Partners

Universities:
Suffolk University
University of Massachusetts at Lowell

The two university partners for the *Voices Rising* project include the American History Department at Suffolk University in Boston, and UMass Lowell in partnership with the Tsongas Industrial History Center. University participation was an essential component of the grant application, since the purpose of the U.S. *Teaching American History* grant program, which funds the *Voices Rising* project, is to "raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of traditional American history."

To fulfill this requirement, for grant years one and three, Suffolk University's American History Department, under the direction of Dr. Robert Allison, will conduct a week-long summer institute in July, as well as eight, three-hour seminars to be held at selected school district sites between September and January of the same years. This pattern will be repeated for grant year two, with UMass Lowell assuming responsibility for providing history content in the summer institute and district-based sessions.

Historians involved in the *summer institutes* will conduct sessions for teacher participants on selected American history topics aligned with both the targeted theme for the year and with state American history standards. Historians will have available for participants required books and printed materials for their session(s). Each historian has also consented to review one teacher-created, primary-source-based lesson developed as a result of teacher participation in the summer institute.

Each historian involved in the *district-based seminar series* has agreed to present one, three-hour, after-school session (i.e., 3p.m.- 6p.m.) to participating teachers on a selected topic in accordance with the targeted theme for the designated year that builds from the work of the summer institute. Historians will also provide books and printed materials for the seminars, and will review one teacher-created, primary-source-based lesson resulting from the seminar series.

In addition to offering well-qualified historians to present content and analysis skills to project teachers, both university partners are committed to using the project's collaborating national parks and historic sites, as well as the Boston Public Library, to enhance further the teaching of American history through teacher exploration of the various primary sources that these places embody. Since the *Voices Rising* project will be employing both classroom and hands-on professional development, the Suffolk University/UMass Lowell partnership is most appropriate for leading the integration of the project's various historical components.

The Boston Public Library

Throughout *Voices Rising*, the Boston Public Library (BPL) will assist teachers in their search for appropriate primary sources. The BPL's extensive collections include American Historical

Prints, Anti-Slavery, Civil War Papers, 20th Regiment, Benjamin Franklin, John A. Lewis Library of Americana, Maps and Atlases, and Massachusetts Newspapers from 1690 – present, to name a few. As a partner in the project, the BPL will (1) provide a half-day orientation during the summer institutes to its pertinent holdings and collections related to the American history for specific grant years, (2) provide research (48 hours each year) on archived holdings of the BPL and other area libraries and archives related to specific topics of study for each grant year, (3) allow digitization of BPL-owned primary source materials for use in participating teachers' primary-source-based lessons, (4) assist with copyright and digital management issues related to historical documents created by the project, as well as those documents that are created by others, but used in *Voices Rising*, and (5) participate on a project advisory board.

National Parks and Historic Sites

The *Voices Rising* project includes six Boston-area national parks and historic sites that will provide project teachers with a hands-on component to the study of American history. These include the *Boston National Historical Park* (and its affiliates the Old South Meeting House and the Old State House), the *Minute Man National Historical Park*, the *Lowell National Historical Park*, the *Old North Church*, the *Saugus Iron Works Historic Site*, and the *Boston African American Historic Site*.

Each of these parks and sites, working with historians, Teacher Learning Center Directors, and project teachers, will assist in providing a hands-on experience to project teachers regarding the use of primary sources. Each park or site will (1) allow three days of free access to their sites for participating teachers for each year of the grant, (2) identify primary source documents and artifacts for digitization and either grant permission to digitize materials owned by the park or site, or identify copyright holders for selected documents and artifacts, (3) provide access to a park or site expert (eighteen hours per year) who will coordinate/conduct an orientation tour of the park or site during the summer and provide ongoing communication with participating teachers for each year of the grant, (4) provide a web link to completed primary-source-based lessons/units from the *Voices Rising* project, and (5) participate on a project advisory board.

School Districts

The Everett, Malden, and Medford Public Schools, three of the four school districts involved in the *Voices Rising* project, have a longstanding relationship and history of successful collaboration in federal and state-funded projects over the past seven years and have received over $3 million in competitive funds from these sources. The fourth school district partner, Revere Public Schools, has continually expressed interest in joining the grant-funded collaborative initiative planned by its neighboring three districts. The *Teaching American History* grant provides a perfect opportunity for that collaboration to occur, given the common American history curriculum goals and needs of the four school districts.

TRITEC

The Tri-City Technology Education Collaborative (TRITEC) is a nonprofit organization created and sustained by the Everett, Malden, and Medford school districts to develop greater economies of scale around common curricular and technology-integration-related issues affecting the districts. TRITEC promotes collaboration among the partners and has been very effective in assisting the tri-city school districts in pursuing collaborative and competitive grants aimed at increasing student learning in the various content areas. In addition, TRITEC brings a high level of management experience to the *Voices Rising* project.

TRITEC will provide oversight and guidance to the *Voices Rising* project through its executive director, Dr. Cynthia Fiducia, who will serve as project director. She will ensure smooth coordination among the project's partners. Dr. Fiducia has served in the capacity of principal investigator or project director for all the federal and state grants (over $3 million) that the Everett, Malden, and Medford school district partnership has been awarded over the past seven years. She will also ensure the continuous training of the Teacher Learning Center Directors, as well as maintaining and enhancing the technology infrastructure needed to support ongoing partner communication and disseminate teachers' primary-source-based lessons.