

Finding Fellowship

URAF
Fall 2023

Booth Recipient Aaryan Morrison '22.5

On Transformative Community Partnerships and Collaboration

Interest and Impact

As an Undergraduate student at Harvard College, Aaryan made it a priority to take courses in which she could learn from anti-colonial and postcolonial scholars from the global South, and developed an interest in community-based work. During the pandemic, she worked in Mobile and Africatown in Alabama, and began to consider transformative community partnerships, thinking about how resources of a place like Harvard could be mobilized to support efforts happening in broader communities. After graduating, Aaryan began her Booth fellowship project, Teaching Africatown: Community-based Curriculum Development in Mobile, Alabama.



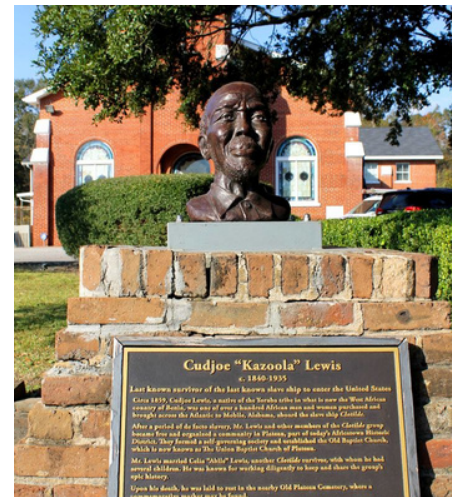
"...It's important to cultivate a fair and mutually beneficial relationship, so allow ample time for meaningful conversations."

Defining Partnership

Within Africatown, Aaryan explains that as opposed to imposing her own ideas on what needed to happen, she wanted to understand and progress the ideas of the community, fitting herself into a place where her skills would best match. In considering her work, she shared that she learned the most when she "...was willing to admit to the things that I did not know." She continued, "I wanted to be led by people who have a lot more familiarity and context for Africatown than I did."

Collaborative Cultivation

Aaryan advises prospective fellows to work alongside community partners to create a mutually beneficial relationship, allowing time and flexibility to maintain strategic support of community efforts. She also encourages individuals to destigmatize seeking help, allowing guided navigation and problem solving, especially in community based work.



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