Blount Scholars Program
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Since 1792 the Blount Mansion has witnessed the transformation of this country from a fledgling state to the progressive and advanced society that we now know as 21st century America. Along the way it has seen both the good and the bad that humanity is capable of, but more often than not it has seen justice prevail and society progress.

Today many are concerned that the positive trend toward STEM in our primary education could have unintended consequences as priorities shift contributing to young people missing out on the collective experience gained through the study of our past. The goal of Blount Scholars is to augment our schools by providing a unique after-school history program for the community’s youth that focuses on watershed moments in United States history as seen through the lens of Knoxville and the Blount Mansion.

The Blount Scholars Program has grown from a pilot program with 15 Hardin Valley students to include students from L&N, Fulton and Morristown. With the help of corporate sponsors like Regal Cinemas we intend to diversify and broaden our participation to include students from all over the Knoxville economic region with a special focus on including students from our most disadvantaged parts within the community.

The Blount Mansion Association’s mission is to preserve our national historic treasure, and promote United States History education in the community. The Blount Mansion’s 225 plus years enable us to shed a unique light on many of our nation’s key moments, and with your support we will lead the way in Knoxville to ensure our community’s students have a sense of perspective as they lead our nation into the future.

Best regards,

Jared Smith, President

Blount Mansion Association
BLOUNT SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Blount Scholars program was founded by Jared Smith, Board President of the Blount Mansion Association, as “a new way to teach history.” The program is an intensive after-school educational series for Knoxville-area high schoolers. The Blount Mansion partners with other local museums, historic sites, historians, living history interpreters, traditional crafts people and other educators to provide a unique experience.

Student Experience

Benefits for the students include:

- Hands-on learning opportunities
- No membership fee
- Unique understanding of real history
- Socializing with like-minded students
- Food and snacks
- Opportunity to learn from quality speakers and guests
- Fostered connection with the local area

Goals for the Future

The Blount Mansion has the following goals for the future:

- Continue to shape the program based on student feedback
- Increase the number of high school student participants
- Conduct high school teacher outreach to increase awareness
- Increase program activities
- Start middle school education program
- Start elementary school education program
THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL EDUCATION

Executive Director Dave Hearnes was featured in an op-ed for the Knoxville News Sentinel in September. In the event of Constitution Day, Dave stresses the importance of teaching history and social studies to students.
BLOUNT SCHOLARS FALL SCHEDULE

Every semester’s student class provides feedback that is used to help shape the next semester’s activities. The spring students have been instrumental in helping to shape the current program.

September 19 –

The students toured the Blount Mansion and grounds as an introduction to our history. Afterward, they participated in an educational walking tour of downtown Knoxville, touring what the city looked like in 1792.

September 26 –

Expert in 18th and 19th century music Chip Bailey came in to conduct a music program with the students. He was followed by a discussion with Lynn Fox, a local historian. The topics included John Sevier and the Overmountain Men’s role in the American Revolution and the founding of the state of Tennessee.

October 3 –

Actor and historian Rob Rambo acted a performance piece about Attakullakull (Little Carpenter), a powerful Cherokee leader. This performance is an excerpt of the Tanasi 1796 play.

October 17 –

Students engaged in a women's history segment and participated in an open-hearth cooking demonstration. They learned different domestic house practices and cooking skills of the 1790’s.
OTHER EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Cherokee Lifeways and Crafts
Curators of the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum walked students through the lives of the Cherokee, one of the area tribes William Blount interacted with. Students learned hunting practices like the use of blowguns and crafted dolls of natural materials Cherokee children would create.

“We were able to learn about specific lives, and specific stories, which are just as important to history as the 'big picture'.” – Rowan P., Blount Scholar

Histrionic History
The students had some laughs as they acted out the play “Hamilton,” a script known for its revering tale of the birth of the Constitution and the controversies surrounding its detail.

“This part was super fun because we got to sing Hamilton! I enjoyed learning little aspects about the Constitution I didn't know before.” – Gabby, Blount Scholar
EDUCATIONAL EVENTS CONT.

Discovering Dendrochronology

The students visited the Tree Ring Science Lab at the University of Tennessee to learn from Dr. Henry Grissino-Mayer. The group observed the process of taking samples of timbers, the material used to build the Blount’s cabin structure.

“I never thought hearing about trees would be so interesting! Somehow, they made wood sound fun. Their research and how the wood of building can help them determine its age is also intriguing.”
– Jacob M., Blount Scholar

Open-Hearth Cooking

One of the students’ favorite activities was open-hearth cooking, the primary method of cooking in Blount’s era. The students prepared their own meal, including: a popular 1790s salad dressing recipe made of eggs and greens, a curried chicken dish, rice and vegetable side dishes, and fruit cobbler, including the dough.

Over all, Blount Mansion showed the students how to make history hands-on, and it was entertaining in an informative manner.” – Julia W., Blount Scholar
**Blount Mansion**

**Significance Today**

Blount Mansion was built in 1792 as the home of Territorial Governor William Blount. The mansion witnessed the birth and growth of Knoxville, housed Tennessee governors and prominent families, and later became slum housing on the Knoxville riverfront. It was saved by early preservationists from destruction, and survives today to tell the stories of Tennessee's birth and growth. Blount Mansion is now a historic house museum and the only National Historic Landmark in Knoxville.

The Blount Mansion hosts themed tours, field trips, educational activities, lectures, dinners and many other events. Its average visitor is over 55 years old, retired and travelling. Classified as a 501c3 educational nonprofit, Blount Mansion has educated over 1000 local school children this year. The mansion welcomes about 4,000 visitors a year. The Blount Mansion is a historical gem. Not only is it the only National Historic Landmark in Knoxville, the mansion is the only home of a signer of the U.S. Constitution located outside of the 13 original colonies and oldest museum in Knox County.

**History**

William Blount, a signer of the United States Constitution, chose to leave North Carolina and build his home in Knoxville after signing the Treaty of the Holston on the banks of the Holston River just a few hundred yards away from the Mansion’s location. Blount had been governing from the home of William Cobb before he announced his territory's capital would move to Knoxville, which had not yet been named. Blount’s Knoxville mansion then served as the territorial capitol and Blount family home until 1925, when the mansion was rescued and revitalized into a museum.

The house was one of the first frame homes built west of the mountains. Made of sawn lumber and timber to meet Mary Blount’s requirement of “a proper wooden house,” the Blount’s home was unlike any other in the area. Built to reflect Blount’s position as a leader and influential land speculator, the family also had nails shipped in from their nail factory in North Carolina and glass shipped from Richmond, Virginia.
REVITALIZATION

By 1925, the area surrounding Blount Mansion declined into slums. The mansion had deteriorated and was facing demolition by the newly-constructed Andrew Jackson Hotel, which wanted to use the historical property as a parking lot. Mary Boyce Temple, member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, offered $100 to secure an option on the historical gem's property. She was assisted by a volunteer board of wealthy local figures such as the University of Tennessee’s Dean and President of East Tennessee Historical Society Dr. James Hoskins, and Mrs. B.B. Cates.

The Blount Mansion Association, Inc., was established to preserve the property one year later. Mary Boyce Temple served as the association’s first president. By 1930, the loan of $31,500 to fully purchase the mansion was paid off, and the association opened the mansion for tours. Blount Mansion received its designation as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service in 1965.

Eighty-three years after its opening, then president of the Blount Mansion Association Board of Directors Dorothy Stair led the way for a current renovation. At the courtesy of public donations and grants from the State of Tennessee and Save America’s Treasures, the association was able to make housing repairs while preserving all original pieces. While renovating, architect Joseph Oppermann and his team measured the age of every wooden plank, adding to the authenticity of the mansion’s originality.

The Gardens

The Knoxville Garden Club has stayed in partnership with Blount Mansion since 1934. The Edith Henderson garden was added in the early 1970s, complementing the Hopkins/Parker garden. Members of the garden club maintain the grounds of Blount Mansion and decorate it for Christmas. The garden club hosts many events at Blount Mansion.
WILLIAM BLOUNT

William Blount was born in North Carolina, served in North Carolina's House of Commons and as paymaster for North Carolina's troops in the Continental Army. Blount was intimately involved in the recruiting and re-equipment of forces in the Revolutionary War. Following defeat at the Battle of Camden, Blount accepted a seat in the North Carolina assembly.

He served in Congress under the Articles of Confederation, and as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. President George Washington appointed Blount to be Governor of the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio. He governed out of Blount Mansion, driving more colonists toward Knoxville. With a history of investing in Western expansion and interest in exploration, Blount negotiated treaties with Native American tribes, organized a territorial militia and led Tennessee to full statehood in 1796.

Blount was elected as one of Tennessee's first US senators. After a brief scandal of conspiracy, which remains unconfirmed, Blount was elected to state legislature and served as speaker of the senate until his death in 1800. Blount represents a strong leader who’s forward-thinking and bravery paved the way toward the birth of our sixteenth state. Blount Mansion stands as a reflection of the strength and solidarity shown in Blount’s character.
**TESTIMONIALS**

“I feel that whenever we have the opportunity to interact with the presenter, we learn more than just listening to them lecture... The interactive activities always seem to be the best parts of the day.” – *Jacob M., Blount Scholar*

“It’s been an opportunity to give a voice to those who never had one. We were able to learn about specific lives, and specific stories, which are just as important to history as the ‘big picture’.” – *Rowan P., Blount Scholar*

“It was very fun and beneficial experience that I hope will continue for the future students, and hopefully past students can show up as well.” – *Rowan P., Blount Scholar*

“This was a good experience because it took the knowledge we had learned in class, and allowed us to connect it to outside information.” – *Madison P., Blount Scholar*

“I also enjoyed how passionate the speakers were about the things they were teaching and they thoroughly enjoyed what they were doing.” – *Jessica M., Blount Scholar*

“I liked being able to hear from people that were experts in specific fields and also have someone with more general knowledge refresh a concept that were had taken the time to cover months prior in class.” – *Molly, Blount Scholar*

“I also enjoyed that we were able to gain more in-depth information on those who lived during the time by talking about things other than major battles which is what is commonly discussed within the traditional classroom setting.” – *Molly, Blount Scholar*

“The presentations circled around historical placement and context as a means to uncover the truth about history and those who experienced it firsthand.” – *Julia W., Blount Scholar*

“I have always liked looking at Colonial homes and being able to be in here so often was really fun... I think this was really helpful in understanding sort of the social aspect of things of the time period.” – *Gabby, Blount Scholar*

“All in all, I thought my visit to the Blount Mansion was pretty cool, and I’d highly recommend it to other students.” – *Eric B., Blount Scholar*
SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Students are given free membership because we believe everyone should have access to a unique, hands-on experience to learn about national history. There are about 20 students in the program each season.

- Each semester contains 4 – 6 activity sessions with 1 – 2 presenters per session.
- Each student’s participation costs about $500 per session.
- Each session presenter costs $100 – $500.

Annual Sponsorship Levels

**PIONEER - $10,000**
- Funds will be used to support and expand existing programming for spring and fall sessions of Blount Scholars.

**CHEROKEE - $25,000**
- Special programming developed around diversity and inclusion focusing on the Native American experience and contribution to Tennessee history.
- Named Blount Scholar scholarships.
- Funds will be used to support and expand existing programming for spring and fall sessions of Blount Scholars.

**TENNESSEEAN - $50,000**
- Exclusive naming rights as presenting sponsor.
- Named Blount Scholar scholarships.
- Funds will be used to support existing programming and to develop a special video project by Blount Scholars to be screened at premier event.
- Special programming developed around diversity and inclusion focusing on the Native American experience and contribution to Tennessee history.