

# BLA KC HISTORY

GREATER KANSAS CITY  
BLACK HISTORY STUDY GROUP

The Greater Kansas City Black History Study Group is a chartered branch of The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the founders of "Black History Month."

On Saturday, October 14, 2023, the GKC Black History Study Group, along with our institutional members, the National World War I Museum & Memorial, Clay County African American Legacy, Inc., the Plaza Community Christian Church, the Kansas University Medical Center Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, The UMKC SPARK Flossie Pack Center for Lifelong Learning, and the William Jewell College Office of Access and Engagement will hold our monthly program/meeting **in person** with featured lecturer, Mr. Phil Cunningham, Curator of the Kansas Collection-Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas.

**Location:**  
**Black Archives of Mid-America**  
**1722 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Ter.**  
**Kansas City, MO 64108**  
**No virtual option will be available for this meeting.**  
**Please RSVP to [kcblackhistory2@gmail.com](mailto:kcblackhistory2@gmail.com)**

Larry Lester, President  
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## "Slave Revolt Leader, Slave Trader: New Evidence on an Old Rumor against Sengbe Pieh "

**2023 Theme: Black Resistance**  
**Saturday, October 14, 2023**  
**1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CST**



**Phil Cunningham** is an archivist from Manhattan, KS. He earned his bachelor's in history from Kansas State University and his master's in library & information sciences from Pratt Institute in New York City. He has interned at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem and has previously served as the Head of Research Services at the Amistad Research Center in New Orleans. He recently joined KU Libraries as the Curator of the Kansas Collection.

After the famous Amistad case in 1841, a group of abolitionist missionaries raised funds to provide transport for the Amistad Africans back to west Africa and to establish a mission in Mende lands (today Sierra Leone). Sengbe Pieh (known in America as **Joseph Cinque**) and many other returning Africans soon left the mission and returned to their home villages, leaving little recorded history of their later lives. Over time, a rumor grew that Sengbe became involved in the slave trade himself. This rumor has been repeated and debated over the past 150 years. Cunningham's presentation hopes to trace the rumor from contemporary sources back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to inform the audience on how this rumor came about, how it spread, and ultimately to assess the validity of the accusation made against Sengbe.