

For Immediate Release

**MIT, Harvard, and Lesley donate total of \$15k to memorial on Cambridge
Common**

*The Friends of the Prince Hall Monument Fund are closer to goal of \$100,000 to erect
nation's first memorial to abolitionist*

Cambridge, Mass. (September 2, 2009) – The Friends of the Prince Hall Monument Fund took another step forward today, thanks to generous donations from local universities. The Friends of the Prince Hall Monument Fund is seeking contributions to offset the \$100,000 cost to erect the nation's first memorial to Prince Hall, who was a slave-turned-outspoken abolitionist in the Cambridge area during the time of the American Revolutionary War. The committee recently received contributions of \$5k each from MIT, Harvard University, and Lesley University.

“Prince Hall was an important advocate for access to education in America, seeing it as among the most basic ingredients to freedom,” said Bill Doncaster, Director of Public Affairs at Lesley University. “This year, as Lesley celebrates and reflects on 100 years of preparing people for careers as teachers and other professions, we recognize Hall's views on the importance of education remain relevant and important for future generations. We're honored to play a role in creating a memorial that will not only reflect on his importance contributions in the past, but also teach and inform into the future.”

The memorial, designed by award-winning Cambridge artist Ted Clausen, will honor Hall's lasting impact on black rights, education and equality. The memorial has been designed to mimic 18th/19th century tombstones, in its cut and shape, which is also appropriate for the site.

Though the unveiling of the monument has been postponed to November, a dedication ceremony in honor of the birth of Prince Hall will be held on September 12 at 12 pm on the Cambridge Common. The ceremony, which will present the foundation of the monument, will be followed by a reception at the First Church Congregational, 11 Garden Street in Cambridge.

The Friends of the Prince Hall Monument Fund is comprised of community and business leaders who have been raising financial support for the memorial since 2006. The location of the memorial, Cambridge Common, is where Hall delivered several groundbreaking speeches on the abolition of slavery and equal rights in 1797. The design features quotes by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Fredrick Douglass and Maya Angelou, and positions Prince Hall as a foundational voice for these activists. Other works by Clausen include the Vendome Firefighter Memorial in Boston's Back Bay and the Irish Immigration Memorial on Boston Harbor's Deer Island.

Mayor Simmons has been an integral part of raising awareness and action to make the monument a reality since joining the committee in 2005.

“I want people to remember that the fight for civil rights didn’t begin in the 1960s but in the 1700s, and Prince Hall was an individual who had a direct impact on this movement and still does to this day,” said Mayor Simmons, whose strong personal interest and research regarding Hall has brought pushed the project forward.

Many historians and professors throughout the country believe the memorial in Hall’s honor is long past due. “Prince Hall laid the often times forgotten footprints towards equality and social justice,” said Dr. Cornel West of Princeton University. “I fully support such a long overdue memorial for our beloved Brother, Prince Hall.”

In addition to the contributions from MIT, Harvard, and Lesley, financial support for the memorial has come from historians, professors, citizens and companies of Massachusetts, including Alexandria Real Estate Equities.

For more information about the Prince Hall Memorial Foundation or to support the organization through a donation, call Ms. Nicola Williams at 617-395-7680 or visit the website at: www.princehallmemorialfund.org.

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About Prince Hall Memorial Committee:

The Prince Hall Memorial Committee was formed in 2005 under the leadership of former City Councillor E. Denise Simmons. The committee consists of community and business leaders who work to honor Prince Hall, a man whose legacy is synonymous with leadership, bravery, inspiration and equality.

About Prince Hall:

Prince Hall is considered to be one of the country’s unsung founding fathers. His impact on civil rights is equivalent to the work advanced by the likes of Martin Luther King Jr. and Frederick Douglass. Hall was a slave in Massachusetts until he was emancipated by his master, William Hall, in 1765. Hall was a resident of Boston and Cambridge in the late 1700s where he met with General George Washington to fight with the Revolutionary Army. After serving in the Massachusetts Militia, Hall established the first Black Masonic Lodge, later to be renamed Prince Hall Lodge, one which still functions in Cambridge today.