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**MISSOURI HUMANITIES COUNCIL AWARDS GRANT TO SHELDON ART GALLERIES
IN SUPPORT OF WASHINGTON PARK CEMETERY EXHIBIT**

ST. LOUIS, MO - The Missouri Humanities Council (MHC) has awarded a grant of \$8,500 to the Sheldon Art Galleries in support of the project, *Higher Ground: Honoring Washington Park Cemetery, Its People and Place*, which will be shown in the Gallery of Photography and adjoining Bernoudy Gallery of Architecture from March 3 to August 5, 2017.

The exhibit will consist of 40 photographs, some large-scale, by Jennifer Colten; video and oral histories gathered by artist Denise Ward Brown; historical land documentation; maps; didactic historical narrative panels; historical artifacts; and a complementary art installation by artist and community activist Dail Chambers. The three St. Louis-based artists will each contribute an aspect of the exhibition that will enable the subject to be presented both from a didactic, historical perspective and one rooted in the humanity of the subject.

Washington Park Cemetery, located near Lambert-St. Louis International Airport in the city of Berkeley, Missouri was established in 1920 as a burial ground for African-Americans at a time when rigid segregation was common practice. The exhibition will shed light on an important but neglected aspect of St. Louis's African-American history, and will uncover larger systemic issues of race, politics and power. The stories told in this exhibition through recorded oral histories will also help to preserve the long tradition and cultural significance of this historic African-American burial site. The project will raise awareness of the history and plight of this endangered cultural resource, which is a treasured burial place for countless African-Americans, including important community and cultural leaders.

The Sheldon Art Galleries has partnered with the Missouri History Museum, and Washington University Library Special Collections, who will offer exhibit support and complementary programming. The exhibit will be mounted at the Sheldon Art Galleries.

The Missouri Humanities Council is the only state-wide agency in Missouri devoted exclusively to humanities education for citizens of all ages. It has served as a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities since 1971. For more information about the grants program of the Missouri Humanities Council, 543 Hanley Industrial Ct., Ste. 201, St. Louis, MO, 63144. Telephone: 314-781-9660. Website: www.mohumanities.org.

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