

# ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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Wake Forest University  
Campus Memorial Project

June 2024



**Baskervill**

Ellick, Harry and wife, Charlotte,  
 Johnson, Anderson, James,  
 Lender, Mary, Sarah, Phillis,  
 Mary, Lucey, Venus, Patience,  
 Mary, George, Murphy, Ted and  
 wife Amy – Jones’ two children,  
 Rose, Martha, Lexy, Mary  
 Sherwood, Aggy and children,  
 Maranda, Mary – Harris, David,  
 Virtn, Betty, Inez, Harvey, Tom,  
 Venus and – Chold, Mary,  
 Emma, Lettice, Isaac, Jim, Lucy,  
 Caroliine, Pompie, Nancy, Harriet  
 – and child, Joseph, Harry, Ann  
 and – two children, & Thomas.

– known names of enslaved people hired  
 by or bequeathed to Wake Forest University

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# Acknowledgments

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This document was designed by Ryan David and Rebecca Geiger of Baskervill. The contents of this report come from participants of the engagement sessions. The team gratefully acknowledges the following groups and organizations who were invaluable contributors throughout the process.

Campus Memorialization Steering Committee

Campus Life Advisory Committee

Association of Wake Forest University Black Alumni

Black Student Association

Wake Forest Historical Museum

Wake Forest Alumni Council

Student Government Association

Wake Forest University Service Staff

Wake Forest University President

# 1 PURPOSE AND PROCESS

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# Purpose and Process

## Executive Summary

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Between October 2023 and February 2024, Baskervill hosted 18 Engagement Sessions with over 200 students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members of Wake Forest University, representing multiple stakeholder groups. These sessions were meant to allow Baskervill to facilitate, discuss, and collect comments, feedback, concerns, questions, hopes, and expectations from a broad cross-section of participants.

Part One presents the purpose of the project and the process of engagement Baskervill utilizes in these sessions. Over the course of the sessions, Baskervill facilitated all in-person and virtual discussions, and online surveys, collecting more than 24 hours of discussion recordings. Each session lasted 1 to 2 hours and utilized roughly the same framework outlined below.

- Welcome & Baskervill Engagement Team Introductions (5-10 min)
- Project Purpose and Call to Action (2-5 min)
- Recitation of a "Grounding Context" (15 min)
- Optional Online Survey #1 Introduced (2-5 min)
- Presentation of Relevant Examples (15-20 min)
- Group Discussion and Open Forum (30-60 min)
- Online Survey #2 Introduced and Concluding Thoughts (5-10 min)

Part Two presents the comments and responses from the various engagement sessions, formatted and edited for clarity. The intent is to provide as full a representation of the discussions and conversations had while maintaining anonymity for participants. Throughout the course of the engagement process, a wide multitude of opinions, thoughts, views, and feelings were expressed and captured within this report.

Part Three of this report presents the analysis of feedback and responses collected through the engagement process, divided into two parts: PRIORITIES and GOALS. The "Priorities" coalesce the needs and wants that were most consistently expressed by multiple participants in multiple sessions, independent of one another. The "Design Goals" are Baskervill's guiding design objectives informed by the priorities expressed by session participants. The proposed next steps are based on the findings of this report.

# Purpose and Process

## What We Heard

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### PRIORITIES

- Educational Honesty**
- Student Wellbeing**
- Investment in and Support for Black Staff & Workers**
- Acknowledgement of Wake Forest's Historic Black Community in the Town of Wake Forest**

### DESIGN GOALS

- Tell the honest story of Wake Forest's history with enslavement.**
- Relieve Black students, groups, staff, and faculty from the burden of educating others about the stories and traumas of Wake Forest's history with enslavement.**
- Celebrate, honor, and commemorate the lives and contributions of enslaved people who were "hired" by or bequeathed to the University and subsequently sold for the benefit of the institution, as well as the lives of those left behind in the transition from the Town of Wake Forest to Winston-Salem.**
- Create meaningful connections between the historic Town of Wake Forest and the Wake Forest University campus for students, faculty, staff, and town community members.**
- Place the Memorial/Artifact in a prominent, noticeable, and unavoidable location, taking into consideration impact on student life and campus activities.**

The responses and comments expressed in this Wake Forest University Campus Memorial Project Engagement Report contain invaluable and pertinent information about the ethos of the campus, daily student life, the past and present experiences of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, and the various specific desires of large portions of the community. This report will be foundational to memorialization efforts moving forward.



# A

## A Call to Action

Creating permanent artifact that recognizes institutional history requires full acknowledgment by those charged with the well-being of the institution. An explicit call to action unlocks and enables restorative action to take place and also provides the opportunity to connect with communities beyond the institution.

# B

## Build Community Alignment

We live in a time when public trust in government, academia, education and just about every other societal institution is fraught, in particular, the trust around social and racial equity. Building consensus around such emotionally charged stories begins with listening. While it seems simple, being able to listen means providing the opportunity to be heard.

# C

## Create a Collective Vision

The outcome from listening and recording conversations is a collective vision, distilled into a 'program' for a permanent artifact. This means that everyone will participate in shaping the artifact and have a sense of ownership.

# D

## Develop the Artifact

Like the basic musical element of 'call and response', the design work is informed and framed by the collective vision. It is a direct commentary on the 'program'. In some African cultures, call and response is a pattern of democratic participation - in civic affairs, in religious rituals as well as in vocal and instrumental musical expression.

# Purpose and Process

## Background

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In 2016, the University assembled a group to examine its history especially regarding **“correcting historical inaccuracies and acknowledging the University’s dealings with slavery and its legacies”**

(“Background,” Slavery, Race and Memory Project, Wake Forest University, n.d.).

The group recommended several initial courses of action, many of which have been completed or are ongoing:

- Join the Universities Studying Slavery consortium (WFU joined in 2017).
- Expand the initial planning committee to include a broader cross section of campus.
- Broaden the diversity of people interviewed for the Wake Forest Oral History Project.
- Develop an interactive historical timeline that documents important milestones in the University’s history and will pay particular attention to honoring Wake Forest’s relationship to slavery and its legacies.
- Create a more accurate history of Wake Forest by commissioning a Southern historian to write a one-volume history.
- Plan for a series of academic conferences on campus, each giving rise to several of the essays in a new Histories of Wake Forest volume.

Born out these actions and other related efforts came further initiatives, including:

- Magnolia Scholars and First in the Forest Program to Support First Generation Students (est. fall 2009)
- Appointment of Muslim Life Chaplain (2010) and Jewish Life Chaplain (2011)
- Slavery, Race, and Memory Project (originally known as the Wake Forest Histories Project, est. fall 2015)
- Children Defense Fund’s Freedom School (2016)
- President’s Commission for Race, Equity and Community (2019)
- African American Studies Program (2019)
- Advisory Committee on Naming (2020)
- Establishment of the Eure/McPherson Student Opportunity Fund (2022)



Photo courtesy of Wake Forest Historical Museum.

# Purpose and Process

## Project Purpose

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From September 2023 to February 2024, Baskervill has led more than 15 engagement sessions, involving students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the associates of the Wake Forest Historical Museum. Next steps in the memorial concept design are:

### Preliminary Design | Feb - Apr 2024

Design team will develop design concepts based on input received during the engagement phase.

### Design Presentations | TBD

Presenting preliminary designs in Community meeting settings with the intent of gathering feedback on design proposals. Concepts will be shared in advance.

### Final Design | TBD

Design Team will develop a final design concept including an opinion of probable costs.

### Final Design Presentation | TBD

Presenting final design.  
Oct 2024 - Presentation to Board of Trustees  
Public Communication of Final Design - TBD

In 2021, acting on findings from the Advisory Committee on Naming in 2020, the WFU Board of Trustees unanimously voted on a resolution create a campus memorial. This created the Campus Memorial Project, with a goal to

“remember and honor the humanity of the enslaved men, women and children who worked for or were sold to benefit the University.”

Gillespie and Villalba, "Wake Forest takes next steps with Campus Memorial Project," Wake Forest University, 2023

The work is led by the Campus Memorialization Steering Committee, including faculty staff, students, and alumni. The community-engaged memorial design process is currently underway and led by Baskervill, with guidance from the steering committee.

This report documents, synthesizes, and draws conclusions from all the engagement sessions.

# Purpose and Process

## A Grounding Context

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Every in-person and virtual forum throughout the engagement process over the course of September 2023 to February 2024 included a recitation of the following history by poet, historian, and activist Toni Wynn. Student names have been removed for confidentiality.

### 1821

Massachusetts native Dr. Calvin Jones, who had married into a North Carolina slaveholding family, purchased 615 acres for \$4,000, which he named Wake Forest. Jones, a physician and former mayor of Raleigh, owned 20 enslaved people.

### 1827

Samuel Wait came from Vermont to become the minister at New Bern Baptist Church in New Bern, North Carolina. The membership consisted of 22 White people and eight Black people, two of whom were likely free. Sally's family expressed their horror at the idea of the Waits settling in a slave state.

### 1830

While Samuel Wait maintained that 'ministers should say nothing about the issue [of slavery]', in the 1830 federal census, two enslaved women appeared in the Waits' household: a woman between 24 and 35 and a girl under the age of 10.

### 1834

Authorized by the Baptist State Convention,

Samuel Wait establishes Wake Forest College as a place to train future Baptist ministers. A Wake Forest account book from 1834 shows that four enslaved African Americans were hired that year. The names listed were Ellick; "Harry & wife;" and Charlotte. As student numbers grew, more enslaved Blacks were hired in the coming years. Thirteen – Johnson, Anderson, James, Lender, Mary, Sarah, Phillis, Mary, Lucey, Venus, Patience, Mary, and George – were hired in 1835 and approximately 16 were hired in 1836. Records indicate they were known as Murphy; "Ted & wife Amy Jones' 2 children;" Rose; Martha; Lexy; Mary Sherwood; "Aggy, her children & Maranda;" Mary Harris; David; and Anderson.

### 1836

The estate of John Blount (a planter of Edenton, NC) is donated to Wake Forest upon his death on May 13, 1836, including land and enslaved peoples. Mrs. Blount continued to use the land and the enslaved peoples continued to maintain the estate until her death in 1859. After her death, the endowment of the estate and the enslaved peoples to Wake Forest became official. On May 7, 1860, the enslaved peoples were sold by Wake Forest to individuals: "Isaac to John Thompson \$525.00. Jim to John Hall \$495.00. Lucy to Peter White \$1,285.00. Caroline to J.H. Hall \$295.00. Pompie to Joseph Maddry \$1,305.00. Emma to John Thompson \$580.00." The \$10,718 obtained from the sale of these 16 humans kept Wake Forest College afloat on the edge of the Civil War.

### 1837

When [the college building was] completed, it was perhaps the best college building in North Carolina, and until its destruction by fire on May 5, 1933, the staliest on the Wake Forest campus. The labor of making the brick and of building was done by the slaves of Captain Berry, two of whom lost their lives by a fall from the building. They were buried in the Wake Forest cemetery both in one pit grave with walls of brick extending about two feet above the ground, but now leveled.

### 1845

Southern White Baptists were non-apologetic about their relationship to slavery, which they felt biblically sanctioned and socially sound. Institutionalizing the proslavery trend in 1845, advocates founded the Southern Baptist Convention, splitting with northern Baptists over the issue of slavery. Wake Forest remained deeply connected to the Southern Baptist Convention, not officially cutting ties until 1986.

### 1861-1865

During the Civil War, enslaved people worshipping at Wake Forest Baptist Church broke away to create their own congregation. First located on the college grounds, Olive Branch Baptist Church eventually moved to a location in the town of Wake Forest. The congregation remains today, led by Pastor Larry Wilder.

### 1906

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An illustration in the 1906 edition of the *Howler* depicts a White person chasing a caricature of a Black person. This illustration was placed at the head of the page dedicated to the University track team.

### 1927

Born enslaved in Virginia, Tom Jeffries came to Wake Forest, NC as a free man in 1884. He worked with Len Crenshaw to build the 3,000 foot stone wall that encircles the campus. Jeffries' work also included assisting in the planting of the college magnolias and rose bushes. When he died in 1927, his funeral was held in the College Chapel with the faculty serving as pallbearers. In 1933, a bronze plaque on the old campus was dedicated to Jeffries. It now resides on the Winston-Salem campus in front of Tribble Hall.

### 1956

Wake Forest College moves to Winston-Salem on part of the Reynolda Estate, former home of the late R.J. and Katharine Reynolds, donated by their family.



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## WHAT HAPPENS TO THE TOWN OF WAKE FOREST?

### 1962

The Trustees vote to end racial segregation in the undergraduate college, making Wake the first major institution in the south to end segregation. That same year, Edward Reynolds from Ghana is the first full-time undergraduate Black student enrolled at Wake Forest University.

### 1962

In October, Martin Luther King Jr. speaks to an audience of 2,200 in Wait Chapel via an invite from the College Union. “The hope of the world” lies in the emergence of “a society of the creative maladjusted.”

### 1977

Maya Angelou is awarded honorary degree.

### 1979

The University hosted Black city leaders for the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Banquet. Fraternity members displayed Confederate flags from their dorms in protest of the event. This incident precipitated a counter protest march by Black students and a ceremonial burning of a Confederate flag. This event resulted in the KKK offering their assistance to the relevant fraternity. The fraternity denied the assistance of the KKK.

### 1982

Maya Angelou named Wake Forest University’s first Reynolds Professor of American Studies.

### 2003

The homecoming spread in the Howler criticized the election of a Black homecoming king and queen. In the article, [the author] questions whether the University will “continue its 12 year tradition of electing a homecoming king and queen that represent only a small portion of students, or will we change our ways and elect the male and female that best represent our school?” According to Star News Online, the article resulted in a petition drive, a discussion forum and calls for apologies from Howler staff and University officials.

### 2009

Under the leadership of Assistant Provost Barbee Oakes, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) is created to develop an institutional approach to fostering a diverse and inclusive campus community.

### 2016

The Social Justice Incubator (SJI) is created. SJI is a space for students to collaborate, engage, and organize around issues of social justice. It’s mission is to provide a space for students to gather and organize and host events connected to issues of social justice.

### 2018

A Winston-Salem State student was fatally shot on the WFU campus which led to a lawsuit by his mother; the suit notes minority students had raised concerns in 2014 that University policy showed racism in handling events they hosted. The same year, video of a student using a racial slur to describe her RA surfaced; she later withdrew.

### 2018

A freshman undergraduate student posted a video on her “finsta” Instagram account in which she drunkenly admitted to having used the n-word against her Resident Advisor. A screen shot of the video was posted to Twitter by a fellow student, who added that “the trend of saying the n-word on finstas is so strong at PWI’s.” Wake Forest’s Twitter handle was tagged in the post. The student later left the University as a result of her racist language.

### 2019

An Instagram post endorsing a write-in candidate for student body president stated that the candidate wanted to ‘build a wall between Wake and [HBCU] Winston-Salem State and he’ll make them pay for it.’ Then president Hatch called it ‘deeply offensive, even if meant as a parody’ of then president Trump’s proposed border wall plan.

### 2019

President’s office established the President’s Commission on Race, Equity, and Community, and related efforts: Committee

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on the Intersection of Incidents of Bias, Expression, and Conduct; and the Slavery, Race & Memory Project.

### 2019

A set of anonymous, threatening, racist, antisemitic and homophobic emails were sent to [ Department Chair] Soares and faculty in sociology, gender and sexuality studies department, the office of diversity and inclusion, the LGBTQ+ Center and the Intercultural Center, calling for a ‘purge of minorities and the LGBTQ community.’ Several of the emails shared a common theme of extolling “the standards set by well raised white men.”

### 2020

The Commission on Race, Equity, and Community presented its initial finding, including recommendations for renaming of buildings and roads on campus. During remarks from then President Hatch on Founder’s Day, students silently protested noted that they **‘they planned to stand in recognition of the involuntary sacrifices of enslaved people and the continuing impact of slavery’s legacy on current students’.**



# Purpose and Process

## Presentation and Discussion Slides

These slides served as supplementary visual materials throughout the facilitated engagement sessions. The slides include the Call to Action given by the Wake Forest University Board of Trustees in 2021 – efforts that the University has undertaken in recent years to address both its history of enslavement and the continuing and pervasive legacy of slavery. Also included are 8 examples of relevant works of recent memorialization efforts intended to help frame the conversation about what the Wake Forest artifact should be, can be, and must be.

These visual materials aided, guided, and served as jumping-off points for discussions at times. Each forum was structured to allow for open discussion as participants saw fit, resulting in a diverse collection of responses and comments on the work of Wake Forest University and the possibilities of a campus memorial.

The following section catalogs and collates the comments made during these discussions, edited for grammar and clarity as needed. Quotes are featured because of a perspective they offered that became particularly significant during their respective discussions.





# 2 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

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Student Open Forum, November 02, 2023.







I love this idea. I think free expression + this type of art allows conversations to begin + thoughts to flow through a different form of expression. Also art always helps me express better than words sometimes, also the clear allows more topics to be discussed either past or happening to

The big thing with this is sustainability is memorial.  
- don't like this one, feel like it could be problematic for groups from different backgrounds

I like the board with the freedom of speech wall because it wasn't just a building people could walk ~~passed~~ over without gaining anything. I think memorials with direct messages help easily convey meaning. It grabs the attention of passer bys. You can't help but stop and stare.

This example is a powerful way of engaging modern discourse + recognizing continued

unlike some other schools, wake's history with slavery is not as visible or known. I feel like that is something to consider for the idea around the memorial

I find all the color on this very striking. It's definitely one that would make me stop and read.

personally don't believe this memorial needs to be the identity of our campus but it does our history need to be made known

- I like how the memorial engages people and conversation

- in a place where everyone can see

- Being from Europe, the history isn't something I'm familiar with therefore it's hard to engage with a time period but names are something everyone can take notice to and I think that's the most important to remember

End the cycle with this memorial. Tell the history, now it's not up for interpretation.

I like how the monument/artifact is at a central point in campus and can be seen a mile away.

I would love to see something like this on campus  
- immersive - large - prominent

I like the concept of a building rather than a traditional "artifact" / memorial. An African-American Studies building would be great and I also like the idea of a rotating exhibition floor that could function like a museum of Black history

I think we should place it in a public place so that it is seen and recognized as opposed to brushed aside. maybe somewhere along an entrance would be good.



Campus Memorial Project  
Basketville

What a memorial to the  
enslaved at Wake  
Forest.

- Who are we memorializing  
For who are we " "
- Why are we memorializing

called destructive  
back people)  
the history  
being  
moved

Connection to  
Wake Forest because  
it's easy to ignore that  
part of our past.

I like how this  
artifact was put  
at a high traffic  
area, considering the  
location of the campus

and don't try  
to stuff  
anything in every-  
where. When  
we say memorial  
building, we  
mean an entire  
new artifact.

→ SLAVERY'S LEGACY

Memorialize the  
present

How Do WE NOT  
RETRAUMATIZE

ARCHIVE OF SILENCE

How do we tell stories  
without retraumatizing??

What does it mean to  
memorialize?

★ Make sure it starts the  
conv. rather than end

I like the idea  
of scars

Positive:

visually scarring  
portrayals like the  
blood portray the  
true horrors accurately

Beautiful, Inclusive  
→ Could be done at Wake

I'm shocked

I like the  
idea of creating  
something that  
involves the  
community history

I like having  
a big artifact  
where it makes  
people stop &  
think

Connect past to present  
- tell the story along  
Reynolds Path?



# Faculty and Staff Open Forum

October 4th, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 401  
3pm-4pm

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12 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

José Villalba  
Morna O'Neill

## Selected Comments

The reason I ask "what is being done?" is because the first thing that comes to mind is, "have we made reparations to all those people named who have been there for theirs?" Seems very important and maybe more important than spending money on a pretty statue or something.

The actual work and the monumentalization of it are probably two different things.

Does this become an office? Is that work based on the coming place of the years of people and stuff and doing the work out of that? So it's not just sitting on a monument?

There's a wealth of programming, but also teaching and scholarship (not research because scholarship is much broader) that goes into this as well.

This isn't about one artifact. This is about how this work connects with the annual artist-in-residence that will happen next month, how this connects to the ways that the Interdisciplinary Arts Center focuses its work with community partners and arts practices that extend beyond this campus.

We want to have something beautiful and something that is transformative, is an experience when you walk by it. It is not just a walk by, I engage with it physically, visually, but it's not just in one location, it has to be embedded in the work, in the programming, in the practice, and in the curriculum.

It is not about sending a message. It's about a site that evokes questions and further inquiry. I'd like to have a deep critique of what it means to 'Memorialize.' I'd like to be thinking about questions rather than messages.

*"We're talking about trauma and it's a mess. It's going to be messy work."*

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I think that there's a real tendency to use intellectualization as a defense.

We're talking about trauma and it's a mess. It's going to be messy work.

The right of knowing your lineage, having been taken from you because that's happened to an entire race of people in this country. Then it's everybody. It may as well be, you don't know. So all of this is deeply personal.

There's got to be some way to acknowledge the trauma without it being re-traumatizing. From my work as a clinician I can tell you that's a fine line. I'm thinking about cycles of rupture and repair, but this is going to be ongoing.

We've already heard from students who serve on the committee, something on the lines of "well, this better not be all a theory." And it's not. At the same time, we've heard from some alums who have said, "it's about d\*\*\* time y'all did something."

In other words, to help students see that the things that they appreciate as typically Wake Forest are in fact built upon trauma and harm.

I don't want to say meaningful for everyone, but it can speak to everyone in the sense that it should be impossible to come here and not have to think about it.

I think it's a common thing, this disconnect and how to reconcile the old campus with this campus. I don't have an answer to that but that felt really probable.

# Student Open Forum

October 18th, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 401  
5pm-6:30pm

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18 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

José Villalba

## Selected Comments

I'm interested in how [what] we're talking about ... also pertains to the present, because ... a memorial often can depict a sort of endpoint but we're nowhere near the end.

The artifact should represent the severity of the atrocity and disservices done to the enslaved people, but also represent the resolve and the strength that they had. I believe that the artifact should show the importance that the enslaved people had as far as allowing the University to maintain the place that it has.

Definitely their names, their story behind it. Showing the severity, the events and everything about how the University is where it is today because of enslaved people.

We were talking about the earthquake [memorial] and the Richmond Trail, about how you can walk through that memorial and almost put yourself in the enslaved people's shoes walking through that trail.

[Hearth] represented a continuation and not "we have the memorial and this is the end." It represents something unfinished and something that needs work and needs reflection and needs research.

If you really want to encourage discourse, ask something that people can come together for instead of have disagreements over.

I think it would just depend on how much impact that us being here actually has. Like if I was going here to listen and listen or like, give my voice opinion, and maybe I will change the design and structure or whatever. I think if I have more involvement, I'd be more incentivized to come and participate.

# Student Open Forum

November 2nd, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 401  
5pm-6:30pm

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16 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

José Villalba

## Selected Comments

I feel like it would be important to make sure people can access the artifact and see, but also at the same time, it be intertwined with the University. Because I feel like if it's too far removed, then it's not gonna necessarily do its role in recognizing enslaved laborers and other things that we are acknowledging in relation to the University.

What was fascinating to me in the [Grounding Chronology] is the mention of the KKK being in contact with one of the fraternities and some problems with the Confederate flag, which caused me to look up about Wake Forest fraternities and the Confederate flag, which led me down a rabbit hole a few minutes ago.

I feel like having more of a conversation is important because you're able to acknowledge those things. I wouldn't have ever thought about that.

Plaques... I never notice anything like that.

I like the design of the [Hearth]. It was in a major walkway where you had to look at it and not necessarily engage with it, but at least look at it and think about it... And then also recognizing that we don't know all of the names of people that were affected. I think that's just really important to acknowledge.

# Campus Life Advisory Forum

November 2nd, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 410  
6:45pm-8:15pm

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20 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

Jose Villalba

## Selected Comments

For me coming to Wake, the first couple weeks were like shell shock almost for me because I've always been to school in really diverse places. So, to see that stuff was really going on as early as today. It's not shocking but it is shocking because you almost wouldn't think that people would have that confidence to say stuff and do stuff like that.

When you think about it, people were enslaved to benefit this institution, so can you really say we don't belong? If it wasn't for us this place wouldn't be here. I just felt that it's very interesting.

In our group we talked about how did we not know about all this stuff that's recent and how can the University better communicate this stuff? It's hard to solve a problem when we don't even know, when it's being shoved under the rug.

I haven't heard about a lot of these things, especially the shooting and the 2019 emails when we were out. And when you do hear about this stuff? It's only from word of mouth. And you're not sure if it's true, so you don't really want to repeat it. And the school doesn't really tell us about this stuff. So, it is kind of upsetting. And when they do say something, it's kind of just like, "oh, I'm sorry, let's move on."

I found it pretty interesting just listening to the timing of things. So, there are times where a lot of events are clustered. In the 60s, you have events that occurred like ending segregation or enrolling the first black student and then you have a little bit of a lull from then to like the 80s, 90s and then you have a couple of events in the early 2000s. So, then 2020 2019 hits and it's like boom,

*“When you think about it, people were enslaved to benefit this institution, so can you really say we don't belong? If it wasn't for us this place wouldn't be here. I just felt that it's very interesting.”*

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boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. And I think that has a lot to say about what time we're in right now.

Accountability. Making sure that the memorial isn't the only thing. It needs to be conversation. It needs to start a conversation, to help learn.

Bringing the past forward, Being together.

It should be in a place that's central and everybody can see it, so that it's not just tucked away. I don't know where that would be, but I think this should be the place that most people can see.

One thing that's kind of unique about our campus is that there's no water features, so I think if there was anything to do with water, it would be potentially grabbing in that there is nothing like it on this campus.

We're a brick campus, so something that's different would catch everyone's eye. But we're also a campus that focuses on nature a lot, so incorporating that different style construction, but making it nature-oriented is something that people like. I just know, personally, I always stop to look at the trees on campus before I'm going to stop to look at Wait Chapel.

They're also trying to make the new road kind of a thing. That's going to maybe be the new focal point. So, some place like that as you're driving on that road and coming in you see it, and so it's not tucked away.

There's this wooded place on the Hearn Plaza, and it has this kind of stone that says Hearn Plaza on the front. And that's where all the classes are at this point. Everybody walks there at some point. If you're a freshman you walk past all the time, but when you're going to classes, you just see it there all the time. That might be a really good spot to have something like that. Because most people have to walk there at some point within their time on campus.

I had a tour at Wake, and it started right there. And I'm pretty sure that's where they start most of the tours for potential students. So, you get that too. I see all the tour guides around exactly where she's talking about Green Hall, Manchester Plaza, Tribble, the Library. Huge focal point

I've heard concerns on both ends when talking about this project. I'm sure I'm not the first person to bring this up. But the fact that it could be a constant reminder may not be a good thing for some students. It can bring up feelings that may not feel great. I'm not one to speak on those feelings, but I would like to convey that message that I know has been a concern, that has been brought up to me.

How does the campus feel with interaction with the town itself? There's none. There is a wall around our campus.



# Association of WFU Black Alumni Open Forum - Part 1

November 8th, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Virtual  
6pm-7:30pm

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9 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

José Villalba  
Keenon Mann

I was at Wake from '96 to 2000, and it was our tradition that all the Black students on campus got together and we voted for one homecoming king and queen every year. It was a beautiful tradition to see happen on the football field and recognize that the majority students had chosen their individual folks while we came together. That's something that I miss seeing at Wake Forest now.

You're happy to have us run across your turf, run around a track, kick a ball, put a ball through a hoop, but we can't represent the University. Athletics brings a lot of money into the University, like tons. So we can make you a dollar, but we can't represent you?

I knew that I was going to a PWI. I knew that there weren't going to be many people who looked like me. And in some ways it was, that was the experience. I wanted something a little bit different. That was a purposeful choice.

I think one of the things that stuck out to me just in my awareness of how different things felt between undergrad and grad school was protest. In simple terms that, in hearing the narrative, it was this sense of there was always protest.

In one of the classes I'm teaching right now, we were discussing specifically issues of new historicism and the issue of how history is written by the victor, and in some sense, how those silent voices work.

I think for me, a lot of this is about addressing issues of voices that have been silenced.

Years ago I heard a provost say, "Don't tell me what you believe, show me your budget, and I'll know what you believe."

*"None of what our people have gone through in Winston-Salem is a surprise or any revelation to me."*

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I don't know what you have in mind in terms of an artifact, but I see a couple of basic pieces here. One is basically how space is allocated to those silent voices on a campus that embraces a kind of architectural intimacy that Wake Forest does.

None of what our people have gone through in Winston-Salem is a surprise or a revelation to me.

Some progress had been made. A good bit of progress had been made during the 60s, certainly at Wake Forest and around the country and the world. I'm old enough to have a living memory of the civil rights movement.

I got to Wake Forest and there were a lot of White people, but there were more Black people than I had been around before for the previous six years. So it was wonderful.

My biggest regret is that I didn't spend more time with my own folk during that time because I was comfortable enough around White people to continue to be friends with them.

My primary reason for getting involved in this discussion and for being on the alumni council and participating in these discussions is worry about what current students are going through.

What we each went through, whenever we were here, we went through and we got through, and we've done fine. But I am so worried, I am so concerned about our current

African American students at Wake Forest, even though there are more of them.

Though we didn't talk about the fact that Wake Forest had basically been an enslaver and benefited from slavery, ... I am not at all surprised. I am gratified to a certain extent that the University is finding a way to address this history.

What I really hope is that these discussions are taking place not only amongst alumni and other stakeholders in the University, but how are we using this to prompt thought and discussion on the part of current students?

Most of us got through it without knowing much about this. Though we knew about discrimination in some ways, how are our current students who are there now going to process this and benefit from it or do good with it? Let's put it that way in the future.

We don't spend enough time critically studying the constructed nature of Whiteness. We just don't and I think that's part of the problem.

It's important to recognize culpability, and culpability in this country has never been addressed because we let Whiteness become the default and we just think about it as "just is" and it isn't.

I think it's important... that we can't let Whiteness off the hook because to really do this honestly is to recognize that we just don't critically study Whiteness and we need to.

*“...it’s important to recognize culpability, and culpability in this country has never been addressed because we let Whiteness become the default and we just think about it as “just is” and it isn’t.”*

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The thought that came to mind for me... was this idea of tradition that is so big at Wake. I think it would be really cool if there was an artifact that actually became part of a tradition or that there was a tradition around whatever this artifact is.

We all supported all of the Black activities on campus. We didn’t have to be best friends, but we spoke to every Black student as you walked by every day. And I think that’s some of the concern that I have for current students, because they have a very different experience than we did.

I was ‘96 to 2000, so class of 2000. Because current students have a very different experience, it seems that they don’t feel to need each other. And so there isn’t that sense of togetherness, that while we didn’t have many of the same challenges that existed in the 80s, as my senior counterparts were saying, there was still a sense of “We are the people of color, and we will stand for each other.”

When I work with community organizations or philanthropy, I don’t want to read their statements because their statements were beautiful, but I want to see their budget and where the funding is.

It’s not lost on me that the Divine Nine statue is on a minor quad and not the main one. It’s not lost on me that the buildings that are currently named for Black faculty or Black alum are not on the main quad. And so I think placement is really important.

Who maintains these artifacts in terms of just daily upkeep?

I think the optics there matter too. Because basically, optics on a campus like Wake Forest, where a majority of the staff basically are people of color, it seems to work against the grain of what we’re doing, right?

We know that Wake Forest has had a contentious relationship over the years with the surrounding community, the whole town and town relationship.

I hope that if we think about stakeholders, there’s also the stakeholders that aren’t paying tuition, who aren’t faculty, who aren’t students. And I don’t know how we deal with that because I see staff, the surrounding community, and Winston-Salem as also part of this arrangement, but I’m not sure how we actually get to that space.

Where we place this is important because when you think of Maya Angelou’s dorm, it’s backed by the baseball field. You have to go looking for that. You have to go through the upper quad, the lower quad across the street, down past Collins. And if you aren’t familiar with Wake Forest, you will miss it because you have to go searching for it.

Is this going to be someplace accessible with parking? Because we know parking is a problem at Wake Forest. So like how are they getting in to see something that also may be part of their history as well?

*“I believe that a healing must take place. I think along with the repentance, there just has to be a healing.”*

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If we look at the embrace structure in Boston, that the Boston Foundation and the Embrace MLK Foundation partnered on, that was a budget of roughly \$10 million. Where is this falling in the scale of projects that you’ve been a part of?

Has there been any conversation of any matching outside funds to go along with this budget to make it more robust because of, you know, any type of building constraints due to costs ?

A lot of times with these types of projects, either the University sets the tone or the budget sets the tone.

Sometimes, the conversation may start in one place, but it winds up in another. And I think, if we look at the contemporary conversations surrounding honoring and paying tribute to something in the past, these are a continuation of a new conversation.

What’s stepping forward to me is, in simple terms, what feels like the importance of coming together, togetherness, but also leading the way in terms of repentance.

It feels like a story for both Black people, people of color, and White people.

I hear this theme of togetherness and remembering that and coming back to that in some of the stories I’ve heard. And so that feels like maybe the part of the story for Black people, past and then future.

And then I think for White people, it feels like in some ways the whole purpose of this is around repentance, you know, like when it comes to things like this, these memorializations or renaming.

Wake does have this sense of “We wanna lead the way or be on the forefront in some ways.” So I’m like “can you all lead the way in terms of repenting as White people? Can you have in some way some of that German shame?” Because that is actually probably what’s gonna do more for change, even societally, right?

The story of this artifact that’s coming to mind for me is the togetherness and the importance of community and coming together for Black people, but also like a challenge to lead the way on repentance for White people.

I believe that a healing must take place. I think along with the repentance, there just has to be a healing.

There’s a reason why many Black alumni don’t even want, like not don’t want to, but really feel like they cannot return to the land.

What I wrote down was “a pervasive and stifling ramification of silence.” And it just feels like from the time that enslaved people were hired, worked, and lived and died on campus, until now, there’s been this silence that has a trickle-down-and-out effect.

Every time we have conversations like this, I hear alumni who share the same stories, but there are layers of them, like from the 70s, from the 80s, from the 90s. And it does bring back this echoing of protest and protest happens, but it leaves you with “to what end.”

It’s this effect of silence. It feels like because the stories are not told, because the oral traditions are not carried on and passed on, there are students on campus now who have no idea that things happened 10 years ago, 20, 30, 40.

What I’ve enjoyed of late is that alumni do come back and they’re enjoying being around each other. But the most meaningful thing is that we get to share how we found love, we found camaraderie, we found community on campus.

There were things that brought us together. I know it doesn’t look the same for current students. And for many students, they just don’t feel it. So when they hear the alumni gospel choir sing, they’re like, “I don’t know what this feeling is, but I’ve never felt this on campus before.”

I love what I heard earlier about the staff from Wake Forest. When I think about our experience on campus, it included a lot of people who worked on campus who we could not have survived without.



Wake Forest University Alumni at an Association of Wake Forest University Black Alumni (AWFUBA) Homecoming event. Photo courtesy of Wake Forest University.

# Faculty and Staff Open Forum

November 14th, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 401  
6pm-7:30pm

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17 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

Derek Hicks

## **Selected Comments**

We didn't even talk about what did happen to the people in the town of Wake Forest, especially the people of color who couldn't afford to just up and leave like the faculty could. Then also what happened in this town when they built University Parkway and bifurcated Boston Thurman.

We tend to think of our history like we had two histories. And it's not true. We have one history that has a thread of commonality all through it. How do we recognize that with this memorial?

I'll say I felt blind to how much this happens.

It just feels like there's this room that's smack dab in the space I'm in, and I have the privilege to walk around it and some don't. It's one thing to read it. It's another thing to have this energy be directed at you.

In Grant Parish, there were names of those who had been lynched. And I called my grandmother, who is from Grant Parish, Colfax, Louisiana, who's 95 years old now, and I just read the name, I told her where I was and I read the names, and she knew two names of lynched people. So when we think about this work, I think about it personally, not because I'm Black, but yes, because I'm Black. Not because of the atrocities that I, in that moment, realized that my grandmother had experienced, but that this is a part of the fabric and tapestry of who we are as a nation.

It is felt. The souls under our feet were buried in the cemeteries at Friendship Baptist and Olive Branch Baptist in Wake Forest, North Carolina, lived and laughed and loved and danced barefoot in the grass as Toni Lawson says.

*“It is a Sankofa moment, but Sankofa ain't Sankofa unless you stop, consider, and cast forward.”*

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We're going to expand that work, but there is an effort right now to, as best we can, find actual descendants of the excavation.

It's complex work. And because, as I mentioned up front, the institutionalized silence of these Black bodies, other than being used as chattel, creates a challenge for us to excavate as best we can or give them our best efforts.

We like the [University of Virginia Memorial to Enslaved Laborers] while having more community engagement to serve the uses of ways of bringing people in who are concerned right in the center campus, it would only be for us and not the rest of the community.

We were trying to stretch the scope as well. The project at Winterfield was an opportunity for us to do something. We were talking about expanding the other stadium and doing work in the Bates Street areas there to champion as our opportunity for us to have better engagement with the necessary community.

Something interactive. Don't know what it could look like, but I do know one thing. Having it where they "roll the quad" does not feel respectful. Where toilet paper is thrown.

What type of curriculum can we build for students? What type of emotional supports can we also create? Because it is something that is in your face.

It is something that you shouldn't look away from it, but you're not feeling it. But specifically for the Black students on this campus, looking at something that is memorializing the 16 bodies that were sold and then also the ways that Wake Forest continues to benefit from labor, from other disenfranchised groups.

It is a Sankofa moment, but Sankofa ain't Sankofa unless you stop, consider, and cast forward.



# Black Student Association Open Forum

November 14nd, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 401  
5:30pm-7pm

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14 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

Janeel Black

## Selected Comments

I recently learned from my class about black market promotion, how different ways that the government kept Black people enslaved, even after they completely illegalized slavery.

The amount of money that they made off selling the slaves to stay afloat in the Civil War also concerns me when they make it so hard for students of color to receive funding and to receive financial support present day.

Going back to the word “hire”, to me it’s stood out as kind of funny because that’s not what was really going on at all. They weren’t hired to work under conditions that are terrible with little to no pay. And it reminds me of now; the workers, the people who work in the Pit, and the people who work in facilities.

I feel like [Calvin Jones] is trying to use “hired” as a way to cover up the vernacular of slavery or the connotation of slavery, just so he can create that disconnect between slavery and religion, even though in history they use religion to reinforce slavery.

Honestly, I wasn’t too surprised by anything that was said. Some of the stories towards the end, closer to the present day - I haven’t heard of those things, but at the same time I wasn’t really surprised.

The thing I was thinking about in relation to the word “hire” is that it does communicate how expendable Black people were then and how they still are now. I think that’s why we see the workers that help us out in the Pit or that clean our rooms or anything like that, treated the way that they are. Even the students; I think we’re still expendable because I don’t feel that the University understands, or wants to understand, or values the work that enslaved people did.

*“...in order for us to be comfortable, everybody has to know that we need to confront the people who are making us uncomfortable.”*

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[Wake Forest is] so activated by the newer donors that have a million dollars and can write million dollar checks while enslaved people had their bodies to give.

I think at the end of the day it’s all political. I think we still are expendable. So I understand why they would use a word that’s a little bit ambiguous, like “hire.”

I feel like Wake doesn’t do a good job at honoring their Black labor.

[Administrators] chose the Black people to come have this conversation instead of themselves having this conversation with us.

In order for us to be comfortable, everybody has to know that we need to confront the people who are making us uncomfortable.

The time, money, and resources expended on building this memorial, in my opinion, could be better spent actively assisting Black students on campus.

I would think the time that I gave to this University to see the same thing in a different font would be a slap in the face.

I don’t know if I can really say what would make me care, when I feel as a Black student my life is not valued. I feel like I’ve never mentioned that here in the beginning as a Black student, you have to do so much to be seen.

I just want to know how will it be protected, how will it be taken care of?

I know that we’ll have the care and the respect of the Black community, there are still other communities that it affects and how will it affect them? Especially the communities of people that come here and their parents write a big check. Do they want to send their kid somewhere where you know they have to walk past? Because trauma goes both ways, they have to feel a White guilt.

It shouldn’t re-traumatize nobody.

The White kids are just going to disrespect it, they don’t care.

It’s important to have conversations with communities, or with people that reflect the true population of the community, because while we know we care about it, other people may not have the same sentiment. And we want something that everybody can be proud of, and not just us, and not have history repeat itself.

I’m afraid that... for the other Black students that are coming after, that if we have White people disrespecting the memorial, it then puts the work back on our Black students and our Black faculty to explain and to teach people why it is important because they don’t care, and they’re not gonna care. And that’s just continuing the cycle of overworking our Black population.

People don’t care, they don’t care, and it’s frustrating. So yeah, sorry, go ahead.

Even within the degree that I'm trying to get, I'm not appreciated for who I am.

What happened with the history is not something that only affects the University, but it also affects the community as a whole.

A lot of individuals are impacted by the increase in price. So that means a lot of Black families, minorities in general, they're impacted by the financial burden they have to take on to just comfortably live in the space.

I was just talking to one of the workers and she was just sharing how she didn't even know why this was happening. She doesn't see the reasoning for this when she can visually see how we're impacted on this campus and how we're not treated well.

There's so many things that you can fix, like an African American history department. They don't even have their own actual department itself for the school.

Whenever they brought up Wake Forest in their household, my great-grandmother just always said they just can't go to this area. They were not allowed to come in this area because they knew what precautions would come with a single black person, especially in the 60s in Wake Forest area, a predominantly White area too.

One reason why I care is because especially for my ancestors and people that came before me, I feel like this is also a part of their legacy as well.

I feel like the University doesn't do a good job at acknowledging Black lives. For example, I think just the other day, a Benson worker passed away. And I gathered that from just a trifle with a picture on it and a veil. And I feel like more could have been done, but you could actively see that the Benson workers were in pain. You could see them crying. You could see that they weren't there at the end.

But they had to come to work because how was it gonna be if they checked out?

You want to sell the community as a whole. For them to see a big artifact here on this campus, that already draws a lot of money and takes away from the community, it's like, well, here they go again. "They're doing the same thing that they've done just in a different font."

We're not being listened to. We're saying this isn't what we quite want, but to see it built, it's gonna just be another slap in the face all over again.

The exhaust of just the people in this room, how much work they put in day-to-day to make campus just feel comfortable for themselves and for the younger class and just to listen to them, and say they don't feel comfortable on this campus already. That they already feel the burden of having to be heavily involved, to overshare, to face things within departments just in general. It's not a good feeling.

I think that it would be really important for the memorial itself to do the work of educating.

It would have to do an incredible job of advocating for the people who have been here and laid the foundation for Wake Forest and the people who have worked here in different capacities.

I was wondering if there was a way for the memorial to span the campus and maybe not be in just one place but to be around different sites on campus? So I asked to highlight that this isn't a singular thing. It's all over Wake Forest. It's deep in Wake Forest.

And so there's no one recognition that could really display or communicate the impact of slavery, of being Black in Winston-Salem and being Black in Wake Forest and the influence and impact that has even to the present.

*"I think that it would be really important for the memorial itself to do the work of educating."*

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If there is a memorial to be placed on Wake Forest at any given time, I think that it would have to function in a lot of roles because it would have to really do the job of both educating and advocating for people who aren't here and who can no longer share their stories.

I think that the reason that some students on campus that aren't people of color that don't have to know that just to survive don't care is because they aren't made to care. The University, again, does a good job of making them comfortable because their parents are supporting their lifestyles and that also supports the lifestyles of the administration.

I think that it would have to be an ongoing process of learning and educating and making people uncomfortable and understanding that it's going to have to be uncomfortable for all parties involved before things can begin to become comfortable.

I think that we have to really stray away from the idea that this process in its entirety is going to be a comfortable movement.

Incorporate some of the history onto the roads that we walk past every day the same way that that Black Lives Matter painted street that was made during quarantine.

Athletics, especially on our campus, is not making slavery less than what it is. But Black bodies will be used again for the continued life of the White community. Come again.

I feel it would be a great idea to make an educational department resemble a memorial.

I was thinking about some of the workers also having some type of space for them to be able to commune and rest.

We definitely need to make something for the workers so they can feel more comfortable in a space that they have to work at every day. In general, the workers on this campus, they're part of what makes it easier for Black students to just go through their day. They know all of us. They know all of our names. We know their names. We have conversations as if they are a part of our family.

# Wake Forest Historical Museum Open Forum

November 28th, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Wake Forest Historical Museum  
3pm-4:30pm

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5 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

Terry Brock  
Derek Hicks

## **Selected Comments**

Names only go so far in having really great interpretive experiences.

One of my concerns is about building something new. I have reservations about that and I know that you guys are open to this, but the idea that we can invest in places that are already here, that already have meaning and then just add other layers of meaning on them.

Through all these conversations, I've had this image in my head of a connection between these two things. So you build something new at Wake Forest that is a memorial and it's an artifact that takes the story into the future just like doing archaeology would do.

There's a common denominator between those two [places], and it's obvious that this came from Winston-Salem and this came from Wake Forest. There's a reciprocal connection between those two things.

What is our ethic when we're telling stories?

I'm in my 50s. And our history in public school programs were completely different when I was coming through school. And I learned about this stuff. And so, you know, but the surprise, "what do you mean this college campus started as a plantation?" Well, of course it did. This is the South. The college was founded before 1865. Connect the dots. There is a lapse there in memory.

There's knowledge and history that the younger generations just have no awareness of. And closing that gap is critical for us moving forward and being able to tell these stories so that it does not happen again.

*"...there's knowledge and history that the younger generations just have no awareness of. And closing that gap I think is critical for us moving forward and being able to tell these stories so that it does not happen again."*

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Post Emancipation stories in Winston-Salem and the African American community, Wake Forest and the African American community are amazing stories and stories of a community that's building itself in spite of the conditions that exist.

The kind of model that would work would be a Wake-Washington kind of model, where you have students who take a semester and they go all the way Washington DC.

That artifact needs to be a catalyst. It needs to serve as a way for people to see it and then to have a moment where they've learned about something new and then they figure out how to act on it.

We partnered with the seminary on multiple fronts. That relationship has ebbed and flowed, as most relationships do over the years, but since I've been here it's been a good relationship and I work with them all the time.

The slavery that happened that built Wake Forest College built the grounds that the seminary is currently on. So not only should they be involved, they should be forking over some money.

If we are looking at partnering with the town in any way, it's always nice to plug it into one of the plans that we have and show it as an implementation item. So the Northeast Community Plan has a historic preservation component, and the historic preservation plan has equity, diversity, and inclusion components.





The Ailey Young House, 2023. The house was the childhood home of Allen Young, one of the founders of the first private school for African-American children in Wake Forest, NC.



East Entrance to the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2023. The institute began offering classes in the fall of 1951 on the original campus of Wake Forest College.



# Association of WFU Black Alumni Open Forum - Part 2

December 13th, 2023

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Wake Forest University,  
Virtual  
6pm-7:30pm

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20 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

Keenon Mann

## Selected Comments

I never had the privilege at Wake for us to go to school with any Black [women] because there were none, okay? I remember clearly, some of the guys had teammates, had Confederate flags in the windows.

I read a story in the Atlantic magazine just this past week, where Lonnie Butch, who was the founding director of the African American museum in DC, he was trying to find out information about his family, and he did some research and ended up at Wake County in North Carolina.

But the great thing about my existence at Wake Forest was that there were 15 of us united, maybe 18 Black students.

My story is kind of unique in that I was the first Black Deacon that the University had. Back then, the Deacon was not in costume. There was no head. There was none of that. You saw my face, so you knew I was Black. And it was my first year as Deacon that was the first year of many changes that were happening on the campus in terms of athletics and the cheer squad in particular.

And I was saying in my group that I was a very public persona that the campus community as a whole knew me as the Deacon. And they saw me at games. But the story behind me actually becoming Deacon and continuing to be the Deacon, and that public persona versus my private experience, was two very different things.

There were a lot of things that we fought for and achieved and accomplished and would hope that things in this generation would be different. And the fact that they're not is unsettling.

*“I am proud to be a graduate of Wake Forest. However, I look at more as I survived Wake Forest. Not graduated, but survived.”*

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I had an experience here in Charlotte where I was one of the first Black students at a previously all White private school from seventh grade through high school.

And let's put it this way. I was used to being around a lot of White people. And I think the biggest mistake I made during my time at Wake Forest, as some of you know, is I had a couple of White classmates from high school who were at Wake Forest. And I spent a lot of time hanging around them and other White people, what I was used to, and not enough with my own. So that shaped my experience.

There was a lot I regret about my time there.

I feel ashamed of the fact that I am hearing a lot about this history going back to the 1820s. I'm hearing a lot about this for the first time. Some of it I knew, much of it I did not. So I think it's very important that this information be made a part of the regular curriculum.

I'm more concerned about today's students than anything else; today's students at Wake Forest and the students of the future, students of color. To make sure they know what Wake Forest history is all about.

I did not know enough when I was there and I greatly regret it. I want the kids now to be more exposed than I was.

I am proud to be a graduate of Wake Forest. However, I look at it more as I survived Wake Forest. Not graduated, but survived.

I was saying in my small group that I was on campus when the Klan came to campus. And I remember that vividly. I had never seen anything like that. I remember going back to my dorm and calling my mom and saying, “maybe I should come home.”

In spite of everything, I have wonderful memories about being at Wake. There were eight Black women in my freshman class.

I remember going into the dorm and you could tell my roommate was astonished. She was like, “What have I gotten into?” I think about it. All the women that she could be rooming with, and there were eight, eight of us, eight black women. What were her chances of getting me? She was from a relatively wealthy family. At the end of the first semester, I got a phone call from the Dean of Women saying, “Your roommate wants to change because you all are so different. It's not because you're Black... but she thinks it'd be better for her to have another roommate.” And so this was my introduction to college.

Wake Forest was the one who did provide scholarship money, provided opportunity for me to express myself in music. And at that time we were the largest class of black students to come into Wake at 58 students who were non-athletes.

I think about my time at Wake, it was some of the best times of my life. I was telling our small group that there are things that I feel God gave me amnesia about that I forgot because there were some different periods.

We had a professor who wrote an op-ed piece in the *Old Gold and Black* that Black students didn't belong in Wake. I had a professor who kept calling me by somebody else's name. And when I corrected her, she said, "all y'all look alike."

In biochem, I remember I had three lab partners, all White males, and they would not speak to me, wouldn't answer questions, would not speak to me at all. And I ended up dropping the class.

If I set my foot on ground, it becomes mine. And Wake Forest is mine. The good, the bad, and the ugly, it's mine.

I had a Black professor my first day and that made such a huge difference because if it hadn't been for Barbee [Oakes], I would not have had necessarily the same connection to Wake Forest that I have now.

All that change has really made a difference and I'd like to see that change continue as we move forward again.

I think it was that sense of "this experience is gonna be what we make of it, and we are going to affect change here and afterwards."

I think his name was Dean Hamilton and making sure I had money to go every semester and making sure I was fully supported, which was very different from what I'm hearing now of all the stories.

I do remember being the only Black student in a lot of the classes. And I do remember the diversity rate being like 8% or something like that during that time frame.

I learned a lot and I thought the people who I encountered were amazing. When I hear stories, like I'm hearing of things like survival, I think it underpins the fact that we take for granted that being able to go on a campus and thrive is simply the product of you.

I went back again in 17, I got an MDiv. That was a great experience. Lots of African Americans in the MDiv program, an amazing program. So I just have a lot of positives for Wake. And I'm pretty sure there are a lot of negatives, but I probably forgot them because every time I had an issue. I had this Dean who was always trying to get me money and get me back in school and just made it his focus to make sure I got through it.

Lately when we hear the news, what used to be said in the shadows is again being said out in public. It's being said proudly as if these things are fact because we don't know our history as well as we should and being able to dig deeper as this experience has reminds us that we still have to educate people now, educate people who weren't aware that was going on.

I too had this love-hate relationship with Wake Forest.

I graduated in 2002. And speaking with some of my colleagues that went to Wake Forest, we all have this shared sentiment of survival. That that's one of the things that keeps us together is that we have that strength that we know that if you can make it through Wake Forest, you can make it through anything.

It taught me how to really navigate certain spaces.

When I left Wake Forest, I wasn't surprised to understand some of those derailment tactics that I had already experienced.

[Black students] came together and they fought back in a lot of ways. And also worked with the Black Panthers and others to serve the surrounding community.

I have extremely warm memories of Wake Forest University.

I remember that a lot of the African Americans on the call, we just found each other.

I think that the reason why I was as successful as I was at Wake Forest was because of that tight knit African American community.

I honestly don't have a lot of memory of my Caucasian peers. I just don't. And I'll be honest. That's something that from time to time, I've regretted a little bit because I'm like, "well, did I not try to engage or to build friendships with some of my other peers?"

My memory is of the African American students finding each other, supporting each other, encouraging each other.

And so I think for that reason, I don't have a lot of memories of negative racialized experiences at Wake Forest. There is one that I can remember. I just remember a teacher my freshman year who encouraged me to just fail a course.

I think having an African American professor and African American Dean who shared with me in a very similar way to how my mom would share with me and who told me that it was not okay to just fail the class.

One thing I can say about the class of 2004 is that we set out really early to take over the campus. That's how we framed it. And we met and talked about what leadership positions we were going to get before we got them.

We were sometimes coddled by the class of 2001 who saw us as their little brothers and sisters and they just ensured that we were going to be successful as far as they were concerned.

Now we get a chance to create the history, the platform by which the histories will be shared from this point on.

I was allowed to stay. My only offense was to back-talk a White person, which, you know, this was in the early 2000s. This was 2001. So to think that that was still happening. Fast forward, lots of spaces were created for

Black people by Black people at Wake Forest for us to be able to survive and to have some semblance of joy in spite of all the ridiculousness that we were facing.

I had a love-hate relationship with Wake. [I] came back and worked at Wake, worked in multicultural affairs later and had got a Masters at Wake and I very much appreciate a lot of what I experienced. It forced me into manhood and into adulthood in some ways that I don't think I was ready for and I don't know that I would wish some of those experiences on other people, but they definitely shaped who I am now.

I feel such a great gratitude towards Wake and the people that I was able to encounter there. And that actually helped me graduate from Wake.

And fortunately, the head of that department was a woman that looked like me, Dr. Neal Lucas. She's phenomenal. And we sat down and we had a very candid conversation and she protected me and she made it right.

All of us on this call continue to make sure that we contribute to the experience of future alumni. I wouldn't have graduated from Wake, I would have come and lived like many of students that we know have.

I'm so forever grateful for my experience at Wake, no matter how much I survived through it. I'm extremely grateful for my experience at Wake and I will forever try to repay that debt.

I vividly remember the story about the Finsta, despite being after my graduation. I remember the story about the emails to the sociology department as a sociology major. But I also think it's been so important and so powerful for those who have paved the way and standing in the footsteps of giants in the past.



I owe so much in my Wake Forest experience to my dad first and foremost, but also to the Black professors that really took me under my wing or under their wing during their experience.

I realized from an early age that this was the place that I wanted to be in. There were many commonalities between my dad and I's experiences and many differences between our experiences.

"I'm just sick and tired of being sick and tired."

[In church,] We're half the people here. And we are gonna stand out because Black people in church, they make themselves known. So even in chapel, the ways that we would engage Blackness was very present, very welcome.

Politically, I think things were changing. I know at times there was something about what Republican students were saying on campus and I remember participating in like a die-in that they had on the lower quad once.

Counseling is a cohort model. And we had 15 students in our cohort. And I was the only Black person, we had one Asian woman. But it was mostly White women.

I also felt supported by even my White professors, because most of the professors were also White. There was a White guy that taught our multicultural concepts in counseling class. And he opened the class by saying, "You might be wondering why a White guy's teaching this class." That statement alone is valuable to acknowledge the privilege and position as you open the class was helpful.

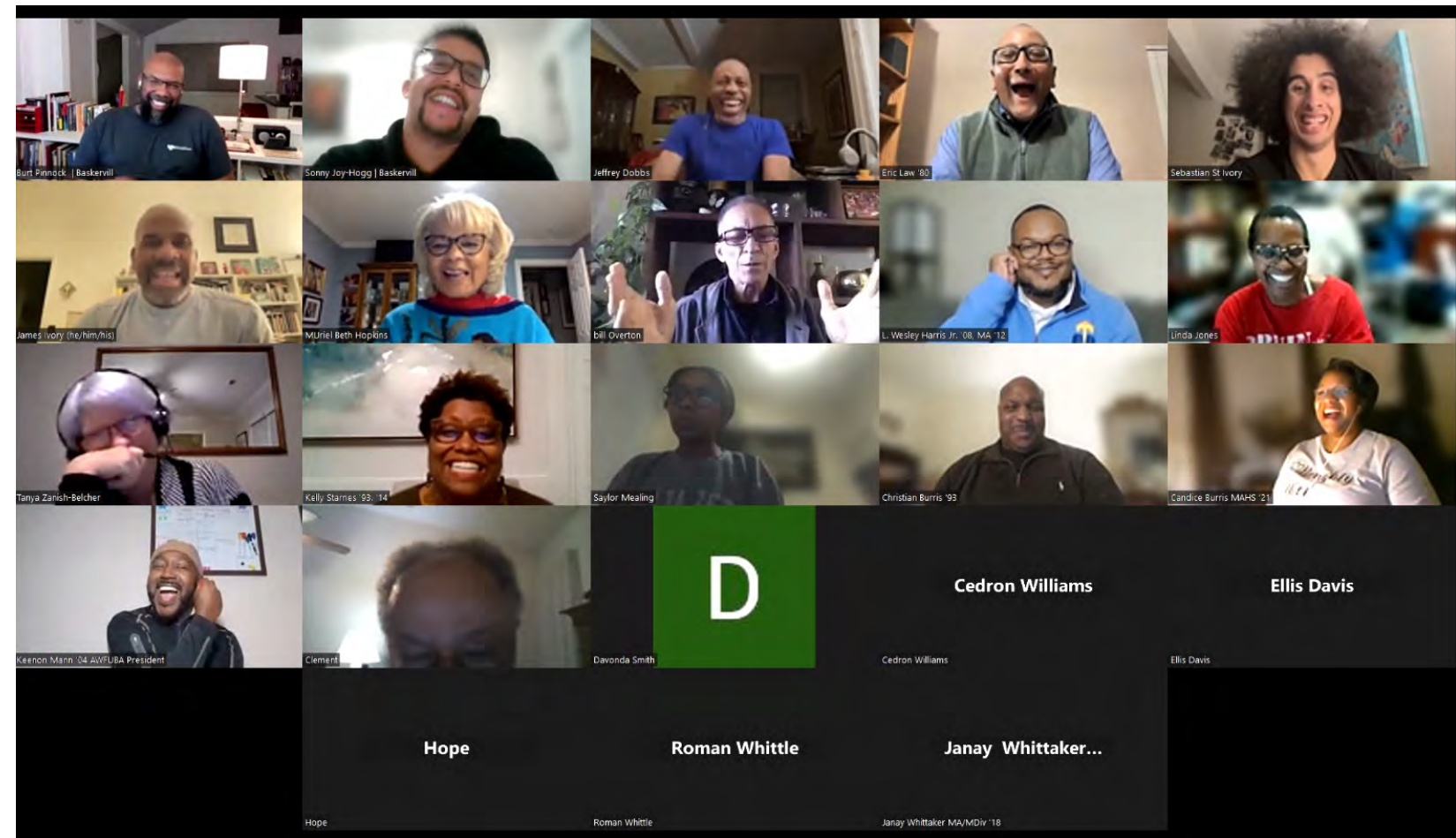
I think across my entire experience, I still felt kind of very safe to sort of be myself, experience all different sort of versions of Blackness, but also stay connected to the struggle that was happening across the wider University and the political landscape.

We're changing the shape of the institution for future people.

We cannot not celebrate the Gospel Choir for the largest, the most impactful, and the oldest multicultural organization on Wake Forest campus.

*"...if I set my foot on ground, it becomes mine. And Wake Forest is mine. The good, the bad, and the ugly, it's mine."*

AWFUBA 12/13 Virtual Forum. Image courtesy of Baskervill



# Alumni Council Open Forum

February 5th, 2024

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Wake Forest University,  
Virtual  
7pm-8:30pm

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23 participants

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

José Villalba

## Selected Comments

Number one, I think there was consensus on the need to memorialize where we are as a University, how we got here, and the contributions people made.

I think a discussion [is needed] about recognizing and trying to repair people's understandings and repair in terms of repaying the contributions the slaves and the Black people have made to who we are as a country.

When I think about repairing, I think repairing gets to the context of recognizing something like the Daughters of the Confederacy, The Lost Cause, and all those monuments.

We've been working with a headwind for over a hundred years in terms of dealing with a narrative that's basically been working against us because, as Burt pointed out in his opening statement, those memorials still exist, that false history still exists.

I'm troubled by the question of both visibility, narrative, and history.

We [need to] work to give an honest apology. We [need to] learn to apologize.

The American Psychological Association came out in 2019 to basically apologize for the damage that it had done in terms of thinking about Black folk.

I think we all had the same emotional reaction, which was kind of a mix of sadness and anger; sadness of what happened and anger that it continues. And I have this vision that everyone should believe they belong at Wake Forest.

*“This should be a story that should be told at orientation every year. There should be no excuse going forward for folks at Wake to not hear the story....”*

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Everyone who comes should feel a sense of belonging. And the fact that some people can't get that breaks my heart. And it comes in lots of ways. It comes with racism and sexuality and men vs. women in lots of ways that can get in the middle of that.

[We] hope this is messaged in a way that this is not just a one-off effort, but a continuing effort.

The question was about what did we see when we listened to the recitation of some of Wake Forest's history. And I think as an African American, it is not something that surprises you. It is a history and a reality that you have to walk with every day. Even though people aren't being sold, in other ways, they are being marginalized, and that is regardless of whether you live in the projects or whether you graduated from Wake Law School. There is always the burden of racism that you have to walk with. So I wasn't shocked. I wasn't even deeply disturbed because the stories have just become a part of my legacy as an African American woman in my family.

I hope that we can get past saying “we're sorry for what happened to you”, and realize that our story IS the American story. It's everybody's story. And so, you have to deal with the reality of what was done and who did it and the result of that and how that affects the whole community instead of just placing it as “we apologize, we're going to set up a monument.”

This does need to be a continual discussion of how we as a community deal with it. And I hope that we get to that point.

Many of us on the call mentioned that we knew a fact or two or three of what was said, but hearing the whole story was new to us.

This should be a story that should be told at orientation every year. There should be no excuse going forward for folks at Wake to not hear the story... We can't have anyone not know that this happened at Wake Forest and is happening.

I also want to say for many of us, and even as a Black woman who went to Wake, this was not my experience at Wake Forest. And so even though it wasn't my experience, doesn't mean that the isms didn't exist, right? So whether it's racism or sexism, classism, I mean, there's so many different issues that I think students just have to push and press through in this homogeneous, wonderfulness of Wake Forest.

The piece that is the most important is... the integration of the truth, not as a standalone, “we must pause at this time to pay tribute to x,” but it is a part of the history.



*“What struck me is the very important fact that memorials are about acknowledgment. It’s not an apology or an absolution and we should make sure that doesn’t get lost. We are acknowledging and that’s not enough. We’re not done, but it’s an important piece.”*

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It is important, even though I did not have this experience, to validate those who did. It is important for me to say, “because it wasn’t my experience and it was your experience, then your experience can’t be true.” There is space for both of our experiences to be true. There is space for me as a Black woman to say, “I did not experience X, Y, or Z”, and to listen to someone else who did and not to debate the validity of whether or not it could, or should have happened, but to acknowledge that it did happen.

I am just inviting us to use this exercise, use the memorial, as a way to provide real, tangible recommendations and suggestions on how we better diversify the human experiences as they have existed and will continue to exist at Wake Forest and how we can play a part in creating positive conditions so that we lessen these types of hurtful and harmful experiences in the future?

The piece for me that’s critically important is continuing to humanize people who were human. And in the event we do not have a clear understanding of their image and likeness, do not attempt to create one.

It’s important that the purpose is to bring that little girl into whatever era that we’re in. And if we’re unable to bring her in her fullness as she existed, then I think we are failing in our attempt to memorialize her or any other person whose name that we’re referencing in the written history.

The blood, sweat, and tears are in the soil and have been and always will be.

The idea of thinking about a memorial that thinks about that organic element plus the idea of a living memorial, not something that is just looking back but also looking forward, could be a really nice way to think about that.

When you’re talking about what does it mean that the current campus wasn’t built by enslaved people? I think that’s true, but we’re still the beneficiaries of it. They are still the reason that Wake Forest exists as the way it is and that can’t be lost. So I think that’s so important that it’s not enough to say “oh enslaved people didn’t build this campus.”

What struck me is the very important fact that memorials are about acknowledgment. It’s not an apology or an absolution and we should make sure that doesn’t get lost. We are acknowledging and that’s not enough. We’re not done, but it’s an important piece.

I don’t want people to [say] “well we built a memorial, we’re done. We renamed some roads, we’re done.” I want to make sure that it’s part of a continuing conversation.

I was just googling what’s \$10,000 from Civil War time adjusted for inflation and it’s about \$2 million and I was like that’s how much you should spend.

*“I’m hoping that with whatever memorial we end up having, that it tells the truth, and that that truth will be able to be dealt with in a way that provides this community some healing and some unity behind the idea of “Pro-Humanitate.””*

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I just want to also tell you how much I appreciate your intentionality in looking at the history of this University and the people of this University, the workers of this University, those who built it, those who died from its beginnings.

The only thing that I would ask, since you asked for an “ask,” is that you tell the truth, the whole truth. I think that is important in any reckoning of history that the truth be told,

I’m hoping that with whatever memorial we end up having, that it tells the truth, and that that truth will be able to be dealt with in a way that provides this community some healing and some unity behind the idea of “Pro-Humanitate.”

We haven’t talked about the Reynolds family who had a very large tobacco plantation in Virginia. The RJR Tobacco Company was formed after the Civil War, but God knows what complex aspects of Jim Crow may be part of that story.

For us to properly convey these debts, there needs to be calls toward Wake Forest, North Carolina through the Reynolds too.

There’s probably few colleges in America who owe more financially to one entity than Wake Forest owes financially to the Reynolds company and family.

# Wake Forest Service Staff Open Forum

February 13th, 2024

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Wake Forest University,  
Benson 409  
1:30pm-2:30pm

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Number of participants  
unknown

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Steering Committee  
Representatives:

José Villalba

## Selected Comments

My first thought in my head, when you mentioned about a memorial, about the enslaved, it's "what retaliation is going to come?" because it's an underlining vibe.

The racial slurs, the posts, those are very recent on social media. So I know on this campus, as far as hazing and things, is very prevalent.

Where I'm from, the Confederacy is like widespread. So to put up anything different, you're going to get retaliation.

And also the culture is, if something [retaliatory] is done, we're not protected like we should be. If something is retaliatory, we don't have the support to be there when these things happen.

I was reading the history also, and it was saying about the campus police, and they still had an indifference, and that's still today.

I work at Shorty's down in the restaurant, and I was talking to some of the students, and they come by and talk to me, and I asked them, because it's been years since I've been in school, and so I just asked them their thoughts and if things were still happening and how did they feel. And the response I got was, "it's still here. It's just an underlying thing, it's still happening, but it's not out front." And I've experienced that.

We have a lot of pictures on the tables from, you see 1954, 1940's, nobody looks like me. And so that kind of bothered me as far as that, because the students can't relate.

This has to change. It really has to change. And not just for African Americans, but just exposed to different cultures.

*"You hear people say, "there's no such thing as institutional racism, there's no such thing as White privilege." If this memorial provides an opportunity for someone that thinks that way to gain some knowledge, that could be very positive."*

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Why do we have a Black History Month? We don't have a White history month?

The history of this country, the way it is evolved and taught and learned, is from those who have the power, right? So what we are doing today, we are not rewriting history. We are only completing it. We are telling you things that have historically happened, and we're inserting them in to create a fuller picture of the truth.

My answer concerning why there's Black History Month and not a White history month is simply because of all the lies that have been told about our history.

Very little Black history is taught, right? So it's necessary to have enough to where we can add as much history and proof and truth as we can. And it's sad that we get only a month to do that, when every day of our lives White history is taught. That's why it's necessary.

It's a matter of pride. The children today don't know our history, and our ancestors are gone. And they're going quickly, and if they don't tell the story, it lies on us. And we have to find the truth to tell the story so our generation could go on. It's a matter of pride.

I want my grandchildren to hold their head up high, and I tell them how special they are. They're kings and queens. And if you notice, if you know your history and you know yourself, that makes a change even in education. So I think that's why it's so important that we have Black history. Because I remember our textbooks. I remember.

There are people whose minds are already made up and are never going to change. But there are still people out there, that with the education and knowledge, can change, want to make a difference. So when you hear people say, "there's no such thing as institutional racism, there's no such thing as White privilege." If this memorial provides an opportunity for someone that thinks that way to gain some knowledge, that could be very positive.

## Where do you think the artifact might have the most impact?

The quad. Where they do the commencement, right in the middle.

The stadium.

Why can't we have multiple? Are you limited to one?

The entrance to the tunnels.



# Online Survey 1 - Responses

## Survey Launched September 28, 2023

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Survey Found at:  
<https://forms.gle/prUBBPqpZqiQD4619>

Distributed at each session after a recitation of the Grounding Chronology was played. For participants to contribute additional thoughts beyond the live discussion.

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18 Respondents



### What did you hear? What stood out?

Ongoing racist attacks on campus that impact us all, but especially Black students. This sounds like a hostile place to work and learn.

I appreciated the attention to the experiences of students in recent years.

I heard that Wake Forest has no ethical claim to its endowment. It belongs in full to Black and Indigenous people to dispose of as they collectively see fit. I suspect they have not been asked if a monument is even what they want. They don't need 'seat at the table' they need to own and control the table. This is not about the campus community. It should not benefit the campus community. It should be a sacrifice from the campus community to the local Black Winston-Salem community writ large. Otherwise it is elite capture. The risk is that this will be a monument that buries the past and becomes a closure rather than an opening.

I am most surprised that even in recent years, there were explicit racist and homophobic speech/actions on WFU campus.

Questions about recognition and audience: who is this for, what do the descendants and neighbors want, and need. I appreciated the shift from monument to artifact and wish to push back against the word "message." The ART-I-FACT, the fact which, as art, calls an "I" / eye to recognize our complicated and painful history is a site and situation which should and will generate an ongoing questioning...

History of memorials, the fact that there are more memorials dedicated enslaved people than what I thought.

*“The risk is that this will be a monument that buries the past and becomes a closure rather than an opening.”*

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What was most interesting was the unique ways in which each [memorial] accomplished their task. Many utilized interesting designs that capture the audience's attention.

What stood out to me is that there needs to be recognition of the past of Wake Forest University, specifically the history of slaves for the benefit of the University. The different styles of memorials stood out to me and there is definitely a possible way to create a memorial that shows the truth of the past. The past could be visually incorporated into the memorial so that people will know the past events at the sight of the memorial but also in a way that does not re-traumatize these events.

I heard about various memorials around the South and what they mean to their communities and the past. One thing that stood out was the Robert E. Lee memorial side-by-side image with the George Floyd memorial being shown over the original memorial. It speaks greatly of the change in society regarding racism and the true struggle and impact certain actions have to a society.

Hearing about the slave trade here at Wake Forest University stood out to me because when I think about the University, I do not think it dabbled in slavery. Of course, it is not surprising, but it is eye-opening to see and hear about it.

The negativity and racism and how we think we're working towards positivity, and it comes back still.

Wake Forest would not exist as an institution without enslaved people and the ongoing labor of minoritized people.

The KKK being in contact with the frats.

How recent racist events at Wake were.

The money used to fund the school was off the profit of slaves and slaves built the first buildings important to the original campus

Budget of \$2 million, Design firm Baskervill, Burt & Keenon, Restorative Action, Edward Reynolds / Ghana, Olive Branch Baptist Church

The more recent atrocities against Black students on this campus should be highlighted as they are a sign of lingering maladaptive ideologies and beliefs.

Two things stood out greatly. First the fact that the last two points were so recent in 2019 and 2020 was very shocking. I had thought that people would have learned or educated themselves on how morally wrong slavery was. Apparently not. Additionally, when the selling prices were read, that really shocked me because it showed the reality of what happened.



*“Reparations are due. Without that, any memorial is premature. The University must earn the right to memorialize. It hasn’t.”*

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**Is there anything else you’d like to share?**

I would assume that students have had similar experiences prior to the modern social media era; I assume that the commission has reached out to alumni regarding their experiences, and I would like to see their stories memorialized and recorded as well.

Reparations are due. Without that, any memorial is premature. The University must earn the right to memorialize. It hasn’t.

I am NOT into the idea of any wall or stele as a form of memorial: so many negative connotations.

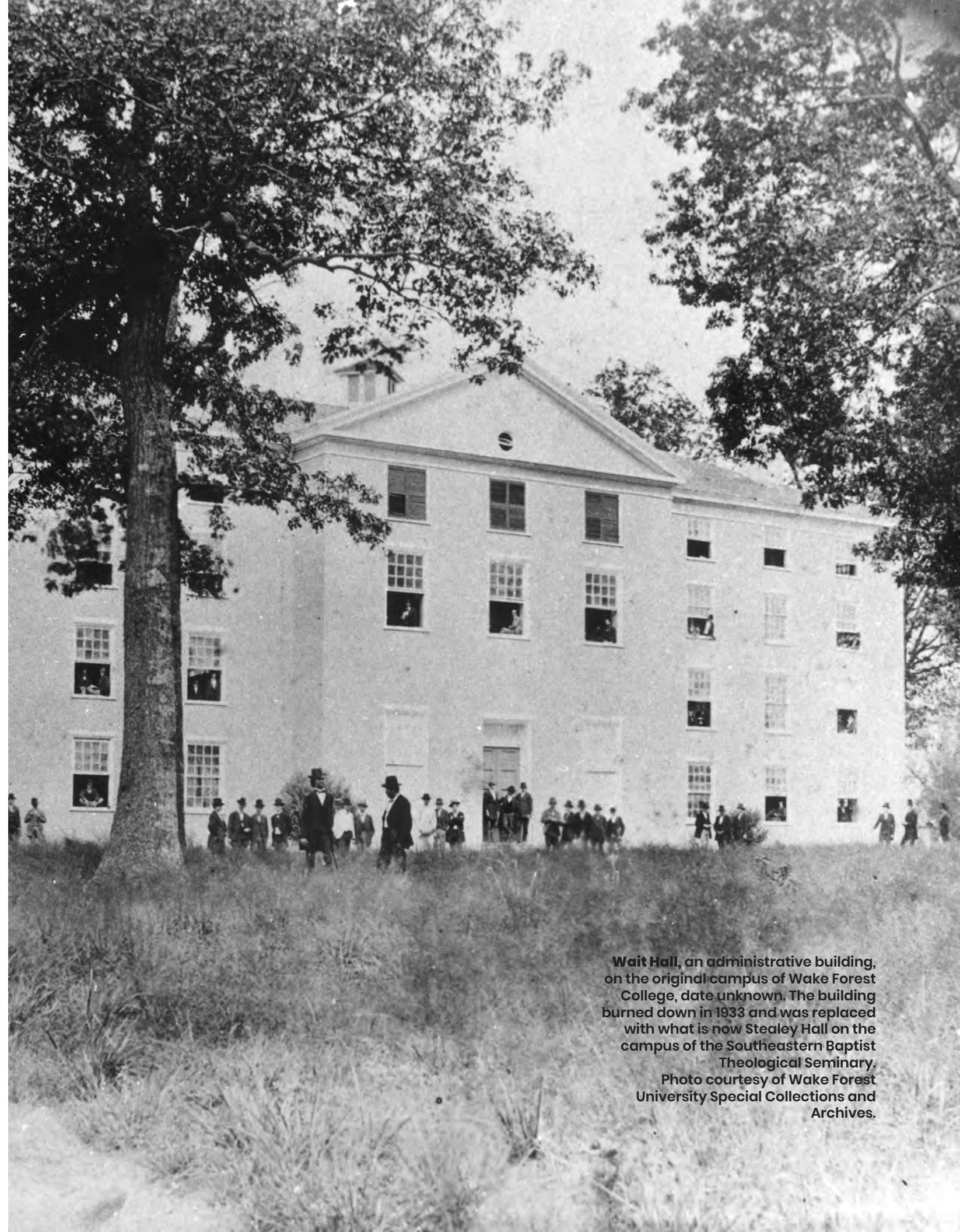
A better relationship with the Black community in Winston-Salem is an URGENT necessity. As is an art museum: a place to share the art WFU is collecting...with that community.

Wake Forest has a lot of monuments. I’d think it important to make this stand out [more] than the others.

The creation of a memorial is not going to erase the harm that has been caused over nearly a century, but we can think about how it can be a generative reminder of who truly built this place.

Are there additional opportunities for volunteers on the SRM project?

I think above all, the memorial should function as a way to inform members of the community about Black people’s contributions to the creation, development, and maintenance of Wake Forest University. This memorial should reference history from the 1800s, as well as connecting with present day contributions from Black faculty, staff, and students. I personally like the idea of a building for the African American Studies department and adding a corresponding course that would fulfill students required cultural/diversity requirement for graduation (all undergrad students that attend WFU need to take one of these cultural/diversity courses to graduate). Students probably shouldn’t be forced to take the course, but students should still be exposed to the information provided by the memorial.



**Wait Hall, an administrative building, on the original campus of Wake Forest College, date unknown. The building burned down in 1933 and was replaced with what is now Stealey Hall on the campus of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Photo courtesy of Wake Forest University Special Collections and Archives.**



# Online Survey 2 - Responses

## Survey Launched September 28, 2023

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Survey found at:  
<https://forms.gle/Wy9m7LbpH5QhFBGHA>

Distributed at each session after relevant memorial examples were presented. For participants to contribute additional thoughts beyond the live discussion.

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21 Respondents



### What message(s) must be conveyed?

Whatever memorial that is created should be publicly accessible. I don't have an answer to this dilemma, but there is a perception that campus is closed off to the greater public (even locally). There's a clash between this and not relegating the memorial to the edge of campus (placing this in the reconstructed LJM area or in Wake Downtown would be inappropriate), but I hope that the committee is able to reconcile or at least consider this tension.

The solemnity and gravity of what is remembered.

That this is merely a representation of the work that Wake Forest knows has just begun. We have a lot to answer for as an institution and Black and brown students are still suffering and under-served to this day. Patting ourselves on the back for admitting a Ghanaian student in 1962 will do no one any favors, though Ed Reynolds and those who followed bravely in his footsteps - Beth Hopkins, and others - should be known by all alumni.

That reparations are due.

Prices put onto human lives. The perpetuation of money as the only value of a human life. Prices. Money. Finance. Onto human lives: children, grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, cousins, mothers, fathers, friends and brothers, sisters and nieces, nephews, families and communities. Scholars were enslaved. Artisans were enslaved, people who protected cultural knowledge within them, who were artisans and scholars before they were enslaved. People across different cultures were enslaved.

Positive messages and themes.

*“That as a Black student you belong here. Your people built this prestigious institution.”*

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We acknowledge our past and are improving. We care about the lives of the people who contributed to the development of this University.

There needs to be acknowledgment of atrocities and the ugly history, but at the same time there has to be a celebration of overcoming the history. A memorial that only tries to portray a negative message might prevent the dialogue that this is trying to encourage.

The story and context of the enslaved people and their contribution/connection to the school- like the George Mason silhouettes and how each silhouette had the story of the enslaved people written on it.

The names of the slaves. I think their story should also be conveyed and should be ties to the community like at UVA.

Their story and their names. I recommend an interactive monument.

Memorializing the story and names of what makes it special within each community or location.

Their names and the importance they had allowing the University to exist and thrive. Show they are a part of creating the University.

I feel as though the artifact must show the hardship that the enslaved people endured and really embody the atrocity while also showing the resolve and strength

the enslaved people had. I also believe that the importance of the roles that the enslaved people had in making Wake Forest University the prestigious place it is should be represented.

The enslaved people's history.

That as a Black student you belong here. Your people built this prestigious institution.

Something powerful and not hidden. Not just a simple plaque.

Recognition of the lives lost and unfairly treated. Context is also very important and I like the idea of an interactive memorial that you can walk into or contribute something to like the Freedom of Speech wall.

Our history and how Wake Forest was built on the backs of slaves. The rawness of the situation, how it was and how we have progressed over time and the great strides that Wake Forest University is doing to make right our wrongs. To display openly and not hold back the shameful things that took place on our campus.

Making invisible labor visible, exposing hidden histories, connecting past and present, a range of meanings, including joy and discomfort/unsettling.

Whatever we do, it should not be merely perfunctory or because other institutions are doing it. It should be meaningful and intentional.



*“The memorial should not be a static, one-time creation that checks off a box for a ‘good’ PWI.”*

The most important message is the humanity of the individuals - with as much detail as can be gathered - their names at the very, very least. I would prefer it steer away from portraying their bodies (at least, as in a realistic sculpture)... that could replicate the value system where enslaved people's bodies were seen as the only/most important part of them.

The memorial should engage the person viewing/ experiencing it to co-create it -- to think about how they are in relationship to these folks from the past. (It should also engage more than one sense -- can visually impaired or hard of hearing folks also experience the memorial, etc.?) In this co-creation, the memorial shouldn't seek to evoke single, specific emotions like "peace" or "veneration" -- which would not do justice to the complicated legacy here. There is much to feel here, including anger, grief, discomfort, etc. and this memorial should create space to feel all of it.

I would be cautious in how the memorial chooses to connect the lives of these folks to the University's history. Yes, they contributed, but they did not choose to, and that was not their purpose, nor should the University's narrative take a central place in this memorial.

The memorial should not be a static, one-time creation that checks off a box for a "good" PWI. This memorial should communicate that it is part of a larger, never-ending process of reckoning with the legacy of slavery, and with the role of race at Wake and in our society.

The memorial should be designed and created entirely by Black folks, who should be fairly compensated for their work (obviously). While the University has a part to play in creating it, again, the University's goals and narratives should not be the central ones.

Opposite:  
1840 Federal Census, showing columns for "free white persons" and "free colored persons." Shows Samuel Wait's household as including three free White people. The same census includes record of Wait owning four enslaved people. Scan courtesy of MyHeritage.com

4.) SCHEDULE of the whole number of persons within the division all

FREE WHITE PERSONS, INCLUDING HEADS OF FAMILIES.

NAMES OF HEADS OF FAMILIES	MALES										FEMALES															
	Under 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 25	25 to 30	30 to 40	40 to 50	50 to 60	60 to 70	70 to 80	80 to 90	90 and upwards	Under 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 30	30 to 40	40 to 50	50 to 60	60 to 70	70 to 80	80 to 90	90 and upwards	
Mr. D. Freeman	1				3	1								1				1	2							
Samuel Wait																										
Joshua Wadkins						1								1												
Jamey Wooda						1																				
Mrs. Jefferys			1	2																						
Branford Mitchell																										
Lloyd Cole	1																									
Mrs. Nichols	2	2																								
Nancy Nichols																										
Thomas Mitchell																	2	2								
Elizabeth Bell																										
Reubin Martin																										
John Bagwell																										
Mant Raiburn	2																									
John B. Green																										
Nancy Walker	1																									
Nancy Fainick	1																									
Viney Morgan																										
John Hinton																										
Lucan Morgan																										
Nancy Fason	2		1																							
Rhoda Pope																										
Sampson Morgan					1	1																				
Patsy Morgan					1																					
Nancy Johnson	1				1																					
John Chamblee	1				2	1					1			3	1											
Elizabeth Chamblee																										
Hopkin Pucket					2						1															
Matthew Pissit						1	1	2						2												
Lydia Mapes																										

AS IT TURNS OUT, BOTH OUR FAMILY'S NARRATIVE AND THE UNIVERSITY'S NARRATIVE WERE WRONG.

- Mary Tribble  
*To Stand With and For Humanity, 23*



# Precedent Responses

## Memorial to the Enslaved People of George Mason

Location: George Mason University, Fairfax, VA  
Year: 2022  
Designer: Perkins & Will  
Cost: -----

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Narration: Civil war survival, make names known, address Baptist roots (1986 cutties??), 1st major inst. To end seg. In schools, 1st African American student, include this timeline in memorial, fatally shot student?? Showing bare truth; how much should be displayed / traumatic.

Messages conveyed: Hope, Acknowledgment, Remembrance, Impactful/Meaningful, Inclusiveness, Equitable, and Truth.

It would honestly take a lot for me to stop and think deeply about a memorial. Something you must walk through but in a quiet place would be ideal.

I like the inclusion of children. Including woman and children experiences is important.

Recognizing how central slavery was and is to the foundation of the University I.C. National Wait (Wait Chapel) owning slaves, acknowledging their humanity and place in our history.

Connection to Wilkins Plaza needs to show how enslaved people help build Wake. Emphasis on the slaves that were sold to keep Wake afloat.

I truly did appreciate having this meeting tonight. It was informing, inspiring, eye-catching, etc.

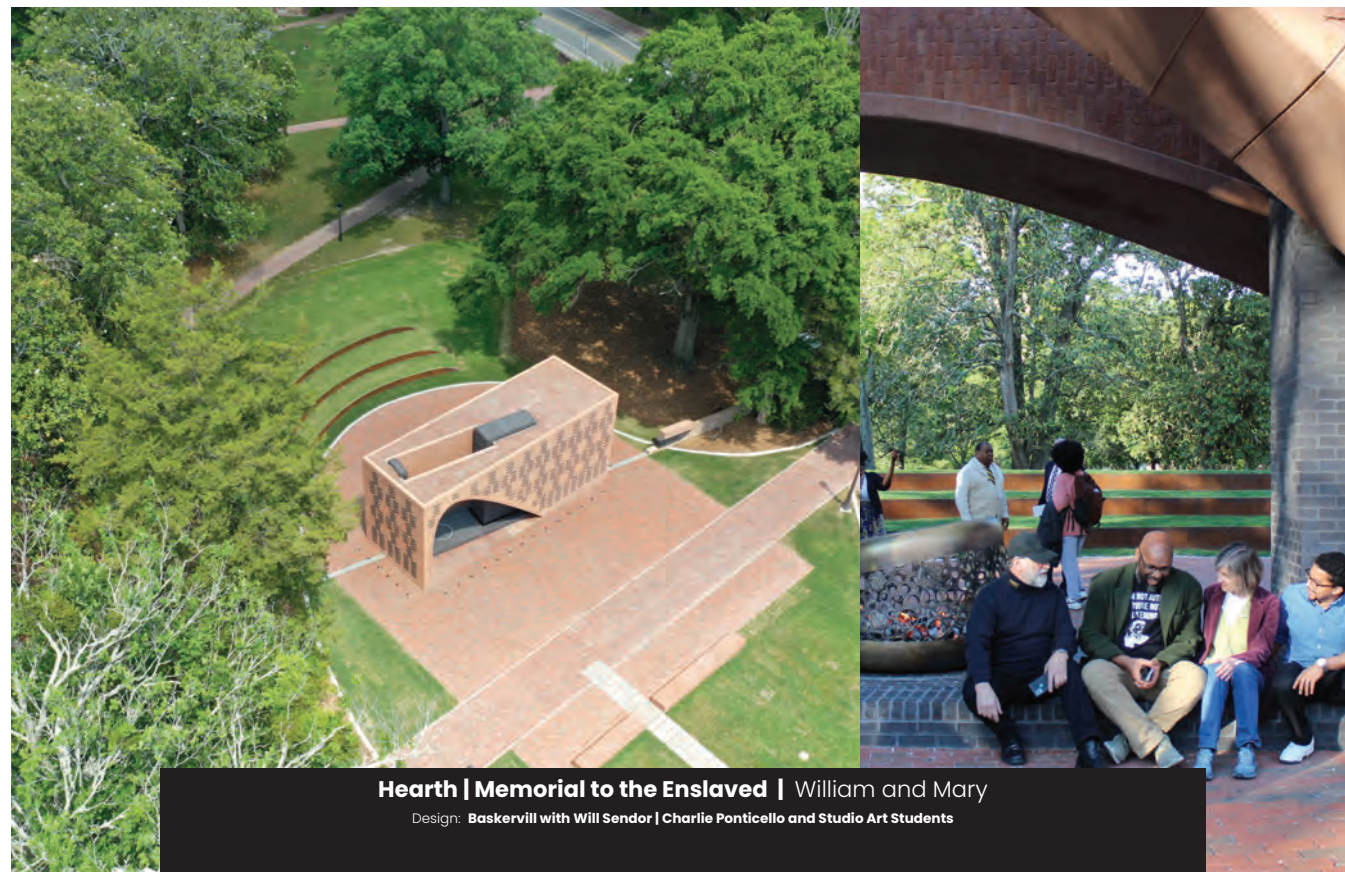


# Precedent Responses

## Hearth: Memorial to the Enslaved

**Location:** College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA  
**Year:** 2022  
**Designer:** Baskervill  
**Cost:** \$2.9 Million

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I like the scale of the memorial, even though I've never visited, but the fact that you can interact and sit or go under allows for a space to sit with the injustice and notice the names of those around.

I think we should place it in a public place so that it is seen and recognized as opposed to brushed aside. Maybe somewhere along an entrance would be good.

I like how the monument/artifact is at a central point in campus and can be seen a mile away.

Being from Europe, the history isn't something I'm familiar with, therefore it's hard to engage with a time period, but names are something everyone can take notice to and I think that's the most important to remember.

I like the recognition that not all names of people affected will be known but the blank slates still recognize them. Research will uncover more names, important facts—places to add them to memorial.

I would love to see something like this on campus. Immersive, large, and prominent.

Hearth / Wake artifact needs to be something that makes people stop and have conversation.

I like how the memorial engages people and conversation.

In a place where everyone can see.

Concerns of Black students, constant reminder of painful history.

Location is important.

End the cycle with this memorial! Tell the history, now it's not up for interpretation.

In area where everyone will see. Engagement with students place to gather. Large easily visible not too large.

I would highly consider including the Black families of Winston Salem because this memorial expands upon the 16 names.

Like this memorial, we need to have something unskipable! People, of all backgrounds, need to be aware of the slavery events/aspects that occurred.

I like the concept of a building rather than a traditional artifact/memorial. An African American Studies building would be great, and I also like the idea of a rotating exhibition floor that could function like a museum of Black history.



# Precedent Responses

## The Free Speech Wall \ Community Chalkboard

Location: Downtown Mall, Charlottesville, VA  
Year: 2006  
Designer: Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Speech  
Cost: -----



Freedom of Speech Wall | Charlottesville, Virginia  
Design: Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

I think something that could be interactive might have more people stop. Like they mentioned how you can feel and touch the Vietnam Memorial or the one everyone could write on. Also, I feel like it should be something students can see every day. I think Wake Forest can be a sheltered place and a reminder right on campus would be good.

I personally don't think this memorial needs to be the identity of our campus, but our history does need to be known in an eye-catching manner.

I find all the color on this very striking. It's definitely one that would make me stop and read.

Unlike some other schools, Wake's history with slavery is not as visible or known. I feel like that is something to consider for the idea around the memorial.

As a student, a simple statue is not eye-catching. That is why memorials like the Vietnam Memorial or the freedom of speech memorial catch my eye.

The big thing with this is the sustainability aspect of this memorial.

Don't like this one. I feel like it could be problematic for groups from different backgrounds.

I like the board with the Freedom of Speech Wall because it wasn't just a building people could walk over without gaining anything. I think memorials with direct messages help easily convey meaning. It grabs the attention of passersby. You can't help but stop and stare.

This example is a powerful way of engaging modern discourse + recognizing continued injustice.



# Precedent Responses

## National Memorial for Peace and Justice

**Location:** Equal Justice Initiative, Montgomery, AL  
**Year:** 2018  
**Designer:** MASS Design Group  
**Cost:** \$20 Million - full complex

Connection to Wake Forest because it's easy to ignore that part of the past.

I'm shocked!

I think the size and design of this is very engaging and hard not to be mesmerized by.

I like the idea of creating something that involves the community history.

I think we should incorporate things from the town of Wake Forest, like the soil in this project.

I like having a big artifact where it makes people stop and think.



**Peace and Justice Memorial Center |** Montgomery Alabama  
 Design: MASS Design Group

# Precedent Responses

## Richmond Trail of Enslaved Africans

**Location:** Richmond, VA  
**Year:** ----  
**Designer:** Baskervill  
**Cost:** -----

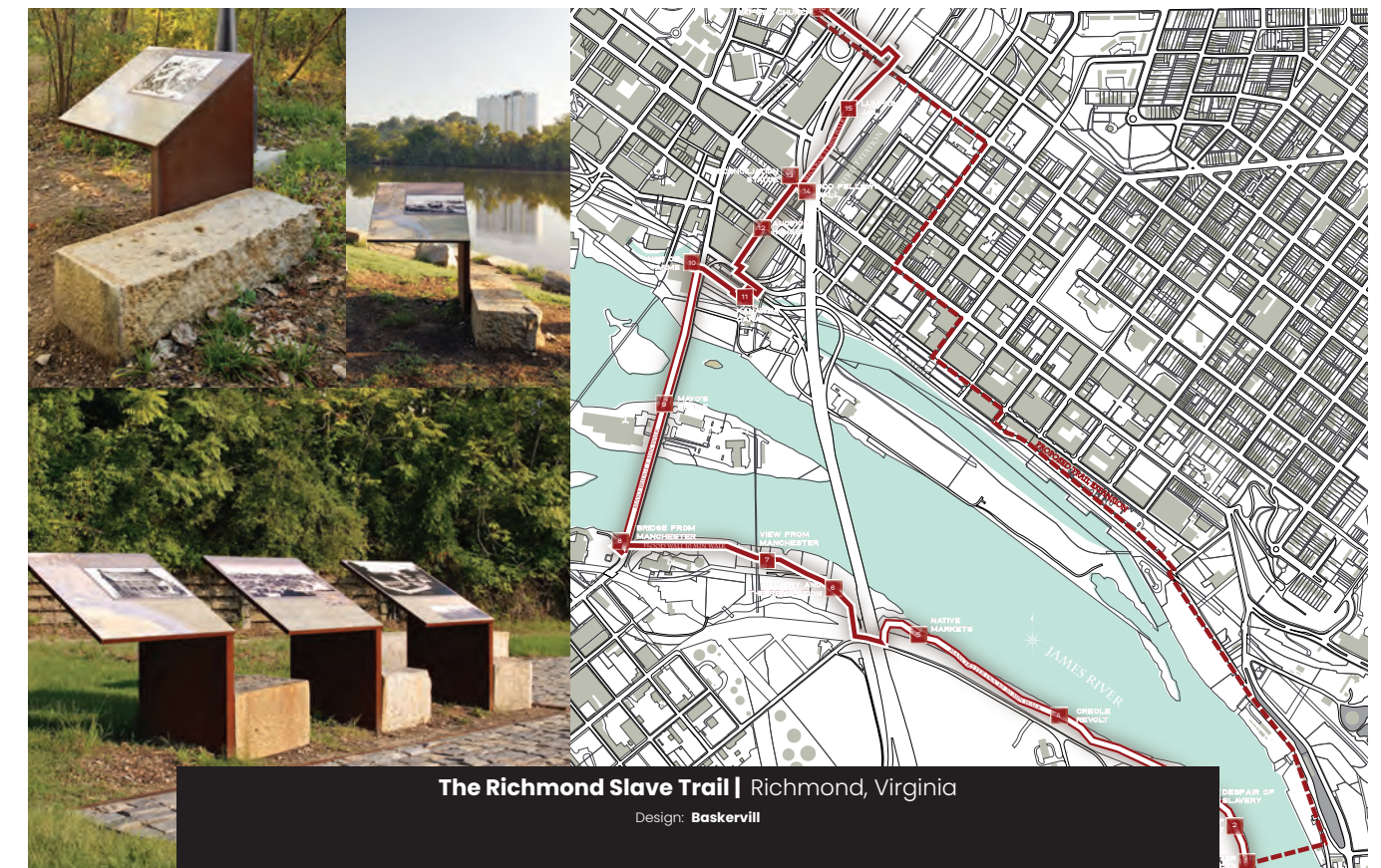
Great way of not keeping a memorial in one spot but allowing it to educate people on a broader scale.

I think a monument incorporating a map of Wake Forest's old campus to give context and more.

We have a trail already called Reynolda Trail. Maybe we could add onto that or something similar to this project to honor others.

Reynolda trail?

Connect the past to present. Tell the story along Reynolda Path?



**The Richmond Slave Trail |** Richmond, Virginia  
 Design: Baskervill



# Precedent Responses

## Robert E. Lee Memorial

**Location:** Monument Avenue, Richmond, VA  
**Year:** 1890 | 2020 (re-contextualized)  
**Designer:** Antonin Mercie, Paul Pujol | Various Richmond Artists, Dustin Klein  
**Cost:** -----

Called destructive (Black people) but the history isn't being honored.

How can you create a mem/artifact for and ongoing issue or impact from origin of WFU? Other memorials at different unis as examples (George Mason, William/Mary). Dialogue in memorials? Not so much removal but completion.

What a memorial to the enslaved at Wake Forest. Who are we memorializing for who we are? Why are we memorializing? Slavery's Legacy. Memorialize the present. How do we NOT 2020 RETRAUMATIZE?

How do we tell stories without retraumatizing? What does it mean to memorialize? Make sure it starts the conversation rather than end.

Where should it be removed/completion?

The whole story of Wake Forest University - the through line - How to connect the town of Wake Forest and into the W-S Community - Can the Beatty Sr Development include an artifact (Five Row, etc.)? Place of contemplative accessible education - lifting the veil. How to grapple w/ Thomas Dixon and the rise of KKK? How can we use

technology to connect all the \_\_\_? Wait chapel, Olive Branch and Jeffries. Idea of it being "-----" - meaning that the story will unfold.

Honor and memorialized the enslaved. The way George Mason has incorporated the Hearth Memorial in the fabric of institution from start to finish - student tours leading to graduation. The ancestors, if located, should have a voice in the process and their voices should be heard. Also like the idea and concept that schools in Germany have adopted where students visit concentration camps and curriculum is embedded in the student experience. Maybe all students make a trip to old campus and do an overnight sleepover where the slaves lived, stayed, and worked. They will have an experience with the campus, memorial, etc. (all students visit once over their 4 years)

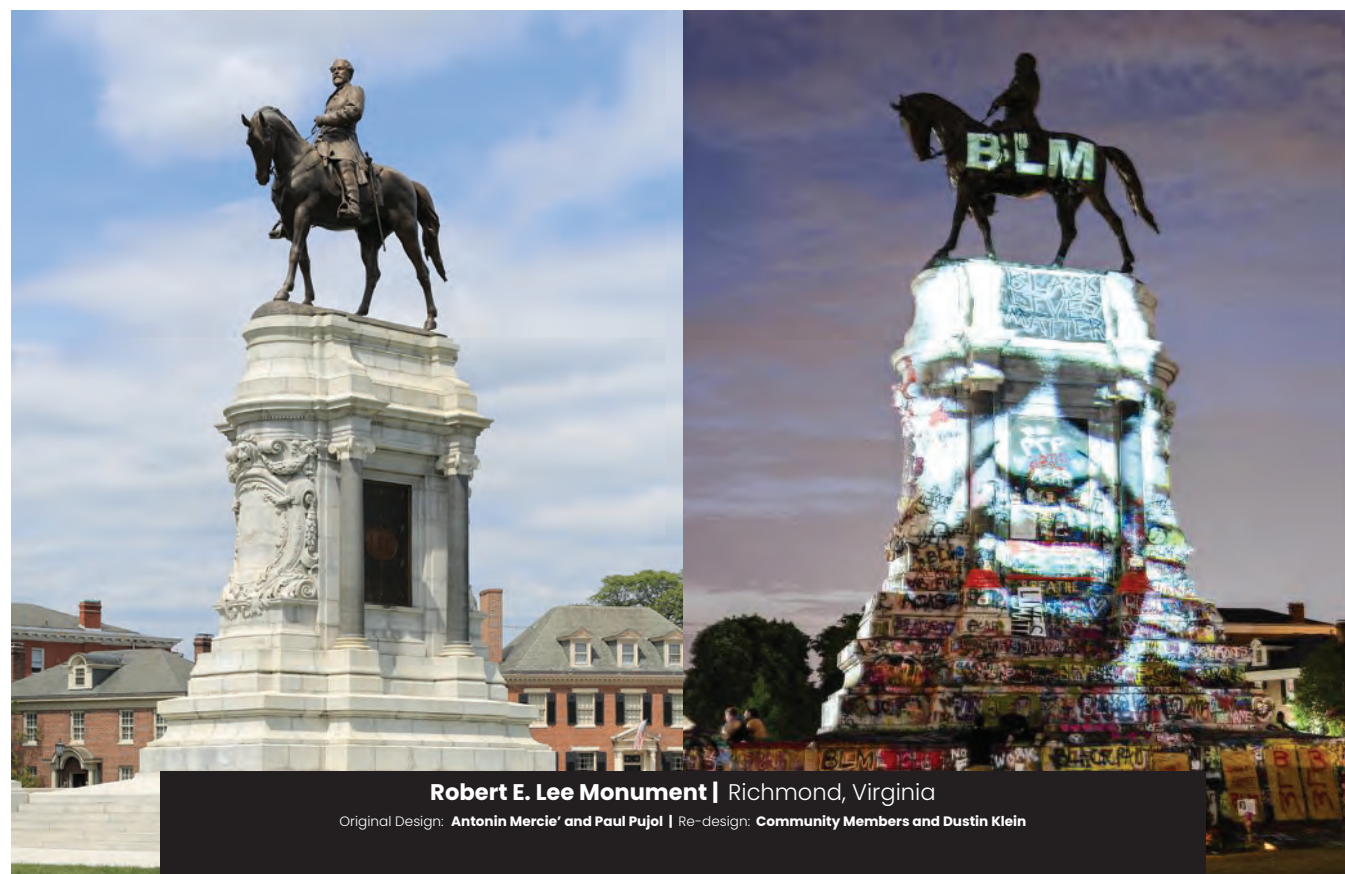
Something interactive, labor. Who does this memorial serve? Is it to appease White guilt? What are Black students to do with reminding of this? The memorial cannot be a tree. Hiring employees and not contracting through the Budd Group!

Something interactive or that encourages interactions like the Hearth. Encourages curriculum/course work around the conversation.

Must connect to something that the University is doing now. Something that draws people attention and makes them stop and think. I like the names, it makes it

human. A place to sit and converse and think. I like the community aspect. David Field, lower quad, potent field by the business school. Someone mentioned adding water and I think maybe trees with a pathway and a semi-circle surrounded by trees, but half private for those that need a moment but open so people can see it too.

To honor not pity. To represent the silent voices of minority students through honoring those in the past that may have been enslaved in benefit of this institution. Visible place on campus, cameras for tampering. "You can't move forward if you don't know where you came from" Wake Forest needs to do a campus announcement, reared event or even during orientation to play audio we listened to an educate those who may not know and to honor those.





# Precedent Responses

## Memorial to Enslaved Laborers

**Location:** University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA  
**Year:** 2020  
**Designer:** Howeler+Yoon, Studio&  
**Cost:** \$2.5 Million

Why would Northerners go to NC and choose to directly participate in enslaving human beings? In supporting and perpetuating a slave society? The church, the church, the church—proslavery [speech] from the pulpit, the influence of the church on social and political policies and the church (who else beyond the Baptists)? White woman were/are complicit—this is not just a “man”/” White men” “problem”—it is not only White men perpetuate racism, it was not only White men building a slave society. I’ve seen too many times where White women want to be crafted into native angels who being controlled. How does this space connect with consistent curriculum—in the classroom—not a sole event but every day. It sounds like the foundation for this connection is there, but cohesive communication may still be forming. How does this manifest today? Events I have experienced in public history work:\_\_\_ want to make racism and slavery and its legacy into a geographic issue—so that if they are from north or outside of the south they feel they do not need to engage with interpretation educating them on the institution and legacy of slavery. Guest also want to make racism and the institution of slavery into a family timeline issue—so that if their family immigrated to the U.S. post 1865 they feel they do not need to engage with interpretative educate them on the institution and legacy.

Don’t try to stuff everything in Maya Angelou. When we say memorial building, we mean an entire new artifact.

Unique challenge of WFU / Reynolda Campus vs. Wake Forest, NC Campus. How to tell that story.

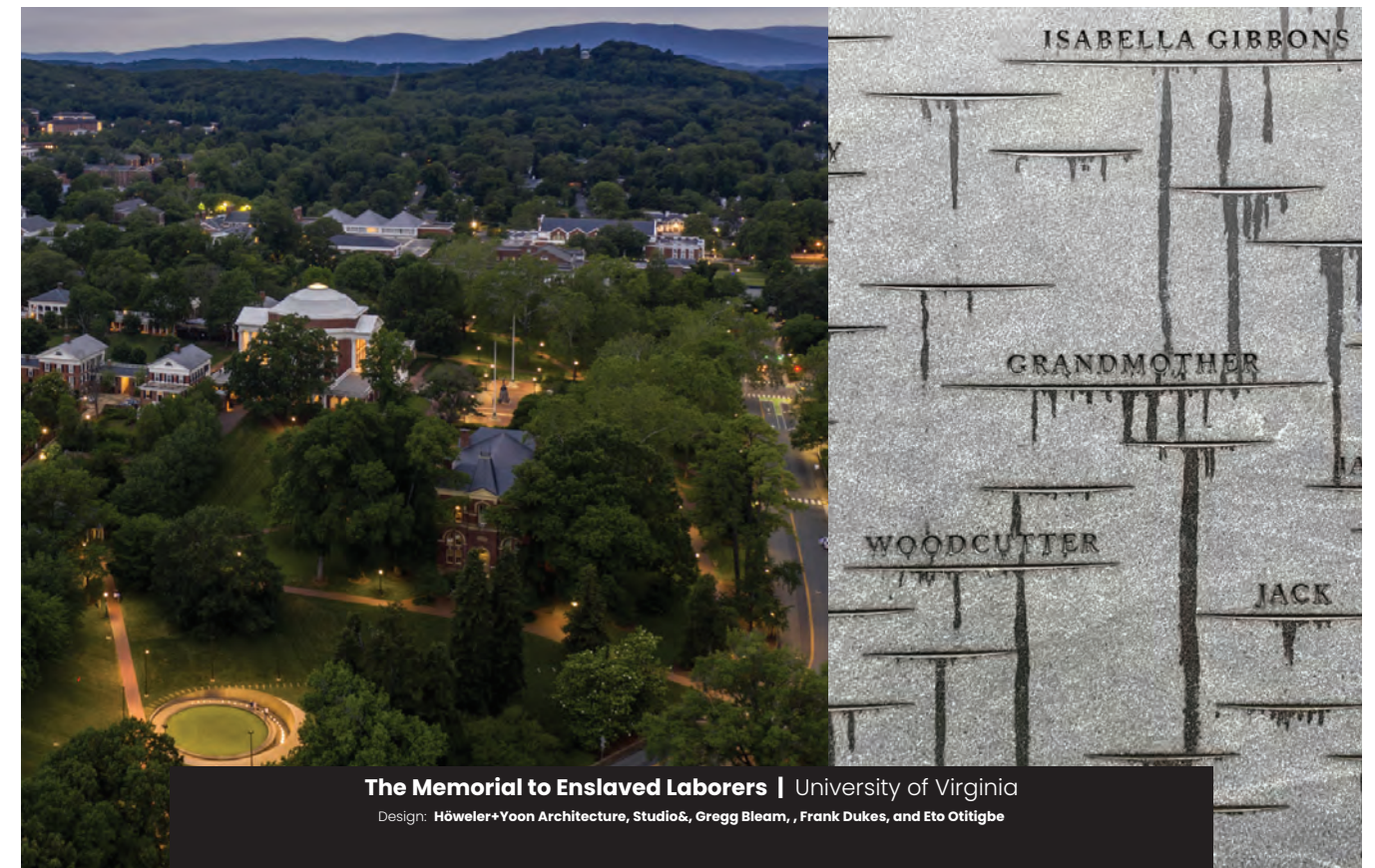
Important that memorial/artifact is reflective of University of Virginia.

I like how this artifact was put at a high traffic area, considering the location of their campus.

Having something like this at both sides of our entrances.

Positive: visually scarring portrayals like the blood portray the true horrors accurately.

Beautiful and Inclusive. This could be done at Wake.







Maya Angelou at Wake Forest University's Opening Convocation on Aug. 26, 1991.  
Photo courtesy of Wake Forest University.

# 3 CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSES

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Winston-Salem

Wake Forest University

Greensboro

100 miles

Durham

Wake Forest, NC

Raleigh

## Notable Places

### Wake Forest Town

Locations that emerged as being considered significant spaces during engagement sessions

- 1 Wake Forest town boundary
- 2 Ailey Young House
- 3 Northeast Community "the East End"
- 4 W.E.B DuBois School, a Rosenwald school
- 5 Historic Wake Forest College Campus
- 6 Wake Forest Historical Museum
- 7 Olive Branch Baptist Church
- 8 Alston-Massenburg Center
- 9 Wake Forest Cemetery





Winston-Salem

Wake Forest University

Greensboro

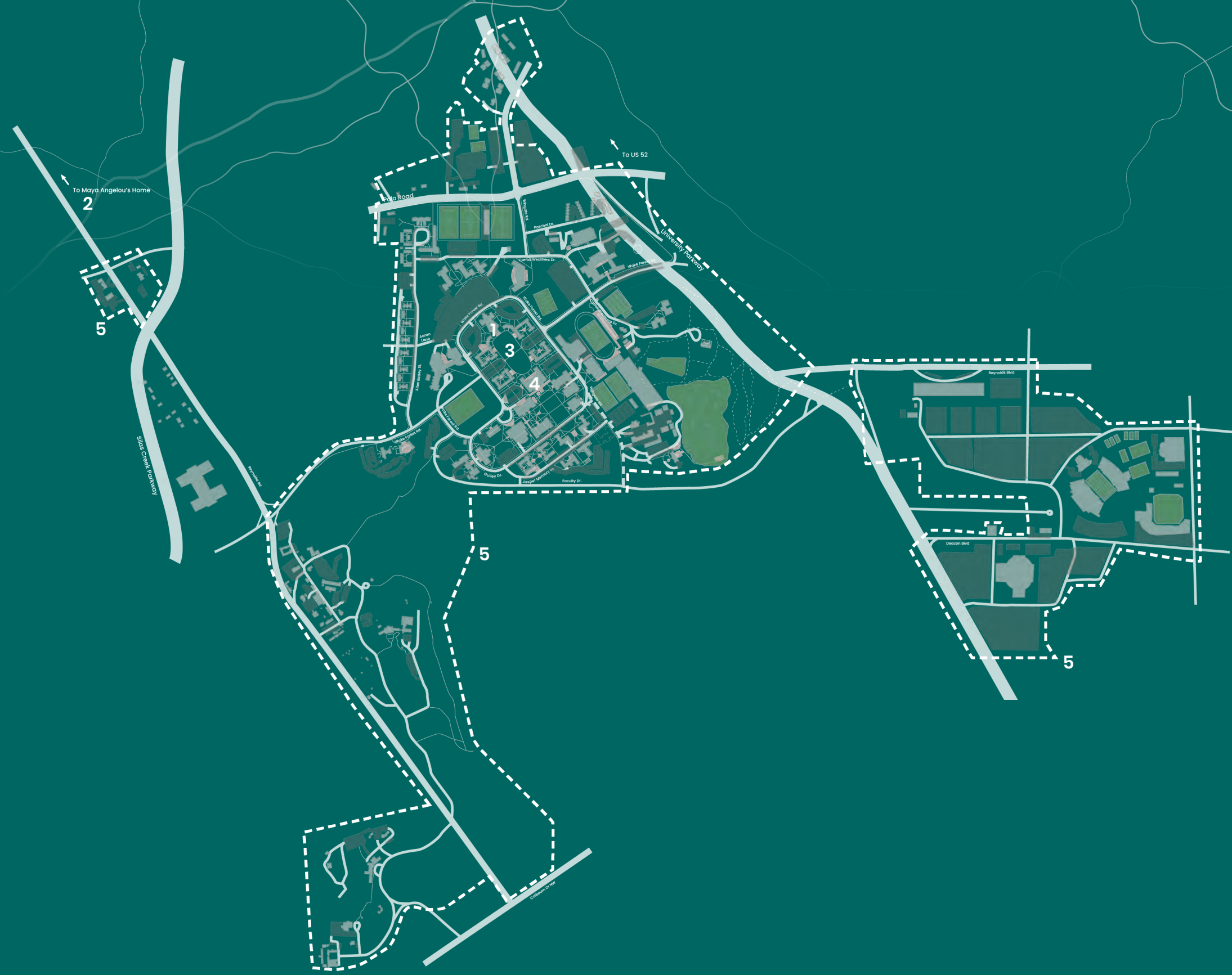
100 miles

Durham

Wake Forest, NC



Raleigh



# Notable Places

## Wake Forest University

Locations that emerged as being considered significant spaces during engagement sessions

- 1 Wait Chapel
- 2 Maya Angelou's House
- 3 "The Quad"
- 4 The Pit in Reynolda Hall
- 5 Reynolda Campus Boundary

# Priorities

## Frequently Expressed Community Needs & Wants

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### 1 Educational Honesty

- Acknowledging the truth of Wake Forest's history with enslavement
- Not shying away from the atrocities and brutality of the story of slavery for the sake of White students and minimizing White guilt
- Not whitewashing the story and avoiding untruthful ambiguous language such as the word "hire"
- Focusing on the human stories of the enslaved men, women, and children the memorial is meant to honor
- Ending apologia for slave-owners

### 2 Student Wellbeing

- Creating/Maintaining traditions
- Building unity and support among Black students and students of color
- Protecting psychological safety and mental health of Black students

### 3 Investment in and Support for Black Staff and Workers

- Breaking the generational cycle of exploited Black labor
- Acknowledging the value of Black Labor (socially, economically, historically)
- Maintenance of the artifact not falling on the shoulders of Black workers
- Establishing safe spaces for workers to congregate and interact w/ students

### 4 Acknowledgment of Wake Forest's Historic Black community in the Town of Wake Forest

- Acknowledging past wrongs, atoning in the present
- Avoid the "slap in the face" of memorialization w/o addressing clear and present urgent community needs
- Increased meaningful student interaction with Wake Forest town
- Economic investment and support of town functions



# Design Goals

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- 1** Tell the **honest story** of Wake Forest’s history with enslavement.
- 2** Relieve Black students, groups, staff, and faculty from the **burden of educating others** about the stories and traumas of Wake Forest’s history with enslavement.
- 3** **Celebrate, honor, and commemorate** the lives and contributions of enslaved people who were “hired” by or bequeathed to the University and subsequently sold for the benefit of the institution, as well as the lives of those left behind in the transition from the Town of Wake Forest to Winston-Salem.

- 4** **Create meaningful connections** between the historic Town of Wake Forest and the Wake Forest University campus for students, faculty, staff, and town community members.
- 5** Place the Memorial/Artifact in a **prominent, noticeable, and unavoidable location**, taking into consideration impact on student life and campus activities.



Wait Chapel, 2017.  
Photo Credit: Ken Bennett  
Courtesy of Wake Forest University.

