

PRESS RELEASE

Concerned Alumni Oppose Demolition of Additional Historic Buildings at Lincoln University as KOEZ Announced

Lincoln University, Pa.---January 30, 2014 – Concerned alumni of Lincoln University, PA, formed the Lincoln University Heritage Initiative (LUHI) last year when Dr. Robert R. Jennings, the university president, announced plans to demolish Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall, the oldest building on the campus. LUHI has now learned of the university's plan to demolish three additional historic buildings (Cresson Hall, Houston Hall and Bond House) in the midst of leveraging the Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone designation that will greatly benefit developers and businesses.

Over 1,000 concerned alumni and friends have signed a petition to have Dr. Jennings and the Board of Trustees to at least hear LUHI proposals to work with the university to save the buildings. At the time of this release, Board of Trustees Chair, Ms. Kimberly Lloyd, and Dr. Jennings have refused to meet with the group.

LUHI President, Carol Black, emphasizes, "This is a time-sensitive opportunity for a win/win proposition by linking the proposed Historic District designation to the many tax credits and abatements that prospective developers and businesses would ultimately benefit from in participation in the recently approved Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone designation that Lincoln has actively pursued over the past year."

"There is absolutely no reason," says Black, "That students, alumni and other stakeholders of the university should support this KOEZ and a development plan that starts with tearing down the very edifices and structures that speak to Lincoln's unique and enduring status as an historic institution of higher learning in America."

Robert Ingram, President of the national Alumni Association of Lincoln University (AALU) and Vice- President of LUHI, remarked, "We are totally on board for STEM education and development and internship opportunities for Lincoln students, but not as a trade-off for our character and traditions that make us valued and unique."

Black agreed, "The University should contribute greatly to the surrounding community and vice versa but not at the sacrifice of our very identity! It is time for the

university to come to the table and explore options." "There are always options," concludes Black.

In May, 2013, Dr. Jennings matter-of-factly reported his intention to the Council of the Alumni Association of Lincoln University that he was going to demolish Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall and replace it with a new welcome center. Many alumni were in shock that President Jennings, a graduate of Morehouse College with no prior connection to Lincoln University, would seek to raze one of the oldest buildings on Lincoln's campus. Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall, built in 1865, was built during the Civil War when the university was originally known as Ashmun Institute. Shortly after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, the university changed its name to honor the slain 16th President of the United States.

Robert Ingram, AALU president, intones, "LUHI is comprised of the best and brightest of Lincoln's distinguished alumni." Ingram continues, "LUHI members include renowned architects, urban planners, engineers, university administrators, historians, lawyers, doctors and persons of the ilk and character who recognize the travesty and gross negligence that would be committed if the university continued on a course to not do all that is reasonably possible to maintain and bring back into use all of its historic structures."

Carol Black, LUHI president, explains, "Our organization has uncovered a survey in the 1980's by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission that informed the university that 15 of the buildings on the campus are eligible for historic district designation on the National Register of Historic Places."

Black emphasizes, "A number of state legislators and government officials find LUHI's goal of seeking national historic designation as worthy of support also for the economic boost in cultural tourism dollars and jobs for Chester County and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania overall."

To learn more about LUHI and its fight to protect and preserve the University's historical legacy, visit www.luheritage.org or contact Carol A. Black, President, at 484-962-0615 or info@luheritage.org.