historical Society



Smithsonian National Postal Museum



Preliminary Evaluation Results

Summer 2022 Cohort – Semi-Structured Interviews and Focus Group

Knowledge and Skill Gains

- Improved writing skills
- Ability to create engaging online content
- Knowledge of how to conduct historical research

Professional Impacts

- Facilitated interest a potential alternative career avenue
- Expanded professional network
- Insight into how end-users interact with a product



Preliminary Evaluation Results

Summer 2022 Cohort – Semi-Structured Interviews and Focus Group

Concerns

- Lack of community
- Limited feedback from mentors

Racial Awareness and Identity

- Limited effect on reflection about racial identity
- No reported impact on racial awareness



Key Takeaway & Future Goals

- Museum-based research in African American studies impactful for students across disciplines
- Program Assessment Future Goals
 - Quantitatively assess change in racial identity and racial awareness before and after internship
- Program Component Future Goals
 - Build in wrap-around support facilitating racial identity development and racial awareness
 - Promote community-building
 - Encourage mentors to provide feedback



This QR code will take you to the website:

(<https://purdue.edu/undergrad-research/conferences/CUR2023.php>)

Which contains information from multiple ConnectUR presentations by staff in the Purdue University Office of Undergraduate Research.

