



## George Blackmon Research Fellow

The Jeanne Rodger Lane Center for Regional History

### POSITION INFORMATION

*Title:* George Blackmon Research Fellow

*Location:* Ketchum, Idaho

*Timeframe:* project outcomes to be completed by March 31, 2026

*Reports to:* Mary Tyson, director of the Jeanne Rodger Lane Center for Regional History

*Compensation:* \$6,000 stipend, one-half to be paid at the start and the second half to be paid at completion. Plus, \$1,000 for travel to and from Ketchum, Idaho. Additional funds could be available for pre-approved travel to places that are compelling prospects of inquiry. Approximately 150 hours of work would be expected.

*Benefits:* none

*Special Instructions:* successful candidates must be able to complete a criminal background check.

### THE COMMUNITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The Community Library's mission is to bring information, ideas, and individuals together to enhance the cultural life of the community. The Community Library Association (CLA) is a non-profit cultural and educational institution supported in part by revenue from the Gold Mine Thrift and Consign Stores, and in part by private donations. As a privately-funded public institution, the Library provides broad access to a wide range of resources and services. Anyone can get a library card here for free! The Library includes robust physical and digital book collections, a vibrant slate of educational programs for all ages, computer and internet access, and the Center for Regional History, which includes the Wood River Museum of History and Culture and the historic Ernest and Mary Hemingway House and Preserve.

### JOB SUMMARY

The Community Library Center for Regional History seeks graduate students or early career professionals for its fellowship program. The program has been designed to provide research opportunities in a special collections and cultural heritage setting in the American West to elevate under told stories. The George Blackmon Research fellow will have a unique opportunity to dig deeply into Blackmon's life story. Starting with a recent gift of the Lola Graham Papers on George Blackmon, the fellow will examine and process the collection, exhaust the Center's collection for relevant mining history, build a source list, and follow the leads that arise in Idaho, Kentucky, and other points near and west of the Mississippi River.

### GEORGE BLACKMON

Blackmon's biography has been described briefly in a few publications; the deeper story of his journey is vastly under told. The significance is not known to the surrounding communities in Idaho where Blackmon spent almost 50 years of his life prospecting, mining, and living a rugged

mountain life, from 1882 until his death in 1936. Of African descent, Blackmon was born in 1854 in Kentucky and enslaved as a baby with his father, mother, and sister. Some broad details of his early life have been uncovered such as after gaining his freedom as a young boy, he became orphaned, sought an education in Minneapolis from a Quaker group, worked on a Mississippi river boat, and eventually made his way to Idaho Territory. There are some places in the White Cloud Mountains that he named, such as Blackman Peak and Fourth of July Creek.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The intention for the George Blackmon Research Fellowship is to uncover biographical details, and to build out broader knowledge to inform and place his story in the full context of American history. The outcomes will be a bibliography on the research, a finding aid for the Lola Graham papers, and narrative draft of George Blackmon which includes historical significance. The outcomes will aid in future researchers' work as well as a planned public sculpture elevating his story. **The outcomes are to be completed by March 31, 2026.**

### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

Physical requirements include being able to move objects, working in a stationary archive setting for extended periods, and working outdoors for some location research. The project can be designed to provide reasonable accommodations for disabilities.

### **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- Applicants are current graduate students or early professionals.
- Demonstrated interest in American Studies, African American studies, Civil War history, and/or history of the American West.
- Travel to places relevant to George Blackmon's life is strongly encouraged.
- The successful applicant will have a demonstrated ability to foster an atmosphere of diversity and inclusion consistent with the library's aims.

### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

To apply, please email a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three references as PDF attachments to [bringit@comlib.org](mailto:bringit@comlib.org). Please use the subject line "George Blackmon Research Fellow: first name, last name." In your cover letter, please describe why you are interested in African American history in the American West, and specifically your interest in George Blackmon. Applications will be reviewed beginning September 3, 2025. Please direct all inquiries to [bringit@comlib.org](mailto:bringit@comlib.org).

