



*Anti-Racist Community Engagement*  
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Washington County Remembrance Memorial Marker: Practicing Anti-  
Racist Community Engagement

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Date: December 17, 2019  
To: The Oak Cemetery Caretakers  
From: Community Remembrance Project Coalition  
Regarding: Commemoration Request

It is with great respect for your role as caretakers of Oak Cemetery that we come to you with our request to erect a marker at the cemetery to memorialize three men who lost their lives to injustice and racial terror in this community in 1856.

Some Community Remembrance Project coalition members have deep roots in Arkansas that extend beyond a century. Compelled by a personal and collective legacy to land and people that includes risks, resistance, and resilience in the face of racial terror, we hope to place the memorial marker in a site that embodies peace, honor, reverence, and reflection.

As a historically black cemetery, Oak is the resting place of a people who have triumphed in the face of race-based tragedies traced through the black lives matter movement, the civil rights era, Jim Crow laws, and slavery. This complex history cannot be erased, forgotten, or buried. Instead, it must be remembered, honored, and embraced as a living memorial and testament to our ancestry and collective ability to survive and thrive. From this standpoint, we see Oak Cemetery as the perfect sacred space for the monument.

The Community Remembrance Project Coalition is a community partner with the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). This organization founded the National Memorial to Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama. EJI provides guidance and financial support for this and remembrance projects in other communities in Arkansas and many other states.

A positive response from the Caretakers regarding this request means that you have a crucial voice in decision-making regarding the marker's location, the wording on the plaque, the details of the unveiling, the dedication ceremony, and other project components. In addition, a member of the Oak caretakers has already agreed to join the project coalition. All the Caretakers are invited to join us at any or all of our meetings.

If approved by the Oak Caretakers, the memorial marker would be installed in the fall of 2020.

This is just an introductory letter about our intentions. Still, there is also an information sheet, the project mission statement, and a document with details about the dimensions and appearance of the marker, all of which are available for your review.

We invite your questions and welcome your wisdom in shaping the next steps to consider this request.

Community Remembrance Project Coalition Members