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**Champaign County African American Heritage Trail
Unveils New Signs in Douglass Park and Savoy**

Champaign, IL—The Champaign County African American Heritage Trail and the Experience Champaign-Urbana Foundation will unveil three signs this week. The first unveiling of two signs will take place at **2:00 p.m. on October 9** at the Champaign Public Library Douglass Branch located in Douglass Park. The second unveiling will take place at **2:00 p.m. on October 11** at Burwash Park in Savoy. **Media are encouraged to attend.**

The first sign celebrates the importance of Douglass Park and Community Center on Grove St. in Champaign. Originally completed in 1946, the Douglass Center held classes in art, music, and sewing, and hosted activities such as softball, baseball, basketball, track, and tennis. It also garnered national recognition in 1968 when the Drum and Bugle Corp won first place in a competition in New York City against 346 other teams from all fifty states. This sign is sponsored by the Champaign Park District.

The second sign in Douglass Park to be unveiled shares the history of the formation of the Douglass Branch Library after having a presence in a room at the Douglass Community Center starting in 1971. The library moved to a donated building on Bradley Ave. where they remained for 20 years before arriving at their current space in 1997. This sign is sponsored by the Champaign Public Library.

On Friday, a third sign will be unveiled at Burwash Park in Savoy, recognizing the Underground Railroad depot owned by Mathias Lane Dunlap. An elected state representative in Chicago, Dunlap relocated his family to a farm he called "Rural Home" in 1856 in what is now Savoy. Around 1857 or 1858, he developed an Underground Railroad depot at his home and ran it until the end of the Civil War. He later helped establish the Industrial Institution in Urbana which became the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and served as one of the University's first trustees. This sign is sponsored by the Village of Savoy.

"These signs all symbolize safe spaces for African Americans in Champaign County," says Jayne DeLuce, President & CEO of the Experience Champaign-Urbana Foundation. "They found respite along the Underground Railroad and formed a community within Douglass Park through perseverance and connection."

About the Experience Champaign-Urbana Foundation

The Experience Champaign-Urbana Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, generates resources that support the destination experiences of people who visit, work, and live in the greater Champaign County area. For more information: <https://experiencecu.org/foundation>

About the Champaign County African American Heritage Trail

The Champaign County African American Heritage Trail is a celebration of the lives and contributions of African Americans in the Champaign County area. The mission is to educate today's residents and visitors about the rich cultural history of a people whose stories have been largely unrecognized, but who directly shaped the place we call home. For more information: <https://www.ccafricanamericanheritage.org/>