



January 29, 2021

Dear Friend of African American History,

We are writing to invite you to join the African American Archives Auxiliary of the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS). WRHS's current fiscal year marks both the founding of the African American Archives in 1970, as well as the establishment in 1971 of the Black History Committee, now known as the African American Archives Auxiliary. The Auxiliary ("Quad A") was actually established 50 years ago this month, which is why we are launching a membership drive in this golden anniversary year, to continue to build on this successful tradition by promoting Cleveland's African American History through preservation of these critical archival collections.

The African American Archives Auxiliary has undergone considerable revitalization in the past year, electing a new slate of officers and planning programming despite the serious challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Quad A launched a Facebook Group this past March which now boasts more than 350 members and has seen extensive activity, including a virtual book club to discuss architect Robert P. Madison's new memoir *Designing Victory* in May 2020. In June just a week after George Floyd's murder by police amid an outpouring of protest around the country, we started a "Share Your Story" initiative in partnership with WRHS to document the work of Cleveland activists for social justice and racial equity. In recent months Quad A has sponsored several virtual talks by local experts like Dr. Regennia Williams, and this February 19th we are planning a Black History Month tribute to Robert P. Madison, celebrated Cleveland architect and a founding African American Archives Auxiliary member. There will be an upcoming podcast series ("#BlackLivesMatter: The Coronavirus Edition"), as well as a possible "Lectures in Cleveland African American History, 1820-2020" series that would feature the work of scholars, community leaders, and artists. You can read more about Quad A's recent activities in our latest newsletter.

Will you consider joining the African American Archives Auxiliary of WRHS? Our new president, Raymond A. Weeden, has called upon us to "Retain, Re-engage, and Recruit" to ensure that Quad A's mission continues for another 50 years and also reaches new generations.

Quad A membership comes with an additional \$25 contribution beyond the regular WRHS membership fee, for a total annual investment starting at \$75. The current "Buy One, Gift One" offer of one extra membership for every signup allows you to generously sponsor a member in addition to yourself (this two-for-one promotion also extends to household memberships). Donations are always welcomed to our sustaining funds which underwrite exhibitions and programs, plus support the work of WRHS African American Archives and help pay the salary of an archivist (currently Patrice Hamiter). Besides having opportunities to meet and work with educators, scholars, artists and others who love Black History, we also welcome volunteer participation through Quad A, for example helping to process donated archival collections, writing for our newsletter or publications like *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, or joining our planned speakers bureau. As a nonprofit, we welcome contributions of all sorts and recognize that volunteer hours have been calculated at the equivalent of approximately \$27 per hour.

We sincerely hope that you will join us as the African American Archives Auxiliary of WRHS embarks on its next half-century. To join please visit our membership page HERE, and feel free to reply to this message if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your generous support, and we look forward to seeing you!

Sincerely,

Raymond A. Weeden, President
African American Archives Auxiliary (AAAA)
of the Western Reserve Historical Society

Regennia N. Williams, Ph.D.
Distinguished Scholar of African American History and Culture

Kenneth D. Hale
Vice President, AAAA

Todd M. Michney, Ph.D.
Chair, Membership Committee, AAAA Trustee