



Historical Society
of Pennsylvania

UNIVERSITY OF **PENN**SYLVANIA
PRESS

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
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Work begins on *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*

Philadelphia, PA (April 8, 2009) — Members of Philadelphia's historical and cultural community will gather this month to start work on *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, a new print and online resource that will provide a comprehensive look at the history and identity of one of America's greatest cities.

More than 150 organizations and individuals have been invited to the April 16-17 workshop at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The attendees will discuss the encyclopedia project and offer advice about its form and content. The workshop is being hosted by the University of Pennsylvania Press in partnership with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Funding for the workshop was provided by the Barra Foundation, with additional support from Southwest Airlines and the Union League of Philadelphia.

The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia will be the first comprehensive investigation of its kind into the city's history in more than 25 years, and the first Philadelphia encyclopedia in more than 70 years. The editors of the *Encyclopedia* will collaborate with area cultural institutions, civic organizations, schools, scholars, and the general public to provide a fresh look at the key issues, places, events, and people that define the city and its influence. The project will include an interactive online resource as well as a print volume that will serve as a durable reference for generations to come.

Although it will be several years until the *Encyclopedia* is complete, the public can get involved now by visiting the project's Web site at <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org>. The Web site will provide updates on the project's progress and will allow the public to submit ideas for possible encyclopedia entries.

The project will be edited by three area scholars: Charlene Mires at Villanova University, Randall Miller at Saint Joseph's University, and Howard Gillette at Rutgers University-Camden. Gary Nash, a UCLA history professor, will serve as consulting editor. Interviews can be arranged by contacting Lauri Cielo, coordinator of communications, at (215) 732-6200 ext. 233 or lcielo@hsp.org.

The two-day workshop at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania will include a public lecture at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 16. Professor Clement Alexander Price will speak on the topic, "Whither the Civic Sphere and the Humanities?" Dr. Price is the distinguished

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service professor, professor of history, and director of the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience at Rutgers University-Newark. He has been a frequent consultant to Philadelphia-area institutions and served as a liaison between the Obama transition team and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dr. Price's talk is the 11th annual Frederic M. Miller Memorial Lecture, which honors the late director of the Urban Archives at Temple University. This lecture is administered and supported through the Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities at Rutgers University-Camden. The lecture will be preceded by a reception at 5:30 p.m.

MEDIA ADVISORY:

Interviews with editors of *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia* will be available:

WHEN: 2-3 p.m. Wednesday, April 15

WHERE: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Lauri Cielo, coordinator of communications, at 215-732-6200 ext. 233 or lcielo@hsp.org.

About the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Founded in 1824 in Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (www.hsp.org) collects and shares the stories of Pennsylvania. It is home to some 600,000 printed items and more than 21 million manuscript and graphic items. Its unparalleled collections encompass more than 300 years of America's history—from its 17th-century origins to the contributions of its most recent immigrants. The society's remarkable holdings together with its educational programming make it one of the nation's most important special collections libraries: a center of historical documentation and study, education, and engagement.

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