TO: Vicki Thompson  
Division of State Lands - Carr Building  
Department of Environmental Protection  
3800 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 130  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399  
Phone: 850/245-2688, Email: vicki.thompson@dep.state.fl.us

FROM: Dr. Erin H. Kimmerle, Associate Professor  
Phone: 813/974-5139, Email: kimmerle@usf.edu  
Dr. E. Christian Wells, Associate Professor  
Phone: 813/974-2337, Email: ecwells@usf.edu  
Department of Anthropology  
University of South Florida  
4202 E. Fowler Ave. SOC 107  
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: Extension of Permission for access to the “Boot Hill Cemetery” Burial Ground for Archaeological Research located in Marianna, FL

Date: May 31, 2013

Dear Ms. Thompson,

Florida Public Statute 267.12 regarding public lands and property relating to historical resources, allows the Florida Division of Historical Resources (FDHR) to issue permits for excavation and surface reconnaissance on state lands to qualified institutions with archaeological expertise. We are applying to FDHR for 1A-32 permit for excavation and documentation of deposits, assemblages, human remains, burials, and associated mortuary furniture and artifacts at the ‘Boot Hill Cemetery’ burial ground on the north campus of the former Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida (Figures 1-2). To comply with that application, we are requesting permission from your agency to access the state lands on which the burial ground is located for the purpose of exhumation and later re-interment. In this letter, we briefly summarize our research efforts to date and our future plans.

During the course of our research over the past two years, we have located human burials on the school property, identified the boundaries of burial grounds located on the property, and developed a list of names of who may be buried therein as well as the history of the school and burial practices. In the course of our research, we have identified approximately 50 suspected and/or confirmed burials. The majority of these fall outside the currently marked burial area,
which is delineated with 31 metal crosses and a wire fence (Figure 3). Physical evidence of clandestine burials outside of this area includes subsurface anomalies identified by ground penetrating radar and evaluated with shallow excavation exposing burial profiles that are rectangular in shape, approximately 5 x 3 ft in size, located 2-4 ft below the ground surface, and arranged in regular rows and columns. Other evidence consistent with burials includes the presence of grave hardware, human and nonhuman skeletal material.

Note that this area is also commingled with remains from an adjacent garbage dump and much of the debris (including many contemporary items; refer to Figures 4-5) are intermixed with the burials we identified. In more recent times (ca. 1980-1990s), the land was used for farming and the entire site was ploughed. Original grave markers (n=31) were placed in the general vicinity of the burial ground for the first time in the 1960s, although the earliest recorded burials date to 1914. Later, pine trees were planted around the site. All of these activities have impacted the burials. When our research began, we found that the burials were covered under heavy brush and woods. Additional burials were also located under the current roadway in the area. There was no indication on the ground surface or in historical records that graves were present beyond the currently marked area. State investigation by the Department of Law Enforcement in 2009 concluded that all of the burials were accounted for in this location by the current 31 crosses. The graves of these individuals would have been lost forever had it not been for these recent efforts to prospect for additional burials. Therefore, we issued an interim report to provide a summary of findings to interested stakeholders and the FDHR who had issued our permit. Subsequently, FDHR approved our request for mechanical excavation (horizontal clearing to ground-truth the GPR anomalies) with heavy equipment and extended the length of our permits to carry out additional work in the area. We have begun to mark confirmed burials outside of the currently marked area with temporary markers.

The Medical Examiner for District 14 Dr. Michael Hunter, the Attorney General of Florida Pam Bondi, the Statewide Prosecutor Nick Cox, the State Archaeologist Dr. Mary Glowacki, Jackson County Sheriff Roberts and Florida Senator Bill Nelson were notified of these discoveries throughout the course of this project, and most of them visited the site this year with our research team. Additionally the Florida Chapter of the NAACP under the direction of Madame President Adora Nweze and Vice President Dale Landry were notified and also visited the site with our research team. The collaboration among local, State, and Federal parties in this effort is important for several reasons: 1) through our research we have made significant efforts to educate the public and provide opportunities for all interested stakeholders to voice an opinion or offer consultation; 2) the outcome of this project and facts of history that may be established are the shared collective history of all Floridians; 3) the majority of the children who attended the reform school, died there, and were buried on school grounds were African American though this site has never been designated as such; and 4) families of the children buried on State land have a legal right to repatriation and to know what happened to their family members. Our continued research at the site will help answer these remaining questions about who is buried at the site, the burial practices and circumstances of their lives and deaths, and the significant role of this institution in Florida history.

No family or next of kin has objected to this effort or to the full excavation and identification of remains. Historical records indicate that 12 children were not named and were listed as “colored boy died”. Additionally, we have found through genealogical research that several of the children buried at the school were orphans, and therefore we do not have the ability to find next of kin who can speak for them. We have communicated with seven families
who are asking for repatriation of their loved one’s remains. The parties listed here are in
support of this request and have requested we proceed with the filing of an A1-32 permit in order
to finish this historical project and locate all of the children buried there. Therefore, the effort to
locate clandestine burials, exhume remains for identification and re-inter the remains in marked
known plots is a collaborative effort between USF, Dr. Hunter, Ms. Bondi, the State
Archaeologist Dr. Mary Glowacki, the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office, and the University
of North Texas Center for Identification who are providing the DNA testing for identification.
To date, the Florida Legislature appropriated $190,000 for the research, excavation,
identification and preservation of the site to be completed by USF and our collaborating partners.
Please refer to the letters of support attached here, which were recently submitted to the National
Institute of Justice for additional Federal funding.

Historic cemeteries are among the most valuable cultural recourses. In fact, the FDHR
cites Florida law relating to the protection, maintenance, documentation, and access to historic
cemeteries (Chapter 704.08), which states that relatives and descendants shall have an easement
to enter and leave a cemetery at reasonable times and that if the cemetery is not being
maintained, the relatives and descendants may request it or have the right to maintain the
cemetery themselves.

While other State run institutions (such as the Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee)
kept meticulous records of burials made on the institution’s property, the Dozier School was
notable for the fact that it did not keep any record showing the location of specific graves, nor
did the School even mark the graves. The cemetery was not documented and no burial records
have been located about who is buried where on the property. In some cases caskets were made
by children working in the school carpentry shop, but in other cases coffins were not used.
When burials occurred on State property staff at the School served as undertakers. In cases
where the bodies were shipped home to families, local funeral directors were used as the
undertakers rather than School staff.

The purpose of our research initiative is to determine the number, location, and identity
of graves and the individuals buried within those graves based on osteological and DNA
methods for human identification. Through the course of this investigation, the cemetery will be
documented and preserved as a valuable historical resource for Florida and surviving family
members. Our USF research team and collaborating partners through the forensic network in
which we operate (ICFAHR, the International Consortium for Forensics, Anthropology, and
Human Rights) routinely locates and excavates clandestine graves for law enforcement and
works for the preservation of historic cemeteries. It is comprised of highly qualified individuals
for this task and already has the necessary tools, technologies, funding, and expertise for
precisely this type of work.
Figure 1. Topographic map showing the location of Burial Ground in 1947. This image comes from the FDLE (2009) investigative report.

Source: Plat No. 1 from the Survey of the Florida Industrial School for Boys, 1947 (Gravesite depicted by cross)
Figure 2. GPR plot map of “Boot Hill Cemetery.”
Figure 3. Top: Wooded area north of marked cemetery, area beginning to be cleared to search for burials. Bottom: Flags mark areas of anomalies noted with GPR, probable grave shafts were found in previously wooded area.
Figure 4. Rusted lock (far right ca. 1912) along with historical and modern garbage found throughout site.
Figure 5. Modern dog remains in cooler and garbage bags buried adjacent to unmarked human burials, 10 meters northwest of currently marked cemetery.
May 6, 2013

Attorney General Eric Holder
Department of Justice
Robert F. Kennedy Building
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 1145
Washington, DC 20530-0001

SUBJECT: Letter of Collaboration - NIJ-2013-3366

Dear Attorney General Holder:

Please allow this letter to articulate our appreciation for the opportunity to team with USF on the continuation of this important work. We are committed to keeping a hands-on approach with what we feel to be a worthwhile project. For nearly a century, families of boys who died in state custody have requested their deaths be investigated and the bodies of the children located. Dr. Erin Kimmerle and this office have been in regular contact, and we look forward to working with and assisting in any form possible. Recently the Attorney General of Florida issued an exhumation petition for the John Doe graves on behalf of our office and the Florida Legislature has earmarked funding for the exhumation. The additional funding sought through this initiative will fund the DNA analysis, skeletal autopsy and anthropological examination for identification and data entry of all relevant information. Through this effort we will perform a forensic examination of the individual to establish a cause of death and produce a DNA profile so identification can be established.

We will work collaboratively with The University of South Florida Department of Anthropology, Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office, the Office of the Florida State Attorney General, and with the Florida Sheriff’s Association who will provide logistical support at no additional cost. This collaborative effort relates to the ante mortem data and DNA collection from families (next of kin) of the unidentified persons. The medical death investigator will be on location during the exhumations and I will have direct contact with Dr. Kimmerle and her team throughout the entire process and together we will examine the remains and issue reports as to
their findings.

If there are any questions that I can answer, please let me know.

Thank you,

Michael D. Hunter, M.D.
District Fourteen Medical Examiner
May 3, 2013

The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General of the United States
Department of Justice
Robert F. Kennedy Building
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW – Room 1145
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Re: Letter of Collaboration – NIJ-2013-3366

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

I am writing in support of the University of South Florida’s application for the above grant funding entitled “Using DNA Technology to Identify the Missing.” This application is being made to support our ongoing effort to exhume and identify unknown human remains from the former Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida. This work is being made done by the Florida Office of the Attorney General in conjunction with several agencies including the University of South Florida (USF), the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources, and Dr. Michael Hunter, the District Medical Examiner for the 14th District of Florida.

The Office of the Attorney General is currently seeking an order from the Circuit Court in Jackson County Florida, where Dozier is located, that will allow us to proceed with the exhumation of a suspected 52 human remains on the campus of the school. Once an order is obtained, Dr. Hunter will lead the medical investigation primarily utilizing the assistance of the anthropologists and archaeologists from USF’s College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. USF’s team will be led by Dr. Erin Kimmerle, with whom the Attorney General and I have personally met and discussed this matter. The Attorney General’s Office will continue to provide legal and other support to Dr. Hunter and Dr. Kimmerle as this investigation progresses.
An operational plan has been put into place by the Attorney General’s Office in conjunction with Dr.’s Hunter and Kimmerle. Once exhumations begin, at the direction of Dr. Hunter, Dr. Kimmerle will lead the effort assisted by a team of faculty and graduate students from USF. As remains are recovered, they will be transported to the anthropological labs at USF in Tampa for examination and autopsy by both Dr.’s Hunter and Kimmerle. At that time, efforts will be made to recover DNA material from the remains which we believe may date back to 1900, and the latest of which is suspected to have been buried in 1952.

Should DNA be recovered from the remains, they will be sent to the University of North Texas (UNT) for analysis. With the assistance of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, we have asked UNT to do this pursuant to a federal grant they operate under. The submissions to UNT will include known DNA samples obtained from descendants of persons we believe may be buried at Dozier. These submissions will be analyzed with the unknown samples recovered from the remains, and if identifications are made, the family will be offered the opportunity to take control of their relatives remains for legal disposition. Any unidentified or unclaimed remains will be re-interred by the State of Florida.

This investigation is being done not only to repatriate human remains with their family/descendants, but also to answer questions about the history and operation of the Dozier School for Boys. This matter has been the subject of a great deal of research, study, speculation and public scrutiny. It has garnered national media attention. Floridians want to find out how many people are buried at this school, who they are, and how they died. It has become a matter of setting history straight, bringing closure to the families of long deceased children, learning from our past, and allowing families to decide where they wish their relative to rest. Questions need to be answered, and the Attorney General and I both are working closely with the University of South Florida to do this.

This grant funding will be very important in this effort; therefore, I hope USF’s application is successful. We have a plan in place with USF to conduct this work and the Attorney General’s Office will continue to assist them in any way we can. This matter is very important to the State of Florida. If I can do anything to assist in your determination to award this funding to USF, please contact me at your convenience at 813-287-7209.

Sincerely,

Nicholas B. Cox
Statewide Prosecutor
May 2, 2013

Erin H. Kimmerle, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Anthropology
University of South Florida
4202 E. Fowler Ave., SOC 107
Tampa, FL 33620-8100 USA

Dear Ms. Kimmerle,

Per your conversation of April 30, 2013 with B.J. Spamer, the Director of our National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) Training and Analysis Division, I am writing this letter of support for your project to exhume and identify young men buried at the former Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida.

The University of North Texas (UNT) Center for Human Identification’s Laboratory for Molecular Identification is one of only a few facilities that integrates STR, Y-STR and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analyses. Once DNA profiles are obtained, they are directly entered into the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). The UNT Center for Human Identification uploads all DNA profiles to the latest version of CODIS (CODIS 7.0) and is one of only nine CODIS laboratories in the United States that is capable of uploading mtDNA profiles to CODIS. The UNT Center for Human Identification is accredited by Forensic Quality Services-I based on the requirements set forth by ISO/IEC 17025 and the FBI Director’s Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic Testing Laboratories. The UNT Center for Human Identification is funded to provide DNA analyses for missing and unidentified person cases at no cost to investigating agencies through the “Using DNA Technology to Identify the Missing” NIJ grant (award number 2010-DN-BX-K206).

The UNT Center for Human Identification also manages the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), a grant-funded program of the National Institute of Justice (award number 2011-MU-BX-K063). All cases processed for DNA at the UNT Center for Human Identification must be entered into NamUs.

The UNT Center for Human Identification is prepared to assist your project with any needed NamUs entries, DNA analyses and anthropological analyses related to the identification of these victims. The NamUs Regional System Administrator for Florida, Michael Nance, will work with your agency and the appropriate medical examiner personnel to facilitate NamUs entries for
unidentified decedents recovered during your exhumation project. Mr. Nance will also provide
assistance in the entry of missing person cases into NamUs, as well as the location of relatives
for DNA collections and submission of DNA samples to the UNT Center for Human
Identification for upload and comparison in CODIS.

It will be our pleasure to support the University of South Florida with this important project.

Sincerely,

Arthur J. Eisenberg, PhD
Professor and Chairman Department of Forensic and Investigative Genetics
Co-Director UNT Center for Human Identification
University of North Texas Health Science Center
3500 Camp Bowie Boulevard
Fort Worth, TX 76107
Phone #: 817 735-0555
Fax #: 817 735-5016
E-mail: arthur.eisenberg@unthsc.edu
May 3, 2013

Erin H. Kimmerle, Ph.D  
Associate Professor of Anthropology  
University of South Florida  
202 E. Fowler Avenue, SOC 107  
Tampa, FL 33620-8100 USA

To Dr. Kimmerle:

I would like to commend you and your team for the work you are doing at the Dozier School for boys in Marianna, Florida. Researching and publically sharing information about boys buried in “Boot Hill Cemetery” on the school grounds and the circumstance of deaths that occurred from 1914-1960 during the era of segregation and heightened racial tension in Florida’s history is an important and much needed endeavor. Your project is consistent with and exemplary of the mission of the NAACP, which is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.

Many people, including many of our membership, have followed public reporting of your team’s progress and have been encouraged by your commitment to social justice and civil rights for victims and families in the present. The Dozier School for Boys has represented many things for the community of Marianna throughout the years and there is much that can be learned by researching this institution and those associated with it. Moreover, many families of the boys who died at this school have
come forward and are asking for information about what happened to their brothers and
uncles, whose deaths were largely undocumented. They ask for answers and
identification. For these reasons we offer our support to your efforts. We want to make
sure stories that have gone untold get shared and deaths that are unaccounted for are
researched and documented.

This project has implications beyond Florida and we recognize and encourage
your efforts at broadening the story to include the complex realities of race, reform and
youth and use of the convict-lease and peonage systems of labor in the era of Jim Crow.
The work you began in 2011 and are looking to continue will help shed light on the
history of the cemetery and those buried there, including exact locations of individual
burials. It will help bring closure to the many unanswered questions that families have
about their loved ones and help educate policymakers and other officials on how to
make such institutions safer and more responsive to the needs of youth in the future.

At the National level, we pledge our support and our offer access to NACCP
resources that can advance your efforts locally and nationally. We will also review your
request for NAACP representation at two upcoming conferences in which you present
your research findings—a conference to be held in Tampa and the American
Anthropology Association meetings November 20-24 in Chicago during which the
results of the initiative will be presented.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Adora Obi Nweze
President, Florida State Conference
Member, National Board of Directors NAACP
May 2, 2013

Attorney General Eric Holder
Department of Justice
Robert F. Kennedy Building
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest, Room 1145
Washington, District of Columbia 20530-0001

RE: Using DNA Technology to Identify the Missing, CFDA #16.560

Dear Attorney General Holder:

I am pleased to provide this letter in support of the University of South Florida (USF)'s efforts to obtain a federal grant. The goal of their proposed project is to assist the District 14 Medical Examiner and Attorney General of Florida in the investigation of missing and unidentified children who died under suspicious and unexplained circumstances at the Former Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida. I respectfully request your consideration of this organization's application for federal funding.

In 2011, USF started the arduous task to document the and identify the remains of the students who may have been buried at the Dozier School for Boys. These young boys died under suspicious and unexplained circumstances and it is necessary to repatriate their remains to their families. Funding for this project will allow the Medical Examiner to order the exhumation of the graves so additional investigations may be performed in establishing the identities of the persons buried in unmarked graves.

This research project is essential and will be in collaboration with a number of Florida law enforcement agencies, medical examiner offices and the State Attorney's Offices. Once this project is completed, a final report will provide a comprehensive overview of the project, but most important of all, the families of the deceased will be repatriated with their brother's or uncle's remains.

Again, I encourage your consideration of this worthy cause. If I can be of further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

BN/ut

CC: Ms. Digna Alvarez, Regional Director, U. S. Senator Bill Nelson