

## **The Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust Donates \$10,000 to Cheyney University's Resurgence**

*Historical non-profit founded by descendants of free African Americans supports the nation's first HBCU with gift for disadvantaged students*

The Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust (DFCLT) recently donated \$10,000 to The Cheyney Foundation to support the university's efforts that have provided a new vision and path for the nation's first HBCU. The donation will be applied toward scholarships for disadvantaged students.

The DFCLT is a non-profit that was created to preserve a rare-and beautiful-historic and cultural resource in northeastern Pennsylvania. The organization donated the gift in memory of Cheyney alumna, Edith Dennis Moore Stephens, Class of 1960, a sixth-generation direct descendant of the Dennis family who valued her years at Cheyney; and in recognition of the educational opportunities Cheyney, has provided to African American men and women since 1837.

"We are presenting this gift on the 206th birthday of our ancestor, Henry W. Dennis, a free, educated African American man born in Vermont, who left us a legacy of hard work, education, and achievement that we are passing forward," stated DFCLT's Board of Directors. "We hope our contribution will help The Cheyney Foundation to continue its legacy of educating young African American men and women, as they prepare for the challenges of the future."

"The Cheyney Foundation would like to thank Mr. Lonnie Moore and the Dennis Farm Charitable Trust for the \$10,000 donation. The funding honors the legacy of Mr. Moore's mother Edith Dennis-Moore Stephens, a Cheyney alumna," said Dr. Larry J. Walker, Class of 1996, Chair of The Cheyney Foundation. "We look forward to continuing to work with the Trust."

"We were humbled to not only receive a donation from the Dennis Farm, but also delighted to learn of the Farm's remarkable history," said Bryan Phillips, Class of 1993, Treasurer of The Cheyney Foundation. "Since its inception dating back to the 1700s, the Dennis Farm predates our beloved Cheyney University. I pray that the two Living Legends continue to endure the tests of time!"

The land that comprises the Dennis Farm was settled by the family of Prince Perkins, free African Americans who moved there in 1793 with the original wave of settlement into the region following the American Revolution. Descendants of the Perkins' granddaughter, Angeline Perkins Dennis, and her husband, Henry Dennis, have retained ownership of the 153-acre property into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This continuous, documented ownership of property by African Americans, in a predominantly white county in the northeast, represents a little-known and remarkable story in American history and holds lessons for us today.

Cheyney students have visited The Dennis Farm in the past and, in 2019, two Cheyney students participated in DFCLT's essay contest on racial understanding and were awarded cash prizes. It is an educational and cultural site for scholars, researchers, educators, cultural heritage tourists, school groups and others interested in extraordinary history.

The Cheyney Foundation plays an important role in the university's transformational efforts, which have created a new applied research institute, new strategic partners, and a new cutting-edge approach to

students' success. For more information about the University's Resurgence fundraising campaign, please visit <https://cheyney.edu/resurgence/>  
For more information about DFCLT, please visit [www.thedennisfarm.org](http://www.thedennisfarm.org).

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