The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is centered around Dr. King’s boyhood home and several historic structures that tell the story of his life in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia. This place includes the Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church where Dr. King served as pastor, which was the site for many meetings and rallies during the Civil Rights movement, including the 1957 gathering that led to the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s HOPE Crew program has completed two projects at the National Park Service site, which suffers from just over $13 million in deferred maintenance for issues such as leaky roofs, water penetration, and wood damage. In 2014, a local Atlanta youth corps and member of The Corps Network—Greening Youth Foundation—embarked on projects to repair and repaint shotgun homes constructed between 1905 and 1909 and the following year rehabilitated five additional structures on the street of Dr. King’s birth home. Over the course of two projects, 16 paid crew members completed 7360 hours of historic preservation work and helped tackle much needed deferred maintenance and rehabilitation at the park. Corps members acquired valuable preservation trade skills while learning about the life and legacy of Dr. King.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**IN JUST TWO PROJECTS:**

- $380,000 Achieved in cost savings
- 7,360 Logged project hours
- 16 Employed crew members
About HOPE Crew

Empowering a new generation of preservationists through Hands-On Preservation Experience, HOPE Crew trains young adults and veterans to perform preservation work for historic structures within the National Park Service (NPS) system and our communities. In just four years, HOPE Crews have logged 120,000 hours in over 150 projects, helping to support $18 million in historic preservation work, as well as engaging 3,000 volunteers and 700 youth and veterans. Projects like these provide job skills and education for the next generation of stewards of America’s most important historic sites while helping to address the deferred maintenance backlog of the NPS.

Seeing young people engaged in work that provides a livelihood for them, increases their contribution to the economy, and helps [the] National Park Service preserve and restore America’s historic resource is a win-win for everyone.

Superintendent Judy Forte, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
National Trust for Historic Preservation, Lauren Walser; “HOPE Crew restores historic shotgun houses in Atlanta” November 6, 2014 savingplaces.org/stories

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