

**Request for Proposals
History of St. John's College
May 26, 2021**

I. Background

St. John's College (www.sjc.edu), founded in 1696, is a private liberal arts college. It has two campuses, a 36-acre campus in Annapolis, MD, and 250-acre campus in Santa Fe, NM; the two campuses comprise a single institution. Originally founded in Annapolis as a preparatory school named King William's School in 1696, it was chartered as a college in 1784. In 1937, a radical New Program of study following a Great Books of the Western World curriculum was introduced under the leadership of Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan. The second campus in Santa Fe was opened in 1964. Buildings on the Annapolis campus range in age from McDowell Hall (begun in the 1740s as the mansion of the governor of Maryland) to Gilliam and Spector Halls, built in the 1990s.

The College's Board of Visitors and Governors (BVG) has created the St. John's College History Task Force (CHTF) to research the college's past in order to understand its relationship to indigenous and enslaved people, and to make recommendations to the BVG on how that relationship should be acknowledged. The archives of the Annapolis campus of the College are housed in the Maryland State Archives, and have been inaccessible to researchers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Work-study students have been hired to digitize the archives, but this effort is expected to take several years to complete.

II. Project Overview

The Steering Committee of the CHTF has identified research topics, and is issuing this RFP to identify and select consultants to research each topic and prepare a report on it for the BVG. The collected reports will be used as the foundation for discussions by the extended College community on how the College should acknowledge its history.

The topics are of three general types, biographical, background, and historic event. (see list below). The subjects of the biographical reports are the men after whom buildings on the Annapolis campus are named. These reports will describe each individual's relationship with the College (e.g. student/alumnus, donor, member of the BVG); the public achievement(s) that led to the College choosing to name the building after him (e.g. signer of the Declaration of Independence); and his or his family's relationship with slavery, if any. The background reports will provide the context necessary for an informed discussion by the College community leading to recommendations. As such, they will provide information necessary to understand the topic, and provide any specific information about it, which would be relevant to the College (e.g. in "Slavery and the economy in post-Colonial Maryland," the focus should be on the involvement in slavery of corporations like the College—rather than on ownership by individuals). The event reports will research an historic event about which the College should know more, with focus on the College's involvement, if any. Since the purpose of the report is education of the College community, the researcher should expect to present the completed report to the College community at a mutually agreed upon time and answer any questions about it that arise.

Each report is expected to be approximately 5,000 words (15 pages) in length and contain full foot- or end-notes, bibliography, and illustrations. The report shall include low-resolution prints or digital copies of all historic photos used and as much contact information for acquisition of high-resolution

copies as possible (contact information may be included in an appendix). Wherever possible, the researcher shall choose illustrations that are in the public domain. All illustrations must be labeled with captions that fully identify the subject, give the source of the image, and provide credit/courtesy lines. The latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* will be used for citations and as a general guide to style.

The total budget for each report is \$1,000. Proposals shall not exceed the budget. The College will not provide additional funding for any costs incurred by the researcher for items such as travel or images.

The project timeline is as follows:

- July 15, 2021 – proposals due to Steering Committee
- August 1, 2021 – Steering Committee to reply with assignment decisions
- February 1, 2022 – completed reports due

III. Research Topics

Research topics are listed below and on the College website (www.sjc.edu/chtff).

Biographic Topics

- Slavery and John McDowell
- Slavery and Samuel Chase
- Slavery and Thomas Stone
- Slavery and William Pinkney
- Slavery and Hector Humphreys
- Slavery and William Paca
- Slavery and Charles Carroll of Carrollton
- Slavery and J. Wirt Randall
- Slavery and Levin Hicks Campbell
- Slavery and John Johnson, Jr., Chancellor
- Slavery and Charles Carroll the Barrister
- Slavery and Henry William Woodward
- Slavery and E. Berkeley Iglehart

Non Biographic Topics

- Native American inhabitants of the Santa Fe campus land
- Native American inhabitants of the Annapolis campus land and of the site of King William's School
- Background for context: Slavery and the economy in colonial Maryland (1696-1784), specifically related to Annapolis
- Background for context: Slavery and the economy in post-colonial Maryland (1784-1830), specifically related to Annapolis
- Background for context: Slavery and the economy in antebellum Maryland (1830-1864), specifically related to Annapolis

College-Specific Topics (will require access to the Maryland State Archives)

- Slavery at King William School/St. John's College for day-to-day operations, 1696-1865
- Slavery and the construction of buildings on the Annapolis Campus
- Antebellum relationship of St. Philip's Church and SJC Annapolis
- Involvement of SJC in 1906 Annapolis lynching
- History of academic development of SJC (prep school → early college → military academy → Great Books School)

(The MSA has recently re-opened following closure to researchers due to COVID. Admission is still limited, and an appointment is required. Research project due dates will be adjusted in the case of significant delays due to difficulty of obtaining admission to the MSA.)

IV. Selection Criteria

The following factors shall be considered in selecting the researcher:

- At least a Bachelor's degree in History, American Studies, Historic Preservation, Architectural History, or closely related field; Master's degree preferred.
- Proposed approach to conducting the research
- Experience with projects of similar subject matter, scale, and context. (Please submit a writing sample from a similar project. This can be a pdf of up to five pages in length or an online link.)
- Three references from clients/employers for similar projects

VI. Application

Please send cover letter, references and writing sample to taskforces@sjc.edu.

V. Questions

Please address any questions and/or submit your proposal to Adrian Trevisan, Chair of the CHTF at taskforces@sjc.edu.