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**Shawnee Tribe Receives \$25,000 from National Trust for Historic Preservation  
\$2.5 Million Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities Through the American Rescue Plan**

(MIAMI, OK) – At a virtual news conference today, the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s *Telling the Full History Preservation Fund* announced its award of \$25,000 to the Shawnee Tribe. The grant is one of 80 given to select organizations nationwide with projects that helped preserve, interpret, and activate historic places to tell the stories of underrepresented groups in our nation.

This grant will help the Tribe prepare an official Historic Structure Report for the three two-story brick buildings of the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School in Fairway, KS, which is perhaps the oldest, surviving federally mandated Indian Boarding School in the US. A Historic Structure Report, or HSR, is acknowledged in the museum and preservation industries as the baseline for preserving and managing historic sites. It is important for an HSR to be robust, including details on the site’s historic significance, building chronology or changes over time, existing conditions and recommendations for repairs & maintenance. This grant from the National Trust and the forthcoming HSR will support the Shawnee Tribe’s overall goal of completing a full-period restoration of this Shawnee Sacred Site and creating an updated interpretive program with an accurate history to restore this National Landmark to its period of significance.

“We are encouraged to have the support of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Kansas State Historical Society as we begin to uncover our Boarding School’s full history,” said Chief Ben Barnes.

The grant was made possible through a one-time \$2.5 million grant program funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) under the *American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021*.

“The *Telling the Full History Preservation Fund* represents the largest number of grants given through a single program at the National Trust,” said Katherine Malone-France, Chief Preservation Officer. “These 80 projects are driven by many dedicated volunteers, staff, and experts, all seeking to expand how we compose the American narrative. We are grateful for the work that they do on the ground and in their communities to reveal, remember, celebrate and illuminate these stories through these extraordinary places,” she continued.

“The National Endowment for the Humanities commends the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its work in administering American Rescue Plan funds to assist historic sites, museums, and preservation organizations around the country in recovering from the financial impact of the pandemic,” said NEH Chair Shelly C. Lowe (Diné). “These awards will reach deeply into communities large and small, lift up often overlooked voices, and tell important, untold stories of our country’s rich and diverse history.”

More information about ways the public can support the Shawnee Tribe’s work in restoring the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School will be available at [shawnee-nsn.gov/simls](https://shawnee-nsn.gov/simls) in the coming weeks.

To see the full list of grantees, go to [savingplaces.org/neh-telling-full-history](https://savingplaces.org/neh-telling-full-history).

A transcript of Chief Barnes’s full remarks is below.



*howesi waapani, Ben Barnes niitesifo noki hokima saawanooki,*

*Good Morning, and I greet you in the language of the Shawnee People. I am Chief Ben Barnes of the Shawnee Tribe — an indigenous nation of several thousand citizens living across North America and abroad. Our ancestral homelands lie within the greater Ohio Valley region; however it was during the earliest decades of the founding of the Nation that colonial pressures forced Shawnee communities to move through most of the eastern United States. Shawnees also experienced forced removals westward over the past two hundred plus years which ultimately fractured us into the three, sovereign tribes comprising all Shawnee People living today. For my people, our westward migration ended when we arrived in Kansas in 1828 and then chose the area of present-day Shawnee, Kansas as our headquarters.*

*After our arrival to Kansas, the United States' Indian Agent in Kansas contracted the Methodist Church to establish the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School. The Manual Labor School was situated on 2000 acres in the heart of the Shawnee Tribe's reservation. Our Shawnee people not only funded its construction and operation, but our citizens helped to build it. The Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School ran from 1839 and well into the Civil War, and the three yet-standing buildings of the Manual Labor School are among the oldest residential buildings in the entire state of Kansas. This place would become the center of American power on our reservation. Today, visitors to this National Landmark can still see and tour the dormitories of the Manual Labor School and learn that Shawnee children were required to sleep in an attic after laboring in the school's fields. In truth, we all have much that we still need to understand about the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School's operational history...*

*Who were the Shawnee children that resided there? What were their names, and what were their stories? How many of these children ---never returned to their families? And when they died, where were they buried?*

*...Now, 160 years after the closing of the school, the Shawnee Tribe is honored to be a recipient of a \$25,000 grant through the National Trust's "Telling the Full History Preservation Fund". This grant will help us prepare an official historic structure report for the three, two-story brick buildings that still stand at the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School, which is perhaps the oldest, surviving federally mandated Indian Boarding School in the United States. A historic structure Report, or "HSR," is acknowledged in the museum and preservation professions as the baseline for preserving and managing historic sites. It is important for an HSR to be robust, including details on the site's historic significance, structural chronology of a building or their changes that occurred over time, the existing conditions, as well as recommendations for repairs & maintenance. This grant and the forthcoming HSR will support the Shawnee Tribe's overall goal of completing a full-period restoration of this Shawnee Sacred Site and creating an updated, interpretive program with an accurate history to restore this National Landmark to its period of significance.*

*The Shawnee Boarding School has touched the lives of virtually all Shawnee citizens, as our ancestors either attended or were impacted by it. The Shawnee Tribe—we are not unique in Our experience with the United States’ policies and practices on quote-unquote “civilizing” Native children through boarding schools and through other means. It is estimated that more than 40,000 children may be buried in unmarked graves at labor and boarding school sites across the United States. For far too long, the truth about American Indian Boarding schools has been absent from national conversations. Others may have forgotten, but America’s Tribal Nations have not.*

*We are encouraged to have the support of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Kansas State Historical Society as we begin to uncover our Boarding School’s full history.*

*niyaawe, nekocaaye*

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