



## **American Public Television Receives National Archives Grant to Launch “Explaining Today: *The Future of America’s Past*” Educational Initiative**

*Multi-year professional learning and content development project will engage middle and high school teachers and students to explore American history*

**BOSTON, MA (January 5, 2023)** – American Public Television (APT) today announced the launch of “Explaining Today: *The Future of America’s Past*,” an educational collaboration with *New American History*, a digital history resource hub founded by Edward Ayers, Tucker-Boatwright professor of the humanities and president emeritus at the University of Richmond. PBS LearningMedia, an online destination that offers free access to thousands of resources from PBS stations and partners, will distribute classroom resources developed through the project to its nationwide audience of educators. The project is funded by a grant from the National Archives’ National Historical Publications & Records Commission.

“Explaining Today: *The Future of America’s Past*” brings together public television stations Alabama Public Television, Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB), WFYI/Indianapolis, The WNET Group, and WOSU/Columbus to locally engage teachers via “train the trainer” workshops over three years to utilize episodes of the APT-distributed series *The Future of America’s Past* and its related primary source educational resources. The workshops will create professional learning communities that will enable public school teachers and preservice educators in participating public television communities to increase the media literacy and critical thinking skills of their students through the use of digital humanities assets. Materials will be accessible on [APTonline.org](https://www.aptonline.org), the PBS LearningMedia website and [newamericanhistory.org](https://www.newamericanhistory.org).

“APT is pleased to collaborate with NAH, PBS Learning Media, and partner stations to provide a valuable resource that redefines the understanding of history for students in the digital age,” said Cynthia Fenneman, President and CEO of APT. “The initiative allows APT and *The Future of America’s Past* to transcend public television while continuing to be a powerful educational tool that both inspires and entertains.”

“*The Future of America’s Past* is meant to inspire people of all ages to recognize the history all around them and to appreciate the many people keeping history alive,” said Edward L. Ayers, Executive Director of *New American History* and host of *The Future of America’s Past*. “This alliance between American Public Television and *New American History* will encourage young people to imagine their own ways to see and tell about the past in the communities where they live.”

*The Future of America’s Past* is a National Capital Emmy Award-winning series featuring locations that define the most misunderstood parts of America’s past. The series journeys to the front lines of American history, seeking rich archival source material and a range of perspectives from public historians, demonstrating how the public can better understand the significance of the country’s historic landmarks.

The first round of “Explaining Today: *The Future of America’s Past*” workshops will be held with GPB in Summer 2023, followed by workshops with WFYI, The WNET Group and WOSU in 2024, and with Alabama Public Television in 2025. The application for local area teachers will be open in January of each respective activity year, beginning with GPB in 2023. More information will be available at <https://APTonline.org> in the spring.

###

### **About American Public Television**

American Public Television (APT) is the leading syndicator of high-quality, top-rated programming to the nation’s public television stations. Founded in 1961, APT distributes 250 new program titles per year and more than one-third of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles in the U.S. APT’s diverse catalog includes prominent documentaries, performances, dramas, how-to programs, classic movies, children’s series, and news and current affairs programs. *Midsomer Murders*, *America’s Test Kitchen*, *AfroPoP*, *Rick Steves’ Europe*, *Pacific Heartbeat*, *Christopher Kimball’s Milk Street Television*, *Legacy List with Matt Paxton*, *Front and Center*, *Lidia’s Kitchen*, *Kevin Belton’s New Orleans Kitchen*, *Simply Ming*, *The Best of the Joy of Painting* with Bob Ross, *Front & Center*, James Patterson’s *Kid Stew*, and *NHK Newslines* are a sampling of APT’s programs, considered some of the most popular on public television. APT also licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service and distributes Create®TV — featuring the best of public television’s lifestyle programming — and WORLD™, public television’s premier news, science, and documentary channel. To find out more about APT’s programs and services, visit [APTonline.org](https://APTonline.org).

### **About New American History**

*New American History* explores America’s past, harnessing the power of digital media, curiosity, and inquiry. Its core projects are [Bunk](#), a curated remix of contemporary online content, and [American Panorama](#), an interactive digital atlas. We also partner with others who share our commitment to innovative public history. These allies include the podcast [BackStory](#) and the video documentary series [The Future of America’s Past](#), as well as a growing network of educators working with us to adapt our [resources for K16 learners](#).

*New American History* is for everyone, from those who know little about the nation’s history to those already immersed in its endless complexities. We seek to uncover the untold stories and missing pieces of what we know or thought we already knew about the American past.

*New American History* is made possible by generous gifts and the collaboration of students and staff at the University of Richmond.

### **Press Contacts:**

Olivia Wong  
APT Vice President, Marketing & Communications  
[Olivia.Wong@APTonline.org](mailto:Olivia.Wong@APTonline.org)

Ajani Martin-Abascal  
Marketing & Communications Associate  
[Ajani.Martin-Abascal@APTonline.org](mailto:Ajani.Martin-Abascal@APTonline.org)