

A Frustrating Search for a Headstone Shared on Social Media Brings a Community Together

PHILADELPHIA, PA, July 24th, 2026 — A post shared on social media has sparked an unexpected and meaningful connection between a grassroots community movement and a volunteer-run nonprofit working to restore one of Philadelphia's largest historic cemeteries.

What began as a simple post quickly became something more. Ameer Barber, founder of Motivate Youth 215, reposted a video from a friend searching for family members at Mount Moriah Cemetery. After hours of navigating overgrown sections, he was eventually able to find them, but not without difficulty. Frustrated and moved by what he experienced, he took to Instagram with a call to action: "Come find your loved ones, or help us find them for you."

With an audience of more than 100,000 followers, the message spread quickly.

At the same time, members of the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery, a volunteer-run nonprofit that has been working on the grounds since 2011, began seeing the video circulating. For years, the group has been clearing overgrowth, resetting headstones, and working to restore access across the 200 acre site.

"We had people reaching out to us about these videos, and after reading through the comments, I knew we needed to connect," said Sabrina Busse, Board Member of the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery. "Our volunteers have spent years caring for Mount Moriah because we believe these stories, these monuments, and the people buried here deserve to be remembered and accessible. Seeing the community come together and offer to help has been truly exciting."

What started as a moment of frustration has turned into an opportunity for collaboration and community action, connecting online outreach with hands-on volunteer work.

The Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery and members of the Motivate Youth 215 community are now inviting the public to take part in an upcoming cleanup effort aimed at restoring access and helping families reconnect with their loved ones.

Community Cleanup Day
Saturday, August 1 at 9:00 AM
6026 Springfield Avenue, Philadelphia, PA

Volunteers are encouraged to bring gardening tools, gloves, water, and any equipment that may help with clearing overgrowth. Participants should be prepared for physical work outdoors.

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About Motivate Youth 215

Motivate Youth 215 is a Philadelphia-based grassroots movement led by Ameer Barber. Through social media and direct community engagement, the platform encourages accountability, unity, and youth empowerment, using its growing reach to mobilize action across the city. To learn more and follow along, visit @MotivateYouth215 on Instagram.

About the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery

The Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization run entirely by unpaid volunteers. Founded in 2011, the group works to improve conditions at Mount Moriah Cemetery by clearing overgrowth, preserving monuments and structures, and increasing public awareness of the site's historical and environmental significance. More information can be found at friendsofmountmoriahcemetery.org.