

BUSINESS/NEWS

Historian/ Educator Launches \$2K Scholarship Contest About Predominantly Black Town in Iowa

NATIONWIDE — Most people haven't heard of Buxton, Iowa — a thriving, integrated coal mining town of 5,000 residents established in 1900, where Blacks and whites were treated equally, and Black Americans were doctors, lawyers, teachers, business owners, and leaders in the community. Rachele Chase, the author of two books about Buxton and the founder and the Executive Director of Uniting Through History, wants to change that.

To help spread the word about this amazing town, Chase invites middle school and high school students nationwide to enter Uniting Through History's 2nd Annual Online Hip History Contest for a chance to win prizes. Thanks to a grant from the Legacy Foundation in Ottumwa, Iowa, contest finalists will win scholarships from \$250 to \$2,000 — and the winners' schools will win a matching amount.

Chase loves the creativity of last year's entries. "Students submitted videos of themselves performing songs, poems, skits, and stories

they wrote," she says. "They created documentaries. One young man even used a vintage television and flying pigs to tell Buxton's story."

Chase has a new challenge for this year's entrants. "We'd like to see students dig a little deeper, really highlight the Black experience and show how Black Americans made a difference in Buxton and why racial equity and equality is important today." This year, contest judges will rate how well entrants address that.

Contest judges include Charity Nebbe of Iowa Public Radio; Derrick Holmes, CEO, Baneker Watches & Clocks; Steve Myers, president of Iowa's premier talent agency, The Peak Agency, and Monica Henry, a successful realtor. More judges will be added weekly in February.

"We're really excited about the contest judges because not only will they help pick winners, they are donating their time to meet with entrants," says Chase. In addition to scholarships, First Place winners get a 30-minute Zoom call

with the judge of their choice—a successful professional who could be a valuable resource for them later in life.

The Hip History Contest is one of the projects that Uniting Through History offers to further acceptance of and pride in the fact that Black history is American history.

At a time when Jim Crow laws limited the rights of Black Americans and Black Americans experienced extreme racism, violence, and were lynched throughout the country, Buxton is an example of what happens when all people are given equal access to opportunities, education, jobs, and equal pay. It is also an example of how corporations, businesses, and individuals of all ethnicities benefit from treating everyone equally.

"Though the town wasn't perfect," says Chase, "we hope that



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people will see how Buxton's lessons of unity and racial equality and equity can be applied to combat racism today."

The Hip History Contest will run from February 1, 2022, to June 1, 2022.

For more details about the contest, visit <https://unitingthroughhistory.org/hip-history-contest/>

Investors Join Female Founder of Black-Owned Robotic Storefront Technology for Roadshow Kickoff

NATIONWIDE — PopCom's founder and CEO, Dawn Dickson-Akpoghene, is set to visit seven cities across the U.S. from January through March 2022 to launch the company's latest PopShop Local installments. PopCom, a company that has largely leaned on its community to support its push forward, is also inviting its crowdfunding investors and followers to join Dawn for an in-person PopCom Meet & Greet at the roadshow locations to celebrate the local impact of its PopShops.

So, what are PopShops? They are an innovative hybrid between e-commerce and local brick-and-mortar storefronts. PopShops not only give customers the option to purchase trusted local goods through an automated system but also offer e-commerce brands discoverability in local markets with real-time metrics, such as measuring consumer wants.

Dubbed the "iPhone of vending machines", PopShops utilize facial recognition to help retailers capture demographic information, machine learning to help deliver targeted content, and blockchain technology to enable identity verification and the sale of regulated products.

The roadshow kicked off on January 14 with PopShop Local Columbus at Polaris Mall, which

currently carries The Brow Dr. and Black Owned, both of which have Ohio-based founders. On the East Coast, from January 16-18, PopCom's latest features was showcased in New York City at the NRF 2022: Retail's Big Show, an annual expo that brings together industry visionaries to tackle retail's biggest topics and to showcase what's next.

Following the NYC exhibition, Dawn will continue the PopShop Local roadshow series and investor meetups at the following locations: Concord Mills Mall in Concord, NC, on January 21; Stonebriar Mall in Frisco, TX, on February 4; The Beverly Center in Beverly Hills, CA, on February 11; Metreon Mall in San Francisco, CA, on February 15; Honolulu, HI, on February 25; Las Vegas, NV, on March 4.

If you are a part of PopCom's crowdfunding investors or general support community, RSVP here to attend the PopCom Meet & Greet in a city near you.

Within the last three months, the PopShop Local Program has debuted six machines offering a variety of local goods that were originally limited to online shopping sites. For instance, SoulFlower's 100% pure natural bath products are now carried at the PopShop



PopCom's founder, Dawn Dickson-Akpoghene, has announced a seven-city roadshow to present the company's latest PopShops, where she will also host investor meetups.

Local Los Angeles at The Beverly Center. In October of 2021, Brew and Feed's launched its creative tea flavors and spice blends at the PopShop Local Concord at Concord Mills Mall.

"We are excited about the energy and innovation that PopCom has in their go-to-market strategy," said Brew and Feed's founder Robert Moreland, "as well as the potential for further innovation their software can bring with integration with other platforms."

In November of 2021, Teas with Meaning launched their organic tea at PopShop Local San Francisco at the Metreon. Each

month, the company will offer new tea boxes, featuring two small loose leaf teas, biodegradable brew bags, and a wooden teaspoon. "With this PopShop, I hope to accomplish increased brand awareness and sales for Teas with Meaning, additional insight for our market research, and to see PopCom continue to blossom for small businesses," said Kamilah Mitchell, founder of Teas with Meaning.

A second PopShop Local Columbus, located at the Fairfield Inn Hotel, opened earlier this month, featuring Ohio-based brand Flat Out of Heels.

TSU Students return, cont'd.



A Family from Massachusetts made the overnight drive to Nashville to check their son in at Eppse Hall on the main campus. A father helps to unload his daughter's luggage at Wilson Hall. Photos by Aaron Grayson, TSU Media Relations.

Freshman Institution," says Cotton, a biology major from Tulsa, Oklahoma. "So, I am excited to get back to that. I first came here in my sophomore year of high school during a college tour. When I stepped on campus during that visit I felt right at home. I said right then

that TSU is the place for me."

Tasha Andrews, TSU's executive director of new student programs, says that because many incoming freshman students missed out on starting in-person classes in the fall, the delay further fueled their excitement about being on

campus.

"They are very excited to know that after all that the world has been going through, they get to come to college for the very first time, live in a residence hall, and be a part of organizations and clubs is really very exciting," says Andrews. "It

is a great time to be at Tennessee State University, and to be a Tiger."

Carla Boudal and Nil Moinet, now in their second year at TSU, are student athletes from France.