

## Fiscal Year 2019-2020 in Review – A Few Highlights

**CAPITAL PROJECTS.** The Friends of the Texas Historical Commission (FTHC) contracted with a local construction company to complete the **“Villa de Austin” Townsite Exhibit** at the **San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site**. Construction is ongoing and expected to be completed in the Spring of 2021, following which, the outdoor exhibit will be open to the public and will provide a hands-on experience of life at San Felipe de Austin between 1823 and 1836.



*Clockwise from top left: A distance view of “Villa de Austin”; a view of the schoolhouse in the foreground, with the courthouse in the back; the Farmer’s Hotel with a brick basement; and a view of Celia’s Bake Oven.*



At the **French Legation State Historic Site in Austin**, the restoration of the **Legation House** is complete, while the rehabilitation and expansion of the Carriage House into an expanded **Visitor Center** continues. This project, also one where the FTHC contracted with one of the leading restoration construction firms of Texas, is another example of the impact your contributions have had on the support the FTHC can provide to the THC. Accessibility for all is a key component of this restoration, with ramps leading up to the Legation house, and ADA accessible pathways and facilities throughout the site.



*Counter-clockwise from the top right: The restored Legation House; an ADA accessible ramp leading from the back to the front porch of the Legation House; and ADA accessible pathways on the site.*

**EDUCATION PROGRAMS.** In January of 2020, the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission and the THC presented the **Real Places 2020 Conference**. Keynote and speakers included award winning author of “Big, Wonderful Thing” and *The Gates of the Alamo*, **Stephen Harrigan**; internationally acclaimed food writer, chef, filmmaker, and culinary heritage writer **Adan Medrano**; head of strategic foresight and founding director of the Center for the Future of Museums **Elizabeth Merritt**; and writer, culinary historian, and educator **Michael Twitty**. The conference included over 65 speakers presenting full and half-day workshops, plenary sessions and keynotes, and concurrent sessions presented to almost 700 attendees.



With the generous support of our donors, including the **Still Water Foundation**, the **Fondren Fund for Texas of the National Trust for Historic Preservation**, and individual contributions from partners like you, the FTHC placed six incredibly bright and talented students in internships within the THC as part of our **Preservation Scholars Program Class of 2020**. As you know, this year was like no other. The interns worked remotely for eight weeks, completing several critical projects. We are thrilled to share that following the completion of the summer program, **William Polley** applied for, and was accepted into the position of **Educator/ Interpretive Specialist at the Levi Jordan State Historic Site**.

*L-R from top row: Katherine Bansemer (graduate student, Texas State University); Lezlie Hernandez (undergraduate, Texas State University); Farah Merchant (undergraduate, UT-Austin); Gabriel Ozuna (graduate student, UT Rio Grande Valley); William Polley (graduate student, Prairie View Texas A&M University); and Richard Quiroz (undergraduate, Corpus Christi A&M University).*

Over the last 12 months, the FTHC supported allied organizations and other nonprofits through a series of **webinars** as well as more in-depth full-day and multiple-day

**Development Workshops**, focused on fundraising and nonprofit management. Topics varied, from “**Grant Evaluation – Setting goals and Measuring Impact**”, to “**Best Practices for the Nonprofit World**”, to “**Together in the Sandbox – Board and Staff Relations**”. These training opportunities are offered free, or at a very small fee to participants.



**STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS.** The FTHC was incredibly grateful to the **Texas Land Title Association (TLTA)** for their continued, long-term support of the **Courthouse Stewardship Program**, which ensures that the incredible levels of investment in our courthouses, both from the state as well as from the local jurisdictions, is substantiated by a high level of training and ongoing stewardship. Over the past thirteen years, the TLTA has invested over \$325,000 in the program, supporting almost 270 hours of training for more than 850 courthouse stewards.

With your support, the FTHC also offers the **Friends Alliance Program**, which supports local state historic sites’ friends organizations through a fiscal sponsorship program. The FTHC also presents the **Annual Friends Alliance Awards** to organizations that perform exceptionally in the areas of “Friendraising”, Stewardship, and Civic Engagement. In January 2020, the FTHC awarded the Friends Alliance Awards to the **Friends of Casa Navarro** (Civic Engagement), **Friends of Fulton Mansion** (Stewardship), and **Friends of Caddo Mounds** (Friendraising).

