ROBERTS CENTER’S INITIATIVES

• Hosted two multi-disciplinary conferences at Norfolk State University on 1619: The Making of America

• Provided the City of Norfolk with important material on the Underground Railroad operation in that city through the creation of a detailed map and website

• Assisted in construction of maps that highlighted important Civil War sites throughout Hampton Roads

• Constructed prototype Under-ground Railroad game project that focuses on George Latimer who escaped from Norfolk in 1842


• Sponsored the exhibition, “Standing on the Precipice of Change: Race, Slavery and the Civil War in Hampton Roads, Virginia,” currently on display in the Norfolk History Museum, part of the Chrysler Museum
The Roberts Center has been actively engaged in sponsoring programming that enhances our understanding of issues related to the Diaspora. In 2010, the Center held its first conference, co-sponsored by the Virginia Sesquicentennial Committee, and hosted by NSU. “Race, Slavery, and the Civil War: The Tough Stuff of American History” was broadcast on C-SPAN and the History Channel.

In 2011, the Center also partnered with NSU’s International Studies Program to bring the Fulbright scholar, Mustapha El Quadery, to campus to discuss “Colonial and Post-Colonial Issues in North Africa.” Ben Vinson Professor of Latin American History at Johns Hopkins University was also brought to campus to discuss “Blacksness and Borders: African Americans and Afro-American History.”

Roberts Center Mission
Dedicated to the exploration and analysis of the history and culture of African people and to those who were part of the Diaspora, the Center affords opportunities to scholars to study and disseminate the story of Africans’ migration around the globe from centuries ago to the present day.

The Center is named in honor of a Virginian whose legacy as the first President of Liberia embodies globalism.

The Roberts Center has established positive contacts with the community, especially with the ongoing 1619: Making of America conference series. We have received over $200,000 in funding that has been used to sponsor our conferences, the Underground Railroad gaming project, the Underground Railroad Norfolk tour, the Africana Fest Culture Walk, and a host of speakers on topics related to the African Diaspora.