

Donate to the Emmett Till Interpretive Center

# EMMETT TILL INTERPRETIVE CENTER

RACIAL RECONCILIATION BEGINS BY TELLING THE TRUTH



ETIC staff visited Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, where they met with the Friends of Tuskegee group.

## ETIC Staff Visits Montgomery to Learn from Memorial Sites and National Park Partners

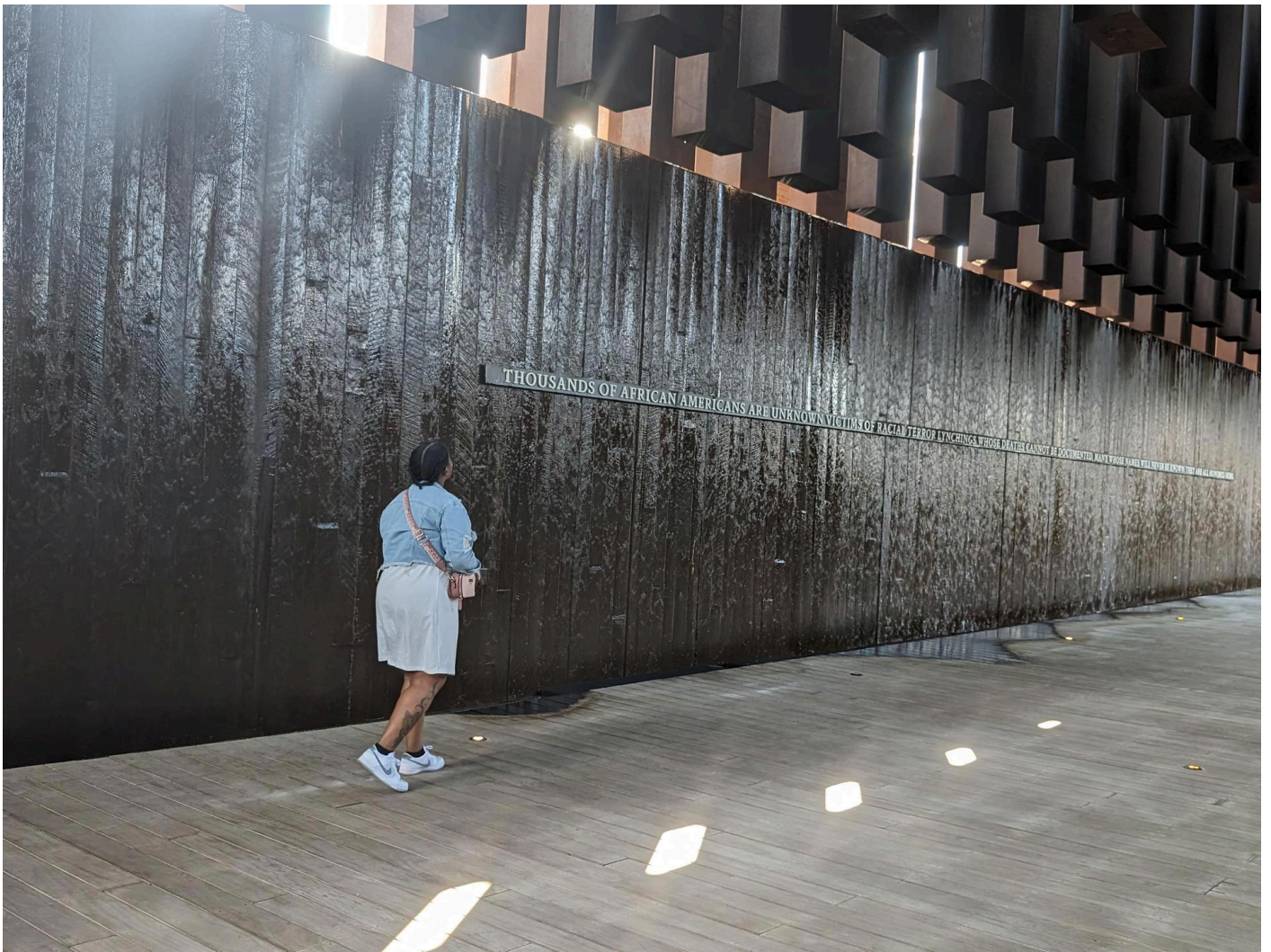
On May 6-8, 2024, ETIC staff traveled to Montgomery, Alabama, to visit memorial and historic sites to learn and to inform our own work in the Mississippi Delta lifting up the legacies of Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley.

A major goal of the trip was to visit National Park Service sites and meet with partner groups of those sites to inform and inspire our own partnership with NPS. One item on the itinerary was the [Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site](#), where we were joined by several members of the [Friends of Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site](#). Daphne Chamberlain, ETIC's Chief Program Officer, found this visit especially poignant.

"The most impactful part of the trip for me was to meet African American women in Tuskegee, Alabama, who were collectively and individually committed to preserving the legacy and lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen in partnership with the National Park Service," Daphne said. "Historically, African American women have been the bedrock of public affairs to advocate for and sustain families and communities. The work of the women who make up the [Friends of the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site](#) is evidence of the long arc of Black women's organizing and 'heart work.'"

We also toured a community arts space, [The King's Canvas](#), to learn about their creative placemaking work. A beacon of community and creativity, this arts hub in Montgomery's underserved West Side transforms a once-vacant storefront into a vibrant space for artistic and entrepreneurial growth. "Our visit underscored the essential role of such community-centered initiatives in our broader mission of memorialization and partnership," said Patrick Weems, ETIC's Executive Director.

In addition to meeting with the National Park Service staff of the [Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail](#), our staff visited the Equal Justice Initiative's [Legacy Museum](#), [National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#), and the newly opened [Freedom Monument Sculpture Park](#). These EJI sites combine first-person accounts, art, and interactive exhibits to engage visitors in reckoning with America's history of racial injustice.



Venita Halbert visits the EJL Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery.

Venita Halbert, ETIC's Community Engagement Coordinator, saw a clear throughline linking the work these groups have done in Alabama with ETIC's own vision. "This trip to Alabama actually made the work that we are doing relatable," she said. "I enjoyed being able to see the outcome of all the hard work that I've heard so many discuss. I was able to draw connections to designs, history, and growth in that particular community that may be helpful in our community. I am excited to see what the possibilities could be of such a powerful memorial, because the EJL memorials explained, exemplified, and presented this history in a manner that connected the dots of today's society."

Patrick similarly saw links between ETIC's history and today. "The visit to Montgomery was profoundly inspiring, especially in light of the visionary work by Jerome Little, our organization's founder, who envisioned the potential for national monument designation to amplify the Emmett Till story. Over a decade ago, Jerome visited Alabama and drew inspiration from other historic sites, seeing how such recognitions can elevate crucial narratives. Last year, on July 25th, this vision was realized with the establishment of the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, a testament to Jerome's foresight and dedication. On our recent visit, we met the same National Park Service staff who had met with Jerome Little and others from our organization many years ago."

The trip has helped shape our staff's thinking as they continue to work in Mississippi and nationally

to elevate the stories of Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley and to preserve historic sites with the message that what is past is also present.



ETIC visited The King's Canvas, an arts space and event venue on the West Side of Montgomery, to see an example of creative placemaking.

[Visit Our Website](#)

## In the News

**"Delta Film Academy Students Create Documentaries on MS History"**  
by Aliyah Veal, *Mississippi Free Press*

Read *Mississippi Free Press's* coverage of the Emmett Till Interpretive Center's Delta Film Academy!



The article features an interview with our Youth Coordinator, Jay Rushing.

[Read More](#)

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