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Submitted by John Sprinkle

Recently, archaeologists from the Washington, D.C. office of Louis Berger and Associates, Inc. (LBA) completed a limited archaeological investigation at the site of the Manassas Industrial school for Colored Youth in Manassas, Virginia. Established as a residential school in the 1890s by Jennie Dean, a charismatic ex-slave who believed in the value of vocational education for black youth, the original buildings were demolished in the early 1960s after the construction of a new school building.

Funded by the City of Manassas and the Manassas Museum, the project was designed to locate the foundations of the three principal structures at the school: Howland Hall, Hackley Hall and the Carnegie Building. LBA used a backhoe to cut two-foot wide trenches in a cruciform pattern across the suspected location of the buildings. Manassas plans to re-establish the foundation outlines of these buildings as part of a memorial park for the school, its former students and founder. As part of this project, LBA will prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the property.

The Manassas Industrial School, 44PW505, was recorded by archaeologist Kay McCarron, who had previously conducted limited survey and excavations at the site of one school building known as Charter Cottage in advance of new road construction near the site. These excavations demonstrated the information potential of the archaeological record at this residential school with regard to standards of living during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For further information about the Manassas Industrial School Memorial project contact: Douglas K. Harvey, Museum Director, the Manassas Museum, P.O. Box 560, Manassas, Virginia, 22110.