

**The BlackQuaker Project: Summer 2020
Research, Video, and Logistics Assistant
15 May-31 July 2020 (Subject to Change)**

[TheBlackQuakerProject](#) (1) celebrates the lives and contributions of Quakers of Color worldwide, and (2) documents and addresses their concerns. The BlackQuaker Project was created by Dr. Harold (Hal) Weaver. Dr. Weaver was the founding Chair of the Department of Africana Studies at Rutgers University and is now an alumnus Fellow at the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University. Dr. Weaver also founded two related projects -- The BlackFilm Project and The China-Africa-Russia Project -- in order to contribute to international understanding and peace through transnational cultural relations. Dr. Weaver is co-editor of *Black Fire: African American Quakers on Spirituality and Human Rights* (2011).

The BlackQuaker Project (BQP) is committed to participating in several international activities during summer 2020 with Russian, Tanzanian, and Kenyan research and cultural institutions with which they have had long-term communication and collaborative relationships. Traveling with Dr. Weaver and his colleagues, the student will carry out various research, videotaping, and support functions.

Summer 2020 Program Structure:

1. **MOSCOW, RUSSIA (18 May-1 June).** Triennial international African Studies conference hosted by Moscow's Africa Institute, with whose scholars Dr. Weaver has been in communication and cooperation with since first being introduced personally by family friend W.E.B. Du Bois in 1961. The conference theme is, "Destinies of Africa in the Modern World." With the Africa Institute's Deputy Director, Dr. Weaver is serving as co-convenor of the panel "Coping with the Difficult Past: Remembering and Forgetting Slavery and the Slave Trade in Africa, Europe, and the Americas." The paper topic for that panel is, "Setting the Record Straight: Black Filmmakers Transform the Representation of Chattel Slavery in the Americas." **Conference Dates: 20-24 May.**

Spending two weeks in Moscow, the student will play an important role in research, support, and videotaping before, during, and after the conference. We will also carry out research on the Black presence in Moscow, past and present, including the experiences of Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Langston Hughes, African students, and African Americans who went to the USSR to find the freedom they could not find in the USA.

*NOTE: There **may** be an additional component to this trip - tracing Langston Hughes's train trip from Moscow to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, extending the visit by one week.*

For these activities, the team will use the materials collected for several of their priority activities of their ministry, The BlackQuaker Project: (1) our Quakers of Color

International Archive, (2) our activities related to the UN Decade of the People of African Descent (2015-2024), and (3) our memoirs.

Dr. Weaver's past experiences in Moscow:

1959: member of the second group of USA young adults participating in the official USA-USSR exchange program;

1961: participated in the World Youth Conference after persistent pressing of the Moscow Soviet bureaucracy;

1962: participated in the post-Helsinki-World-Youth-Festival sojourn in the USSR;

1963-February 2004: journalist of "The Baltimore Afro-American" newspaper, for which he was officially accredited to Moscow by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

2014: participated in the African Studies annual meetings, delivering a paper on African students in the USSR;

2017: participated in the African Studies annual meetings, co-convening and co-chairing a panel, as well as presenting a paper on Paul Robeson as pan-Africanist.

2. **ZANZIBAR, TANZANIA (1-11 July).** Annual Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF), for which BQP served as Ambassador since 2005 after being President of the International jury in 2005, co-convenor (our BlackFilm Project) with UNESCO of the slavery-and-film conference in 2006 (at which BQP also presented a paper), and President of the UNESCO-appointed jury selecting the best film on slavery at ZIFF 2007.

Spending 10 days in Zanzibar, we will interview leaders in Quakerism, culture, politics, and film. These materials will be used for the Quakers of Color International Archives, the UN Decade for People of African Descent, and our memoirs.

3. **KISUMU, KENYA. Friends United Meeting (FUM) Triennial, Western Kenya. Kisumu: 12-18 July 2020. Nairobi: 18-21 July.**

Spending 10-14 days in Kisumu and, later in Nairobi, and the Friends Theological Seminary in Western Kenya, we will videotape interviews for the Quakers of Color International Archives and collect written documents on Quakers in Kenya, which is estimated to have at least half of Quakers in the world. The FUM general secretary has offered The BlackQuaker Project the opportunity to facilitate an Interest Group on African American human rights leader Bayard Rustin, an occasion which will draw heavily on the film, "Brother Outsider: Bayard Rustin." We have been using this film since January 2003—before its national release by PBS—to educate Quakers and others about the life, achievements, and times of this Quaker human-rights activist. We also hope to videotape an interview with a retired Kenyan medical doctor who literally walked from Nairobi to Cairo to apply for a scholarship to medical school in Socialist Russia or another Socialist country; he was assigned to Poland. We also hope to videotape other African leaders who studied in Russia and other Socialist countries in Europe and Asia.

All these activities tie in with three of The BlackQuaker Project's priority activities, 2019-2022: (1) the Quakers of Color International Archives (QCIA); (2) Hal's memoirs, "Black Fire: An African American Quaker Activist Scholar in a White-Supremacist Culture," vol. 2 of a projected trilogy; and (3) the UN Decade for People of African Descent, 2015-2024.

We will spend time before the first international research sojourn at a post-secondary USA institution—perhaps Harvard or a Quaker institution—in research, planning, and skills development in interviewing and videotaping. After visiting Russia, we will return to the USA for de-briefing of an anticipated rich Russian sojourn, for archival research related to Dr. Weaver's memoir, and for preparing for the next phase: East Africa—Kenya and Tanzania. Finally, after East Africa, we will return to the USA for a final de-briefing and writing of a final report.

Student Qualifications:

1. A mature student leader-researcher who is passionate about learning about other cultures and has a deep commitment to learning. Is flexible and adaptable to other cultures and societies.
2. Expert computer skills, including an interest in further developing the Black Quaker Project website.
3. Desired to have some background in Africana studies, international studies, or Russian studies.
4. Because a significant part of the work would be videotaping interviews with our professional video equipment, the student should be prepared to assume those responsibilities. The student assistant would be responsible for the handling, use, and security of the equipment. TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED BEFORE DEPARTURE FOR A STUDENT ASSISTANT WITHOUT VIDEO EXPERIENCE.
5. An asset, but definitely not a pre-requisite: some Swahili or Russian or French language skills.
6. Reliability is a major pre-requisite.

Dr. Harold D. Weaver (weaverhal@yahoo.com), Associate, Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Harvard University; Associate, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University.

Interested applicants must meet with the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship (CPGC) Manager of International Programs, Stephanie Zukerman. Schedule an advising session through [CPGC's website](#).