

For Immediate Release
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***Young Historians Living Histories* Video to Debut at CAAMFest 2014
in San Francisco on March 15**

Oral history project funded by Smithsonian grant completed with national film festival premiere

CLEVELAND, OH — In Fall of 2013, the [Western Reserve Historical Society](#) and the locally founded Asian Indian Heritage Project which serves Northeast Ohio, embarked on [Young Historians, Living Histories](#). The project, funded through a grant from the Smithsonian Institution's Youth Access Program, is a national project engaging under-served Asian Pacific American youth to deepen their understanding and appreciation of their history by conducting oral histories and film documentaries. The Western Reserve Historical Society brought together six local students in an effort to capture and record the oral histories of members of the Cleveland Asian Indian community. Over the course of three months, the students interviewed individuals and couples from the community and in January 2014, completed the creation of a six-minute video from the interview footage.

The video, which the students created and edited themselves, will premiere nationally on March 15 at [CAAMFest 2014](#), a film festival produced by the [Center for Asian American Media](#) (CAAM).

"The students who worked on this project did an outstanding job capturing the oral histories of those in their community," says Dr. John Grabowski, Senior VP for Research and Publications at WRHS, who led the project at WRHS. "The experience was enlightening for all involved, and I couldn't be more proud of the team we assembled. The premiere at CAAMFest is a great celebration of the hard work that was done."

The festival, which will take place in San Francisco, is the nation's largest showcase for new Asian American and Asian films, annually presenting about 130 works. Since 1982, the CAAMFest has been an important launching point for Asian American independent filmmakers

as well as a vital source for new Asian cinema. The Cleveland film is one of nine produced by those who worked on the *Young Historians, Living Histories* program at sites throughout the United States.

WRHS began its involvement in the program after being chosen as one of nine Smithsonian Affiliate partners for the project. With those funds, WRHS was able to purchase video equipment used for the project and provide modest stipends to the students involved in the project. The selection process for both the students and interviewees began shortly after, with constructive and insightful input from AIHP and the Asian Indian community. The student videographers/Interviewers were: Aekta Chowksey, Debolina Ghosh, Pranav Idnany, Krish Lamba, Trisha Roy, and Shivani Yerigeri. The video editors were: Debolina Ghosh and Krish Lamba. The Interviewees were: Dr. Ranajit Datta, Dr. Ivan Tewarson, R. Balasubramaniam, Dr. Elizabeth Balraj and Mr. Winfred Balraj, Dr. Shanta Kampani and Mr. Surinder Kampani, and Dr. Saroj Aggarwal and Mr. Shiv Aggarwal. Two students and one AIHP representative will represent the group and introduce the final video for its world premiere at CAAMFest.

The Smithsonian Institution's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education and Access manages the Youth Access Grants program. The project is a collaboration between the [Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center](#), [Smithsonian Affiliations](#), and the Center for Asian American Media. The goal of the program is to encourage young historians to explore and better understand the history and culture of the Asian American experience while at the same time, learning to utilize new technologies.

The Western Reserve Historical Society [History Center](#) is located in Cleveland's [University Circle](#) at 10825 East Boulevard. Museum hours are Tuesday - Saturday 10:00am - 5:00pm and Sunday, Noon - 5:00pm. Western Reserve Historical Society members and children two and under are free of charge. The research library is open Thursday – Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$10 and \$5 for children 3-12. Group rates are available. Parking lot fees are paid at the admission desk during museum hours.

Founded in 1867, Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) is Northeast Ohio's premier storyteller based on its vast collection of the tangible history of Northeast Ohio—such as: automobiles, airplanes,

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books, carousel horses, decorative arts, diaries, furniture, gardens, garments, genealogical resources, historic buildings, maps, paintings, photographs, shoes, toys, uniforms, and weapons. It is one of the oldest and largest nonprofit regional historical societies in the nation. It presents the lives and activities of 19th-century settlers at historic Hale Farm & Village in Bath Township, Ohio, and it presents the glitter and industry of the Gilded Age through the history of Cleveland's millionaires and entrepreneurs. WRHS offers a wealth of resources to research your family heritage at the History Center in Cleveland. For more information WRHS, 10825 East Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44106 visit www.wrhs.org or contact Jane M. Mason, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, jmason@wrhs.org or 216-721-572 ext. 1501.



WRHS receives public support with local tax dollars from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. Sponsorships, bequests, grants, admissions, and other funding are used to preserve and enrich the region's artistic and cultural heritage.