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Museums and Communities Collaborate on Alabama/South Africa Youth Exchange

Birmingham, AL — The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) will take 10 local high school students to South Africa in June and bring 10 youth from South Africa to Birmingham in July. The goal of the project is to educate youth about the Civil Rights and Anti-Apartheid Movements in the U.S. and South Africa— to shed light on comparisons and contrasts between their nations’ histories — and to engage new audiences in the work of the partner museums.

Funded by the Museums and Community Collaborations Abroad (MCCA) program, the International Legacy Youth Leadership Project is a partnership between BCRI and the Mandela House Museum and Apartheid Museum in South Africa. MCCA is made possible by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by the American Association of Museums (AAM). The project involves youth and their families, as well as respective communities served by the partner museums.

Birmingham’s MCCA project participants represent seven different high schools in the metropolitan area. The students are: Byrrh Bryant and Jesse Bryant of Shades Valley High School; Michael W. Craig of Restoration Academy; Jasmine Nicole Flowers of Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School; Barry McNealy, Jr. of Parker High School; Krista Faith Fluker, Kristen Joy Fluker, Jhana Elise Plump and Jessica Lauren Lockett of Ramsay High School; and Yesenia Jaimes of Carver High School. Also studying the Civil Rights and Anti-Apartheid Movements are alternates Jeffery DuBose, Jr. of Restoration Academy and Maya Williams of Sylacauga High School.

BCRI is proud to partner with sister institutions abroad to offer public programs in fulfillment of its mission — to promote civil and human rights worldwide through education. “Through this project, we are educating youth and the community about connections between Birmingham’s history and struggles for justice worldwide,” said BCRI President & CEO Dr. Lawrence J. Pijeaux, Jr.

“Participants in the MCCA program -- both institutions and individuals -- share the common traits of being inspired and inspiring,” said AAM president Ford W. Bell. “Certainly the museums and students taking part in the International Legacy Youth Leadership Project are emblematic of the entire MCCA initiative: bridging cultures, forging bonds and inspiring others through the legacies of those leaders who won rights in Birmingham and South Africa.”

For more information about the International Legacy Youth Leadership Project, contact BCRI Archivist Laura Caldwell Anderson at 205.328.9696, ext. 215.

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