The Catherine Cutler Institute seeks Graduate Place Justice Scholar for 2022-2023 academic year (November 2022 through May 2023) - Place Justice Initiative

The Catherine Cutler Institute is seeking a Place Justice Scholar to assist in carrying out a contract with The Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations related to its Place Justice initiative connected to LD 1934, a legislative bill to eradicate offensive place names in Maine.

Place Justice Project Description
Some of Maine’s most beautiful islands, summits, and brooks are marred by names that are offensive to Black and Indigenous people and perpetuate centuries-old historical harms. Similarly, many of the state’s roads and even some of its towns and counties are named after enslavers and slave traders. As name-changing initiatives gain momentum around the country and the world, the Permanent Commission, with support from the Catherine Cutler Institute, will work with communities throughout the place now known as Maine to address dehumanizing place names and exclusionary memorialization practices in order to create a more welcoming environment for all.

The Permanent Commission’s Place Justice initiative is grounded in the principles that racist representations constitute a human rights violation, that communities thrive when truths of racialized harm and privilege are acknowledged, and that engaging local partners throughout the state in undertaking a critical inventory and review process represents a tremendous opportunity for collective growth, reckoning, and transformation.

Place Justice Scholar Job Description
Under the guidance of Permanent Commission staff and contracted consultants, the student researcher will work 10-15 hours per week to conduct historical research into the origins of place names throughout the state. Additionally, they will conduct research on individuals who enslaved or committed other atrocities against Black and Indigenous people in service of identifying sites named in their honor. The student will also be responsible for carrying out a number of administrative tasks related to project development and management.

Depending on the knowledge, skills, experience, and interests of the student, they may also assist with:
- Community engagement
- Communications, media
- Writing, editing, design
- Mapping
● Policy research, literature reviews

Compensation is $1000/month. The position will entail attending meetings via Zoom and in person and conducting independent research, with some travel to sites around the state possible.

To apply, send a resume and cover letter to Erika Arthur, Policy Analyst - Catherine Cutler Institute, at erika.arthur@maine.edu. Applications will be accepted until Thursday, October 27 and interviews will be conducted the following week via Zoom.