



**SULTANA PROJECTS**  
PRESERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION

P.O Box 524 / Chestertown, Maryland / 21620  
[www.sultanaprojects.org](http://www.sultanaprojects.org) / 410-778-5954

---

***Press Release***

***Sultana Projects, Inc.***

***February 1, 2011***

*Contact: Drew McMullen, Sultana Projects, Inc., 410-778-5954, [dmcullen@sultanaprojects.org](mailto:dmcullen@sultanaprojects.org)*

**SULTANA CO-HOSTS SUCCESSFUL “ROOTS OF A NATION”  
TEACHER CONFERENCE AT HISTORIC LONDON TOWN**

***Chestertown, Maryland:*** On Saturday, January 29, more than 70 teachers, educators and scholars attended the Inaugural Conference for the Roots of a Nation Teaching American History initiative at Historic London Town outside of Annapolis, Maryland. The Roots of a Nation Teaching American History initiative is a consortium of seven Maryland school districts, including Calvert, Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s, and Talbot counties, working together to increase teacher content knowledge, improve pedagogical practices and measurably improve student achievement in American History. Funded by a Teaching American History Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Roots of a Nation initiative is being administered by Sultana Projects, Inc. and the Kent County Public Schools in partnership with the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience, the Center for Environment and Society at Washington College, and the Calvert Marine Museum.

“Roots of a Nation is the most inspiring teacher professional development experience I have witnessed in a long time,” commented Dr. Marcie Thoma, Supervisor of Social Studies for the Maryland State Department of Education, who was in attendance at this weekend’s conference. “The teacher participants were thrilled to hear all of the historic learning opportunities which will be offered to them over the next three years. Sultana Projects always provides top quality learning experiences for students and teachers, however, this initiative goes beyond anything else they have developed. Seven Maryland school districts working collaboratively with five historic sites and museums....all focused on improving social studies teacher content knowledge and pedagogical practices is a rarity when so many programs are only focused on reading, math, and STEM initiatives! Creating a network of teachers committed to promoting excellence in history education is a worthy goal!”

In the Fall of 2010, Sultana Projects staff worked with Social Studies coordinators from the seven participating counties to select a core group of approximately 40 “Master Teachers” to participate in the Roots of a Nation program. These Master Teachers attended Saturday’s Inaugural Conference at Historic London Town to plan out their course of study which will include over 400 hours of professional development programs

over the next three years, including 18 unique courses, conferences, and week-long seminars. Over the course of the day, teachers had an opportunity to meet with some of the course leaders, including Professor Adam Goodheart from the C.V. Starr Center at Washington College, Dr. John Seidel from the Center for Environment and Society and Sherrod Sturrock, Deputy Director at the Calvert Marine Museum. By the end of the conference, attending teachers had signed up for an average of five courses between February and August 2011, representing more than 3,250 teacher-hours of programs.

Examples of courses and seminars to be offered by the Roots of a Nation program in 2011 include:

***Life & Society in the Chesapeake Tidewater: An Historical & Archaeological Journey:*** In this five-day course led by Dr. John Seidel and Elizabeth Seidel of Washington College's Center for Environment and Society, participating teachers will travel to various archeological and cultural sites related to Native American settlement in the Chesapeake Region at the time of first contact with Europeans.

***The War of 1812 in Maryland – A Tale of Divided Loyalties:*** Led by Calvert Marine Museum's deputy director Sherrod Sturrock and noted historian Dr. Ralph Eshelman, teachers participating in this five-day course will travel to many of the key sites of the War of 1812 in Maryland, meet with several noted historians, and learn about the important role the Chesapeake Bay played in this little understood conflict that helped forge the identity of our young country.

***Picturing the Past - An Exploration of History Through the Visual Arts:*** Adam Goodheart, Director of the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience at Washington College, and Donald McColl, Professor of Art & Art History, will lead teachers on this two day seminar to Washington, D.C., where they will make a unique exploration of slavery and the Civil War using the visual arts as their primary sources.

*A full listing of all Roots of a Nation courses can be found at:*

***<http://www.sultanaprojects.org/rootsofanation/programseminars.htm>***

“This was a great way to kick-off the Roots of a Nation program,” said Chris Cerino, Vice President of Sultana Projects and principal organizer of the conference. “We have been working on this initiative for almost 18 months and it is very gratifying to see the programs so well received by area teachers and administrators.”

END

---

### **About Sultana Projects**

Each year more than 15,000 students of all ages take part in a unique educational experience with Sultana Projects. Whether sailing on the decks of the 1768 schooner SULTANA, paddling on the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail, or restoring wetlands on tidal tributaries, students who participate in Sultana Projects' programs gain a greater appreciation of the history and environment of the national treasure that is the Chesapeake Bay. Sultana Projects' programs are accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education and the organization was the recipient of the 2009 American Sail Training Association "Sea Education Program of the Year" award.

**[www.sultanaprojects.org](http://www.sultanaprojects.org)**