Connecting Student Learning to Historic Preservation
REACH Enhances College Experience

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VP for Development
Black River Technical College
REACH:

Researching Early Arkansas Cultural Heritage
Theory and Application
Extend Classroom into Community
Apply Learning in New Settings
Learning and Skills are Connected, not Discrete Information

CONNECTIONS
Trans-Mississippi West
The Structures

Rice-Upshaw House

William Looney Tavern
East Arkansas Settlement Study
“When I first heard about the study, I did not understand what could be so interesting. They are just old houses, on the side of the road, in the middle of a field, and on a riverbank. But...stories of the early settlers...brought life into the old homes before me.

The highway before me became a trail...The settlers...traveled hundreds of miles by trails, on horseback, by foot, and in wagon trains. They overcame many obstacles, faced many hardships, and survived...
“The homes now stand alone, quiet on the stone foundations. .. Now I see them as pieces of a puzzle, pieces that have been essential in shaping our community. They are beckoning us to dig deeper into their past and give them a solid place in... history.”

Twyla Evans,
Freshman English I Student
William Looney

- Early 1800s arrival
- Accompanied by enslaved African Americans
- Justice of the Peace
- Regional financier
- Distiller of apple brandy
- Inn/Tavern
The county of Randolph .

To the hands of Abalam Coosy & Co. 100 1/2 S. Coosy

Robert a negro man about 50 years.
Rose a 50. Woman " " 15 1/2

Hyram a 50. Man " " 37 1/2

Albert a 50. " " 22

Ann a 50. Woman " " 18

Matthew a 50. Man " " 15

Pamela a 50. Girl " " 13

Emily " " 12

John a 50. Boy " " 10

Joseph a 50. " " 8

Eliza a 50. Girl " " 6

Franka a 50. 150 " " 4

Suey a 50. " " 3
Reuben Rice

- 1812 Arrival in Eleven Point River Valley
- Well known merchant
- Illiterate but visionary
- County Commissioner
East Arkansas Settlement Study

• Age of structures confirmed
  – Rice-Upshaw 1828
  – William Looney Tavern 1833

• Classroom skills
  – Can be linked
  – Positive student engagement
Development of REACH

• Restoration would require grant
• Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC)
  – Historic
  – Architectural
  – Archeological
Ownership by BRTC Required
Contingent upon grant, restoration

DONATION AND ACCEPTANCE
$194,000   Stabilization of Rice-Upshaw House

2006
$575,000
Restoration of Rice-Upshaw House
2007
$500,000 Restoration of William Looney Tavern

2008
Site Enhancements, Outbuildings, Pavilion, Tavern Completion
$500,000
2009
$1.7 Million
2011 ANCRC Grant Application: Public Visitation

- $475,000 Request
- Pavilion at William Looney Tavern
- Historic Fencing
- Interpretive Master Plan
- Digital Interpretive Materials
Upcoming Plans

• October 2011 Major Public Event
• Public Visitation
• Expanded student engagement
• Digital interpretation
• Occasional special interpretive events
Rice-Upshaw House
William Looney Tavern
Rice-Upshaw House
Celebration and Family Dedication
William Looney Tavern
Celebration and Family Dedication
Cost vs. Value

• Historic
• Architectural
• Archeological
• Craftsmen skilled in preservation trades
RESTORATION OF THE RICE-UPSHAW HOUSE

2007-2009

Drawing by Jessica Hausman, Art Student
RESTORATION OF THE WILLIAM LOONEY TAVERN

2009-2011
Rice-Upshaw House

- Honorable Mention:
- “Excellence Through Restoration” 2009

Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas
William Looney Tavern

“Outstanding Work
By a Craftsperson” 2011

Historic Preservation Alliance
of Arkansas
What is the worth of history?
Making Connections

- English
- Art
- Community Heritage
- Machine Shop
- Music
- Nursing
- Chemistry
- Government
- Criminal Justice
- Welding
- Desktop Publishing
Student Connections
Student Jamie Taber sketches fireplace at unrestored Rice-Upshaw site.
BRTC Students Sketch
Rice-Upshaw House
BRTC Students at UA Fayetteville

Dr. David Stahle. Director, Dendrochronology Laboratory
BRTC Students at UA Museum Archive
BRTC Students at UA Archive

Rick Parker, AIC, Parker Conservators, Inc
BRTC Students View REACH Artifacts at Arkansas Archeological Survey

Aden Jenkins, AAS
Descendants of Reuben Rice
Christina French, Donor
William Looney Tavern
Historic Architect Tommy Jameson, AIA  (left)
Randy Dennis, ANCRC Director
Joan Gould, Historic Preservationist (left)
ANCRC Members
REACH as Educational Setting
BRTC Faculty Tour Rice Upshaw House
BRTC Faculty Visit Fall 2010
William Looney Tavern
BRTC Construction Manager discusses Early Arkansas Experiences of African Americans with Historian Ronnie Nichols
Requests for Visits

- May 2011
- June 2011
- “Juneteenth Celebration”
- Gifted/Talented Instructors
- Pocahontas Public Schools
- African American descendants of former slaves of William Looney family
Other institutions of higher education

- Dissertation Studies
  - Distilleries
  - Non-Plantation Enslavement
- Heritage Studies Programs
* Theory and Application
* Extend Classroom into Community
* Apply Learning in New Settings
* Classroom Learning and Skills are Connected, not Pieces of Discrete Information
References


