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MISSOURI VALLEY COLLEGE TO TAKE PART IN SCOTT JOPLIN HOUSE EXCAVATION

Historic site excavations to take place June 16-July 4 in St. Louis.

Marshall, Mo. (June 16, 2008)—The Missouri Division of State Parks, GEAR-UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) St. Louis, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and Missouri Valley College have partnered together to conduct a six-year heritage project at the Scott Joplin House State Historic Site in St. Louis.

This heritage site was the home of musician Scott Joplin, the "King of Ragtime," from 1900 to 1903. His residence fell into disrepair by the mid-1970s, but was saved by the Jeff-Vander-Lou Neighborhood Association and was then given to the Missouri Division of State Parks. In 1976 Joplin's home was recognized as a National Historic Landmark site. Since its renovation and opening as a state historic site, its interpretation has focused on the celebratory heritage of Joplin.

In 2005 the Scott Joplin Heritage Project was established to redevelop and redefine this historic site's interpretation, expanding to broad lines of social history that connects the past to the present. This has included the creation of a community committee that meets regularly to discuss the historical interpretation and how this site can help the living community through economic revitalization, performing arts, and education.

In regards to educational programming, the UMSL School of Education is involved in this project through a multi-million dollar U.S. Department of Education GEAR-UP grant. The mission of GEAR-UP is to increase the readiness and success of students that attend post-secondary education from St. Louis area school districts. The Scott Joplin House State Historic Site will be the focus of a historical archaeology GEAR-UP program that utilizes this historic site as a laboratory for learning.

The first archaeological excavation will be from June, 16 to July 4, 2008, and will include teacher workshops for area high school teachers. In the summers of 2009 and 2010, high school students will participate in historical research and archaeological excavations. Members of the public are also invited to take part in these excavations.

ABOUT MISSOURI VALLEY COLLEGE

Missouri Valley College is a liberal arts college that provides educational, social and cultural experiences in a decidedly Christian environment. Established in 1889, MVC offers 28 majors, 7 pre-professional programs, associate degree programs, and certificate programs. The legendary Viking athletic program consists of 12 sports and 20 varsity teams. The liberal arts heritage focuses on scholarship, critical thinking and academic excellence to prepare students to become members of a responsible citizenry. For more information, call (660) 831-4000 or visit www.moval.edu.

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