

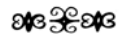
## Introduction to The Missing Chapter: untold stories of the African American Experience in the Mid-Hudson Valley

On September 29, 1677, seven French Huguenot families, the Hasbroucks, Crispells, Deyos, Dubois', Lefevers, Freers, and the Beviers were granted a patent for a tract of land recently purchased from the Esopus Indians. This parcel measured more than 40,000 acres stretching from the Hudson River to the Shawangunk Ridge, and consisted of what are now the towns of New Paltz and Lloyd as well as parts of Gardiner, Rosendale, and Esopus. In 1674, three years before the founding of New Paltz, Louis DuBois, purchased two African slaves, Anthony and Susan at a public auction held in Kingston, then called Esopus. Over the following 150 years, the people of New Paltz were as actively involved in the selling and exploitation of African Americans, as any other enclave in the Dutch and later British colonies in the Americas. Sadly, our history is not unique, as the institution of slavery in the town of New Paltz represents a microcosm of the wider systems of slavery, which flourished throughout the state of New York, and the early United States in general. According to the 1790 federal census, there were 21,324 enslaved Africans living in New York State. In fact, Ulster County had the second highest slave population in New York, with 2,906 Africans living in bondage.

A major goal of this curriculum is to help students appreciate the valuable contributions African Americans have made to their community. Regardless of their partial absence from the historical record, enslaved Africans were involved in every aspect of colonial life and held positions such as carpenters, bakers, doctor's assistants, shoemakers, wheelwrights, barbers, butchers, chimney sweeps, cooks, healers, farmers, gardeners, sailors, soldiers, masons, blacksmiths, spinners, dressmakers, weavers, coopers, magicians and fortune tellers. Each of the eight activities in the curriculum includes a detailed lesson plan, primary documents, and accompanying **Word** documents. Activity sheets can be edited as needed. It must be stressed that these activities need to be part of a complete study documenting the history of the colonial period in New York State, and the role African Americans played in that society, as one cannot study one without the other. The colonial system in the Americas, and the institution of slavery go hand in hand, and complete understanding of one requires significant attention to the other. Perhaps as important to this discussion, the social stigmas surrounding this institution, and their lasting effects have also been addressed in this study. As exemplified in the Hidden Heritage section of this exhibit, detailing the life and struggles of the Reverend James Murphy, even the possibility of a bi-racial man being associated with an early Christian congregation was enough to send a community into uproar. In addition, rather than seeing the ethnocentrism that bolstered the institution of race-specific slavery as something that only existed in

### *The Missing Chapter*

*Untold Stories of the African American Presence in the Mid-Hudson Valley*



the past, understanding of how racism still reinforces inequality today, will be met. By studying “The Missing Chapter,” students should be able to connect the past with the present, and gain better perspective on the social injustices inherent in the world today.



The above symbol, sankofa, can be traced back to Adrinka cloths made by the Asante people of Ghana and the Gyamon people of the Ivory Coast. It is the symbol of the wisdom in learning from the past in building for the future.