

Dave the Potter Legacy Trust LLC – Descendant Guidelines

Purpose

David Drake (Mr. Drake), also known as “Dave the Potter,” was a highly skilled enslaved African American potter in South Carolina in the 19th century. During his lifetime, Mr. Drake created tens of thousands of ceramic works which reflect extraordinary craftsmanship and high artistic achievement, and are considered among the most significant examples of American ceramic art. Adding to the artistic and cultural significance of Mr. Drake's works is the fact that he dated and signed many of his works, and he further inscribed many works with poems or polysemous verses, which is of significance given that Mr. Drake created these works at a time when it was forbidden to teach enslaved persons to read or write and literacy among enslaved persons was criminalized.

Mr. Drake's works have been acquired by leading museums and private collections throughout the United States and have substantial commercial value. Because Mr. Drake was an enslaved person, he was denied the full benefits of his brilliance, talent and labor, and the economic benefits of Mr. Drake's work have historically excluded his descendants.

The Dave the Potter Legacy Trust LLC (the “Trust”) was formed to preserve Mr. Drake's artistic, cultural and historic legacy and ensure that his dignity and memory are honored through meaningful restitution and compensation to ensure his descendants are among the beneficiaries of his legacy. The Trust's goal is for all of Mr. Drake's heirs to have the opportunity to participate in the Trust.

The Trust invites any persons who in good faith believe themselves to be descendants (e.g., related by blood) to Mr. Drake to submit the materials described below for evaluation to be recognized as a descendant of Mr. Drake.

What to Submit

- Basic contact details (name, email, phone number).
- Family names and locations connected to Mr. Drake and Edgefield, South Carolina (e.g., surnames, churches, communities).
- Genealogical documents establishing your relationship to Mr. Drake: census records, vital records, wills/probate, deeds, manumission/emancipation documents, obituaries, church records, family bibles, photographs, oral histories, etc.
- DNA information (optional): your testing service (e.g., AncestryDNA) and, if comfortable, your match to anchor testers. DNA is not required to express interest.

Evaluation Process

- The Trust will review submissions with fairness and in good faith, using both documentary evidence and, where applicable, DNA information.

- If the Trust determines that you have reasonably established that you are a descendant of Mr. Drake, you (and your descendants) will be recognized as descendants by the Trust, and Mr. Drake's heirs (i.e., the eldest descendants in a particular family tree line) will be invited to become members of the Trust.
- If the Trust determines that you have not reasonably established that you are a descendant of Mr. Drake, you will be given the right to appeal the decision. By submitting the information requested, you agree to submit to binding arbitration to resolve any disputes regarding status as a descendant, and you agree that if you dispute the Trust's initial determination that you have not established that you are a descendant, you will be solely responsible for the cost of any dispute resolution unless it is determined that you are a descendant of Mr. Drake.

Privacy & Confidentiality

- Submissions are used solely for evaluating descendant connections and related Trust programs.
- You retain ownership of any DNA data you choose to share. The Trust does not share your information without your written consent.

How to Submit a Request

Email your materials to KellieFarrish@descendantsofdave.org. Please do not send original documents.