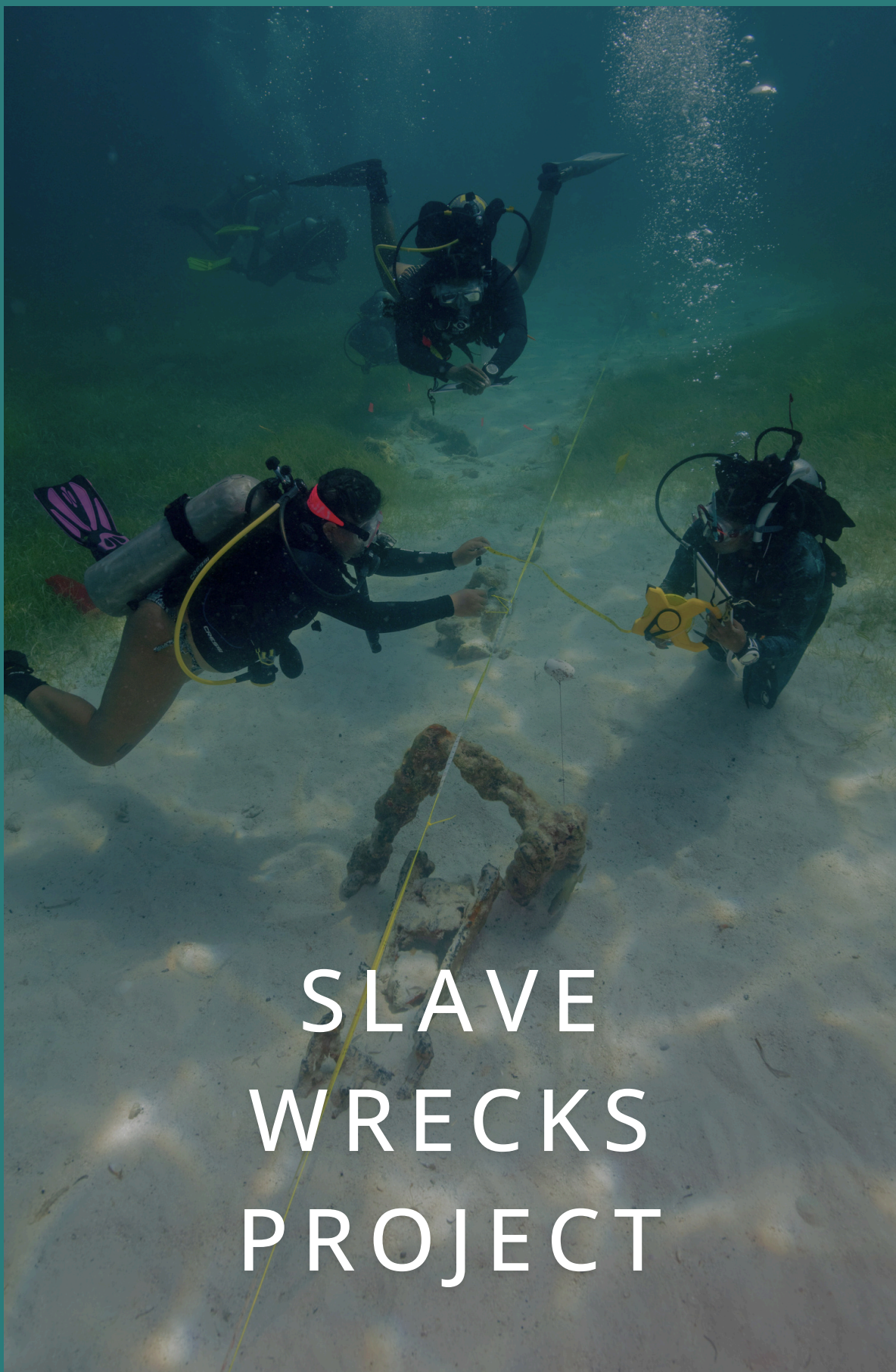


MEDIA TOOLKIT



SLAVE WRECKS PROJECT

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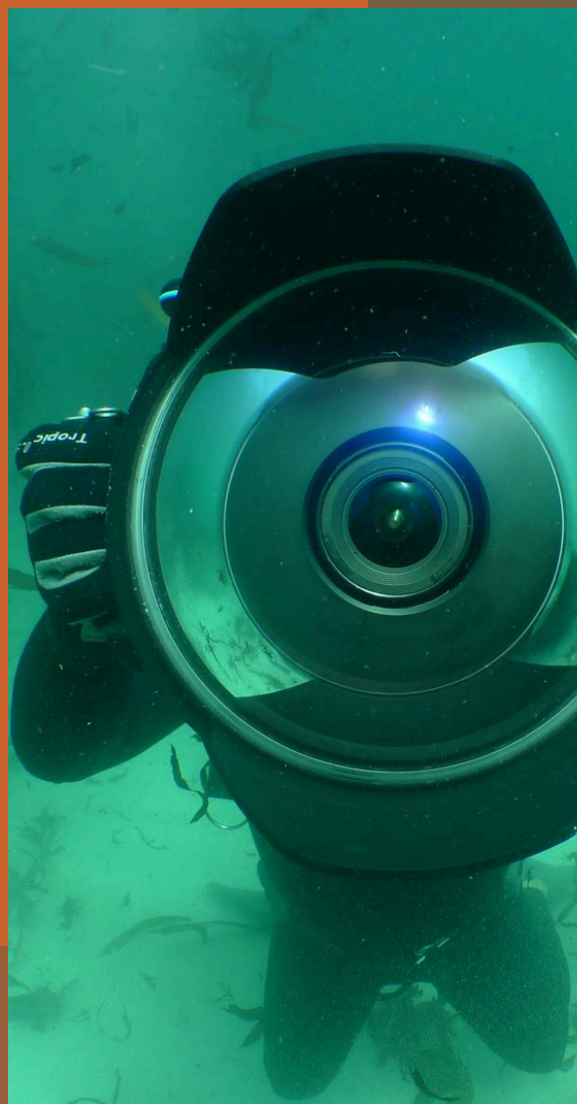
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OVERVIEW

The Slave Wrecks Project (SWP) is an international network of institutions and individuals that investigates the global history and enduring legacies of enslavement across the African diaspora.

WHERE WE WORK

Africatown, Alabama

Biscayne, Florida

Brazil

Mozambique

Portugal

Senegal

South Africa

St. Croix, U.S.V.I.



WHAT WE DO

- 1 Conduct groundbreaking research into slave ships, incorporating history, maritime and historical archaeology, and anthropology.
- 2 Connect global scholars and descendant communities, furthering local, national, and international understanding of slavery and its afterlives.
- 3 Support public education and programming focused on fostering dialogues on the enduring legacies of the slave trade.

MISSION

SWP uses shipwrecks, their voyages, and related maritime landscapes as a distinctive point of entry for pursuing interdisciplinary research and developing dynamic public education and community engagement programs. SWP engages in local, national, and international collaborations designed to simultaneously build partner capacity, protect heritage, foster public dialogue, advance research, and promote greater diversity in scholarship.



The SWP is co-coordinated by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and the George Washington University in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. It is led by an International Leadership Team that draws from a number of the network's co-founding and longest-standing institutional partners. SWP's collaborations involve many local, national, and international organizations and individuals and use an interdisciplinary approach to uncover the histories and legacies of the African slave trade.

AFRICATOWN

SWP supports the Alabama Historical Commission in efforts to involve the community of Africatown in **preserving the legacy of slavery and freedom in Alabama and the memory of the Clotilda, "America's last slave ship."** SWP currently works with Africatown community partners, conducting archaeological work and swimming and scuba diving training with local community members and youth groups.

BISCAYNE

SWP has engaged in underwater archaeological work inside Biscayne National Park in Florida since 2012. In Biscayne, SWP assists in **underwater archaeological training for youth and facilitates an internship for early career professionals in archaeology and heritage related disciplines.** SWP's work with partners provides opportunities for underwater archaeology training for new generations of divers, archaeologists, and environmentalists.

BRAZIL

Since 2023, SWP has assisted the AfrOrigens Institute in the recovery of the brig Camargo, **the first archaeological investigation of a wrecked slave ship in Brazil** by the AfrOrigens Institute. SWP and its partners in Brazil are working to identify and recover the wreck, and work with the descendant community at the Quilombo Santa Rita do Bracuí to understand the living legacies of this important history.

MOZAMBIQUE

For more than a decade, SWP collaboration in Mozambique has expanded with a primary focus on the Mozambique Island region. SWP currently supports local capacity building through the Community Stewards program, runs archaeological trainings, and assists in fieldwork. This includes **investigating the French slave ship L'Aurore, innovations in community engagement, heritage protection, public education, professional training, and transformative museum work.**

PORTUGAL

In collaboration with several Portuguese institutions, SWP has sought to research a more complete history of the slave trade and its multiple dimensions in the formation of the Portuguese colonial empire, which can catalyze important but difficult conversations about slavery's legacies. Challenging deep-rooted public narratives about Portugal's past, the partnerships forged by SWP continue to promote initiatives that **engage the public in discussions about national identity, cultural heritage, diversity, and racism.**

SENEGAL

Since 2014, SWP has fostered a network of researchers based in the Laboratoire d'Archéologie Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire at the Université Cheikh Anta Diop. Our ongoing work in Senegal includes our **groundbreaking international and interdisciplinary training project, Slave Wrecks Project Academy.** This academy serves as the pilot for a multiphase training program aimed at building regional leadership and community capacity for preservation work and economic development.

SOUTH AFRICA

During its launch in 2008, SWP initially focused on several sites in southern Africa. One of these sites resulted in the **identification and excavation of the São José Paquete D'Africa, one of the first known ships that foundered with enslaved Africans on board to be identified,** archaeologically documented, excavated, and conserved. SWP and its collaborators continue to identify, explore, and document other ships in South Africa that bring the stories of the enslaved back into memory.

ST. CROIX

Since 2015, SWP has developed a network of collaborators in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, devoted to exploring the history and legacies of slavery and freedom there. As a site of historical and contemporary anti-colonial resistance, work in this region **supports existing community efforts in historic preservation and community memory.** Our ongoing work in St. Croix includes exhibitions, terrestrial archaeology, and training for global collaborators and students.

REGIONAL WORK

STRUCTURE



SWP was launched in 2008 as a collaboration coordinated by The George Washington University with its two other co-founding partners, the United States National Park Service Submerged Resources Center, and IZIKO Museums of South Africa. In 2011, Diving With a Purpose and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) joined the project, which was renamed the Slave Wrecks Project in 2015.

**"The Slave Wrecks Project is one of the things I'm most proud of...
It's really about recognizing that the slave trade is not about
yesterday. It's as much about today and tomorrow..."**

Lonnie Bunch III
Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution

Since 2015, SWP has been co-coordinated by NMAAHC and GWU, with NMAAHC serving as the network's institutional host and GWU administering SWP's international coordinating office.

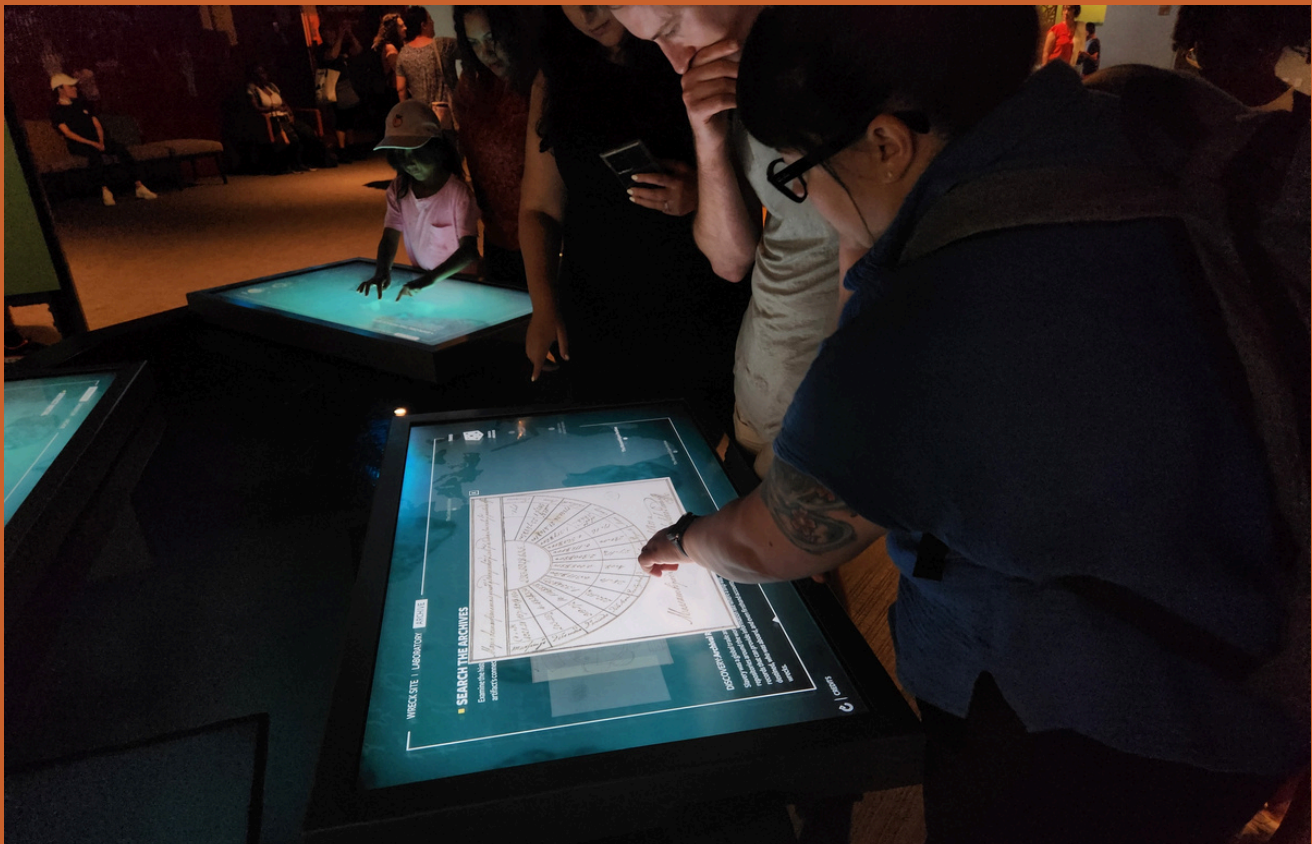
NATIONAL
MUSEUM of
AFRICAN
AMERICAN
HISTORY &
CULTURE

Smithsonian

NMAAHC is the only United States national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, history, and culture. The NMAAHC is the proud host of the Slave Wrecks Project.

SWP's International Coordinating Office is administered at GWU. GWU is a Tier 1 research university that offers a unique education to students in one of the most culturally and historically diverse cities in the world.

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC



An interactive display at NMAAHC exploring the process of identifying the São José shipwreck.

KEY PARTNERS



Diving With a Purpose (DWP) plays a key role in underwater archaeology activities and community monitor training.

DWP is dedicated to the conservation and protection of submerged heritage resources by providing education, training, certification and field experience in maritime archaeology and ocean conservation, with a particular focus on shipwrecks that were involved in the transatlantic slave trade.

AFRORIGENS

AfrOrigens conducts research on slave ships in collaboration with quilombola communities.

It is an organization committed to mapping, studying, and integrating the material culture associated with the African diaspora into political agendas aimed at recognizing and addressing historical reparations for crimes against humanity. AfrOrigens prioritizes social protagonism, knowledge exchange, and the appreciation of cultural references.



The **National Park Service Submerged Resources Center (SRC)** supports the stewardship of submerged resources.

NPS maritime archaeologists contribute their expertise to our maritime archaeology of the slave trade work and training early career maritime archaeologists.



ACHA is a South African-based not-for-profit organization that does development and capacity building work across Africa.

ACHA carries out excavations, undertakes heritage and archaeological impact assessments and acts as a center for researchers and research into all things heritage. It helps researchers access funding and international networks of experts and coordinates global projects aimed at developing heritage, capacity and economies.



Iziko Museums of South Africa is a declared national heritage institution.

It was established as a flagship museum, bringing together 11 museums under a single governance and leadership structure. Iziko is governed by a council appointed by the minister of arts and culture. Its core mission is to manage and promote a unique combination of South Africa's heritage collections, sites and services for the benefit of present and future generations.



URICA is a laboratory of the ETHOS Doctoral School at Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, Senegal.

URICA is committed to supporting the positive transformation of African societies and preparing the next generation to build new perspectives and ways of thinking for the African of tomorrow through ambitious training programs. URICA students and staff work across SWP sites and co-coordinate SWP activities in Senegal.



Eduardo Mondlane University's **Centro de Arqueologia e Investigação de Recursos Marítimos (CAIRIM)** is a result of SWP collaboration.

It was inaugurated on Mozambique Island in 2018. Through continuing research and training collaborations, CAIRIM has secured additional collaborations and support, such that of UNESCO. CAIRIM is poised to become the epicenter for underwater cultural heritage research and management in East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean.

Website: slavewreckproject.org

Instagram: [@slavewreckproject](https://www.instagram.com/slavewreckproject)

Facebook: [Slave Wrecks Project](https://www.facebook.com/SlaveWrecksProject)

Email: africanslavewrecks@gmail.com

YouTube: [@SlaveWrecksProject](https://www.youtube.com/@SlaveWrecksProject)

LinkedIn: [Slave Wrecks Project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/SlaveWrecksProject)

Newsletter: sign up [here](#)



@slavewreckproject

SOCIAL MEDIA & CONTACT



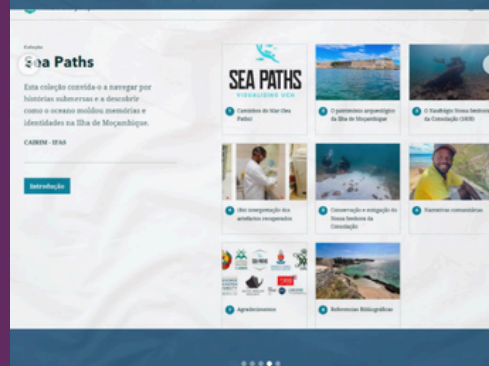
HOW WE POST

Our social media pillars: **uplift partners, amplify stories, educate the public.**

We only repost from institutional accounts, but we feature media from individuals on our stories.

We regularly work with our partners to create social media features and blog posts highlighting our collaborations.

Sea Paths created this story map to make underwater archaeological heritage accessible specifically to the residents of Mozambique Island.



Blog Posts

Spotlights



Dispatch from Angra dos Reis, Brazil

I just wanted to share a quick dispatch from our unforgettable morning in Angra dos Reis, the site of the wreck of the slave ship, Camargo. You know how gorgeous the coast of Brazil is. And three hours or so from Rio, it's rural and lush, achingly beautiful. The mountains fold around the bay here and drop right into the sea. The water is every shade of calm. But we're here because of the history of this place.

[READ MORE](#)



Rituals of Collecting Sea Water

Written by AfrOrigens and Emerson Mec to explain the process of collecting water from the site of the Camargo for inclusion in the In Slavery's Wake exhibition in Rio de Janeiro.

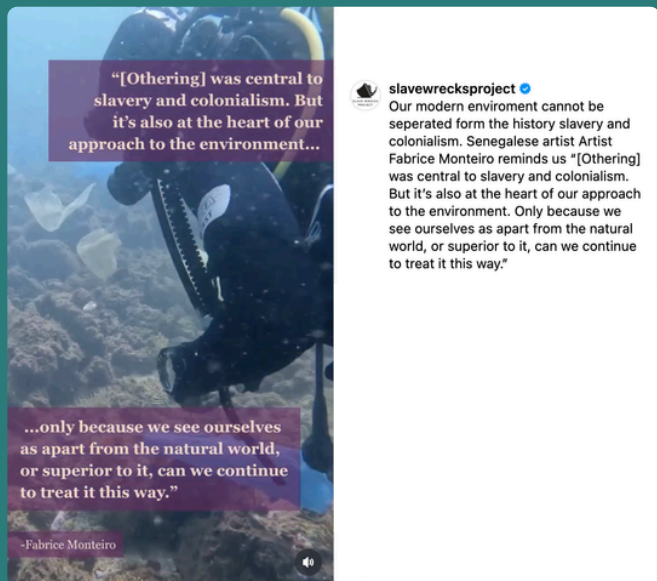
[READ MORE](#)



In Slavery's Wake and the Camargo

Descendants of the enslaved people from the Santa Rita do Bracul farm now form the Quilombo do Bracul and fight to remain on the land of their ancestors. The work of the Slave Wrecks Project and its partners in Brazil – AfrOrigens and the quilombo itself, ensures that this work is also about reclamation, about healing, and about empowerment.

[READ MORE](#)



FEATURED MEDIA

#slavewreckproject

#InSlaverysWake

#maritimearchaeology

How the Slave Trade Shaped the World

December 2024

Hidden shipwreck reveals horrors of the slave trade

August 2025



The underwater hunt for the Camargo

March 2024



High-resolution photos available upon request.



SWP-ACADEMY

Slave Wrecks Project-Academy (SWP-A) is a groundbreaking effort by the SWP as part of its Maritime Archaeology of the Slave Trade (MAST) Training and Professionalization program. SWP-A aims to cultivate and diversify a new generation of scholars through the development of innovative curriculum and training programs that are responsive to the specific needs of professionals and communities in a wider array of settings, with particular attention to the challenges confronted by historically underserved communities — with an emphasis on professionals in/from Africa and from across the African diaspora.



TEACHER TRAINING

The Teachers' Training at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon equips educators and museum professionals with the tools to engage with difficult histories—particularly Portugal's role in the transatlantic slave trade. Led by SWP, this immersive course blends historical context, museum visits, and practical workshops to rethink how these narratives are taught and remembered. Historians from globally renowned universities discuss the importance of slavery's legacy in Portugal, Brazil and the United States, as well as some of the legal and pedagogical tools to fight it.



COMMUNITY MONITORS/STEWARDS

The Community Monitors/Stewards Program on Ilha de Mozambique provides dive training to local community members in order to monitor submerged cultural heritage resources in the local waters, to become ambassadors for conserving/preserving these resources, and to engage in local economic development activities surrounding ocean conservation. Since the program's inception in 2015, nineteen local Mozambicans have participated.



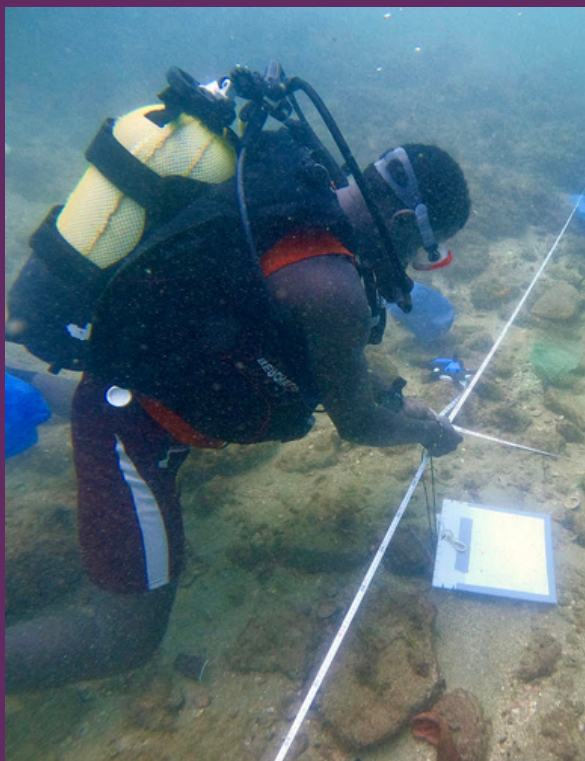
SWIM TO SCUBA

The Swim to Scuba Program is a collaborative project aimed at empowering residents of Africatown to engage with underwater heritage through access to the water, specifically swimming and scuba diving proficiency. SWP collaborates with institutions like Diving With a Purpose, Africatown Heritage Preservation Foundation, and City of Mobile to provide training and resources to residents.

Between June and September 2025, SWP and its partners supported young residents of Africatown through introductory scuba work to open ocean dives.

DONATE TO THE SLAVE WRECKS PROJECT

With your support, previously submerged archeological remains and long-neglected histories will continue to be recovered, restored, remembered, protected and shared.



Give Online: [Click here](#)

Mail a Check: Make your check out to The George Washington University, add The Department of Anthropology-Slave Wrecks Project in the memo line, and mail it to:
The George Washington University
P.O. Box 98131
Washington, DC, 20090-813

Call to Donate: Call the GW Division of Development and Alumni Relations at 1-800-789-2611