

**"Children's Guide to Columbus"**

**Mississippi University for Women  
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**January 1, 2016-June 30, 2017**

**May 24, 2017**

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## Final Report Narrative

**Title of Project:** Children's Guide to Columbus

**Grant Period:** January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

**Grantee Name:** Mississippi University for Women

**Project Director:** Monica Riley

### Description of Project

This project was a partnership between Mississippi University for Women's pre-service teacher candidates and the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau. The project focused on developing next-generation leaders' knowledge of the rich heritage of Columbus. Pre-service teachers from a block of Methods courses (ED 305, Methods of Teaching Math; E310, Methods of Teaching Social Studies; ED 312, Methods of teaching Science; and ED 334, Methods of Teaching Reading and Language Arts) and K5 students researched the cultural heritage of Columbus and developed a way to share the information with current residents and tourists from a child's perspective. Candidates researched the cultural heritage of Columbus including but not limited to its architecture, music, food, celebrations, and history. They developed and presented lessons on the research topics to K5 students from partner schools. Students from the K5 area schools had opportunity to research and learn about the rich heritage of Columbus in each of these areas. Both MUW candidates and K5 students worked with representatives from the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop a method for sharing their research and knowledge with residents and visitors of Columbus.

### Activities

- Activities and meetings with community partners  
Dr. Riley discussed partnership opportunities with representatives from the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau. Candidates in the teacher education program met with professors of the participating courses in mid-August to discuss the project and to draft the content that would be researched and presented to students. The candidates and faculty then met with the CEO of the Columbus- Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Columbus Cultural Heritage Foundation, our community partner. Professors and candidates toured the Visitor's Center and the Columbus Welcome center to learn about existing tourism opportunities and the timeline for the new Children's Museum from the community partners. With partnership input, the candidates focused on the areas of agriculture, arts and architecture, daily life, history and geography, and transportation as they related to the impact of the Civil War on Columbus, MS. Candidates conducted research around these themes and then developed and taught a group of children an introductory lesson and subsequent in-depth lessons to

4<sup>th</sup> grade children. Students from two area schools came to the MUW campus. Candidates taught and had the 4<sup>th</sup> grade children investigate the city of Columbus during the designated time frame. Children developed 5 final projects as a result of their learning and research. They created an ABC book, city map, architecture scrap book, cotton gin, and transportation game. Candidates then met to discuss and develop the poster for the ATP conference presentation. They presented at the ATP conference and presented virtually to our community partner. One candidate then went to Jackson, MS and presented the poster at the Capitol in the Capitol Rotunda.

- Mid-August, 2016: Candidates and faculty met to discuss project and develop draft of the content.
  - September 7, 2016: Dr. Riley, principal investigator, and Nancy Carpenter, CEO of Columbus- Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Columbus Cultural Heritage Foundation, met at the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau and discussed opportunities for collaboration.
  - October 7, 2016: Dr. Riley, Dr. Coleman, MUW candidates and Nancy Carpenter met at the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau and discussed plans for the project, resources for the research project, possible opportunities for presentations, and possible opportunities for developing projects. Candidates and faculty took a tour of the Columbus Cultural Heritage Foundation.
  - October 2016: 4<sup>th</sup> grade students came to campus and received instruction and conducted research about Columbus during the Civil War era.  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/95579020@N04/albums/72157674877521001>
  - November 1, 2016: Dr. Riley met with Nancy Carpenter and the architects for the new Children’s Museum and discussed ideas and options for exhibits as well as ways for MUW students to be involved in the process.
  - November 2016: Candidates developed the poster for ATP.
  - December 2016: Candidates presented at the ATP conference and virtually to the community partner. <http://www.muw.edu/news/4005-w-students-to-participate-in-atp-symposium-in-washington>
  - March 23, 2017: Presentation at the Capitol Rotunda to share student research.
- presentations of student research to community groups other than the primary partner.
    - March 23, 2017: Posters at the Rotunda- This is an opportunity for undergraduate students to showcase work at the Capitol in Jackson, MS. Students visit with legislators and the public about their poster presentation.

## **Project Outcomes**

The Children's Guide to Columbus project accomplished the goals and objectives set forth in the original proposal. The proposal stated that candidates would seek leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth and to advance the profession.

- Candidates in the MUW elementary education program developed as leaders and took on the responsibility of guiding elementary students' learning as part of the week of teaching and researching the cultural heritage of Columbus. Candidates collaborated with colleagues, professors, and school professionals for this project.

To meet the project goal of participants experiencing parts of the regions, the project stated that candidates would understand how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues

- Candidates in the MUW elementary education program planned and taught lessons that helped connect concepts and engage learners in critical thinking and collaborative problem solving.

To meet the project goal of sharing research activities in the broader professional community, candidates collaborated with peers, professors, teachers in the field, and the community partner around the research that they conducted.

To meet goal 4 of the ARC research goals (Natural and Cultural Assets)

- Candidates researched the cultural heritage of Columbus as they planned and implemented lessons.
- Candidates met with 4<sup>th</sup> grade students for 5 days and provided teaching and mentoring as they researched the cultural heritage of Columbus.

## **Problems Encountered**

- The original project indicated that MUW candidates would work with K5 students. Due to the elementary schools' availability for sending students, the candidates worked with 4<sup>th</sup> grade students only.

## **Program Continuation and Sustainability**

- The project can be continued/extended in the community through developing a child-facilitated tour of landmarks/spaces of Columbus and the surrounding area. This will help visitors and existing community members become aware of the rich cultural heritage in Columbus and how history has shaped the current landmarks and culture.
- The ATP can be continued and sustained at MUW by engaging MUW candidates and community partners through developing cultural competence and future leadership by educating our children. Further, by involving MUW candidates in undergraduate research opportunities that are significant to their field of study, the ATP provides support and a framework from which to build that research.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

- Candidates', community partners', teachers', and students' awareness of the work of the ARC was increased through the implementation of this project.
- Projects were to be developed and submitted to the Children's Museum. The museum is not currently ready to receive the projects and it has been determined that the Welcome Center of Columbus may be a better fit for the projects.

## **Attachments (in PDF format)**

- Digital copy or photographs of the poster presentation













- Photographs showing students in action





- Publicity such as newspaper articles, documentation of TV and radio spots, etc.

<http://www.wcbi.com/video-teaching-role-columbus-civil-war/>

<http://www.muw.edu/news/4005-w-students-to-participate-in-atp-symposium-in-washington>

<http://www.etsu.edu/cas/cass/projects/muw/default.php>

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/MUWED/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/MUWED/posts/?ref=page_internal)

- Posters at the Rotunda

## Tamra Harrison

Mississippi University for Women



*Columbus, MS*

**Senate District 17  
House District 36**

Tamra Harrison made the decision to return to school after spending many years working in medical billing and pursue her lifelong passion to work with children. During her time at MUW, she has made the President's List three semesters and is a member of the National Society for Leadership and Success. After graduation in the spring, Tamra hopes to become an Elementary Education teacher in the Columbus area.

"Participants in this collaborative project shared their product with the Columbus/Lowndes tourism bureau to encourage greater and more sustainable tourism in the local area. Local K5 students and MUW teacher candidates worked in a partnership to promote the community's rich history and culture."

-- Tamra Harrison

### Children's Guide to Columbus

This project was conducted through a partnership of The W's pre-service teacher candidates and the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau. The goal was the development of next-generation leaders' knowledge of the rich heritage of Columbus. Both pre-service teachers and K5 students researched the cultural heritage of Columbus and developed a way to share the information with current residents and tourists from a child's perspective. Research topics included, but were not limited to, Columbus' architecture, music, food, celebrations, and history. The MUW students developed and presented lessons on the research topics to K5 students from partner schools. The K5 students then investigated the rich heritage of Columbus in each of these areas on their own. Both the MUW candidates and K5 students worked with representatives from the Columbus-Lowndes Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop a method for sharing their research and knowledge with residents and visitors of Columbus.

<b>Student's Major:</b>	Elementary Education
<b>Faculty Mentor:</b>	Dr. Monica Riley
<b>Mentor's Department:</b>	Education
<b>External Funding:</b>	Appalachian Teaching Project