

**Thursday, September 25, 2014**

Unveiling 11:00 a.m., Film and Reception 6:00 p.m.

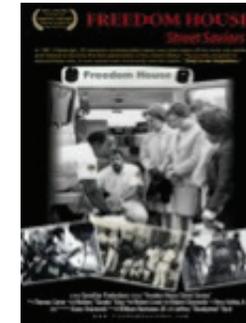
# FREEDOM HOUSE AMBULANCE HISTORIC MARKER UNVEILING

In the 1960s, calls for emergency medical services often went unanswered in the low-income and predominately African-American Hill District of Pittsburgh. So in 1967, Freedom House began to train underemployed and unemployed men and women in the neighborhood as emergency medical technicians. Starting in Presbyterian and Mercy hospitals in 1968, they became the first paramedics in the United States, and a bold initiative was born, funded in part through a grant from the Department of Transportation.

From 1967 to 1975, Freedom House recruited and trained more than 50 EMTs, owned five sophisticated mobile intensive care units, and operated a nationally acclaimed emergency service around the clock. This service born in the Hill District was not limited to Hill District residents — the Freedom House Ambulance covered a large percentage of the City of Pittsburgh.

The men and women who provided emergency care to the Hill District community faced many challenges, but their contribution went beyond the streets of Pittsburgh when Freedom House field-tested the first standard paramedic curriculum that the Department of Transportation published in 1977. Today, the paramedic course remains the foundation for all pre-hospital advanced life support education. Countless paramedics and their patients have benefited from this robust curriculum.

The Hill House, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Falk Foundation, and State Rep. Jake Wheatley, honors Freedom House Ambulance Service with the unveiling of a marker on Centre Avenue. We will screen “Freedom House,” a documentary by Gene Starzenski of GenaStar Productions of Los Angeles and conclude with a community conversation. Participants include Freedom House Ambulance personnel; Phil Hallen, President Emeritus of the Falk Foundation and the organization’s founder; and Morton Coleman, Director Emeritus and Advisor at University of Pittsburgh – Institute of Politics.



*A poster for the Freedom House film.*

Historic Marker Unveiling

## **Freedom House**

2021 Centre Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Film and Reception

## **Elsie H. Hillman Auditorium at Kaufmann Center**

1825 Centre Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Free to the public