



Mississippi Humanities Council  
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## Mississippi Humanities Council 2017

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### Mississippi Humanities Council

3825 Ridgewood Road, Room 317  
Jackson, MS 39211  
Telephone: 601-432-6752  
Fax: 601-432-6750

[www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org)

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MississippiHumanities

Interpreting Our History & Culture — Fostering Civil Conversations — Enriching Communities



Dr. Stuart Rockoff  
Executive Director



Shannon Warnock  
Board Chair

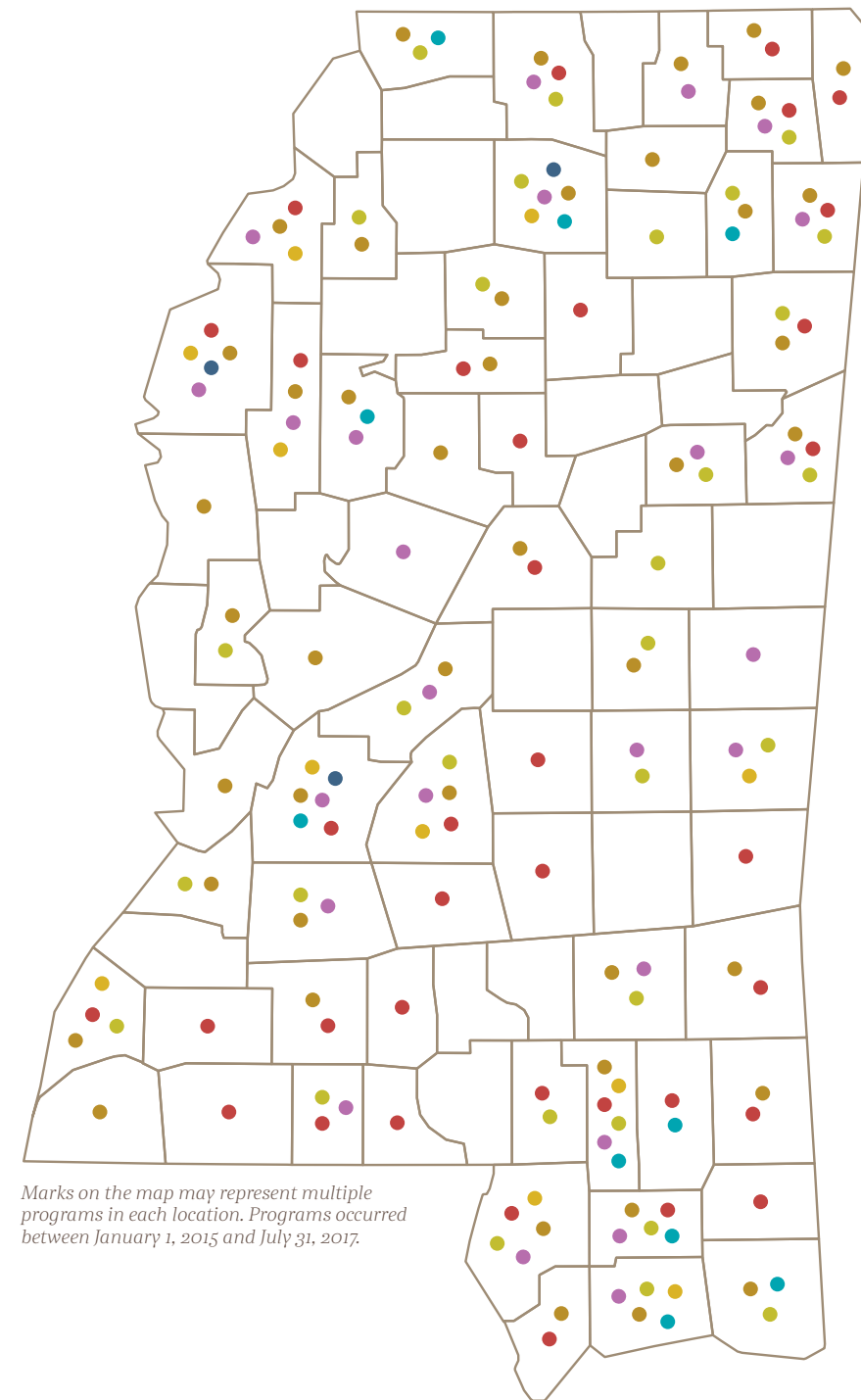
A nervous audience gathers in Jackson to discuss one of the most hot-button issues in our state: the Mississippi state flag. Not everyone agrees with the comments made by the diverse panel, but the audience members leave the civil discussion with a better understanding of what the flag symbolizes for different people. An audience on the Mississippi Gulf Coast passes around an actual Pulitzer medal after the retired executive editor of the *Sun Herald* declares that the award, which his newspaper won for public service after Hurricane Katrina, truly belongs to the people of the coast who struggled and rebuilt their homes and communities. A group of schoolchildren in Holly Springs stands around a morning campfire as a famous food historian in period dress talks about how the enslaved cooked and fed their owners and themselves and why this legacy is important today. These are just a few of the memorable moments from programs sponsored by the Mississippi Humanities Council this past year.

At the MHC, our mission is to create opportunities for Mississippians to learn about themselves and the larger world and to enrich communities through civil conversations about our history and culture. This may sound simple, even saccharine, but as we know, in Mississippi, history and culture are often contested terrain. The humanities offer us tools to navigate these contests and remind us of what we have in common without ignoring our differences. In a period when our country feels particularly divided, the humanities help us listen and learn from each other. The MHC is committed to fostering these difficult conversations while celebrating and exploring our unique legacy as Mississippians.

We are a resource, a catalyst, a convener, and a partner to citizens and organizations across Mississippi. We are an advocate for the importance of the humanities to our state. Throughout these pages, you can see the impact of our work, from our grants program that helps libraries, museums, colleges, historical societies, and many other organizations deliver humanities programs, to the many council-conducted initiatives we offer. We bring Smithsonian exhibits to small towns, storytellers and rich discussions to underserved communities, college level humanities courses to inmates at Parchman, and humanities speakers to public spaces across the state.

We invite you to explore our programs in the pages of this report and encourage you to support our work. Together, we can continue to create memorable moments of greater understanding.

## Mississippi Humanities Council programs reached **64 counties across the state**, through partnerships with **207 different organizations**.



- Grants
- Ideas on Tap
- Special Initiatives
- Traveling Exhibits
- Speakers Bureau
- Humanities Awards
- Family Reading Programs

The MHC grants program is the cornerstone of the Council's work. **During 2015–2017, our grants program expanded two-and-a-half fold** when the Council partnered first

with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and then with the Mississippi Development Authority to foster public programs with specific aims, built on a humanities foundation.

WKKF awarded the Council \$250,000 for a two-year initiative to fund public programs exploring the state's complicated racial history and encouraging discussion about continuing racial disparities in Mississippi. In its first year, this racial equity grant fund helped support a community racial dialogue program in Tupelo, an initiative in Indianola to empower young black men to tell the stories of their own community, a lecture series in Hattiesburg about the tragic civil rights activism of Clyde Kennard, and many other projects around the state.

The Mississippi Development Authority asked the Council to administer a \$500,000 grant fund to support dozens of community events celebrating the state's bicentennial in 2017. A total of 88 grants were awarded across the state, examining the state's history, culture, music, food, and more. In partnering with the Mississippi Humanities Council, these programs not only commemorated the state's 200th year, but also documented, interpreted, and explored the underlying culture of our state over these past two centuries.

The MHC grants program seeks to fund projects that stimulate meaningful community dialogue, attract diverse audiences, are participatory and engaging, and apply the humanities to our everyday lives. Grants may be used to support public humanities programs, exhibits, the planning of larger projects, and the development of original productions in film, television, radio, or online resources. The MHC also offers special grants to support oral history projects around the state.

**The Mississippi Humanities Council is committed to fostering the public's understanding of historical, literary, and philosophical perspectives on the human experience. Our grants empower nonprofit organizations to develop and administer public humanities programs that explore these perspectives.**



One of the Council's larger grants supports a short film about Prospect Hill Plantation in Jefferson County, once owned by a Revolutionary War veteran who co-founded the Mississippi Colonization Society, which sought to "repatriate" freed slaves to West Africa in the early 19th century. In preparation for filming, Harry Ross, a fifth-generation descendent of Prospect Hill Plantation meets with descendants Sam Godfrey and James Belton at the historic property.



*The Spirit of Ramadan* is an international creative initiative to educate and enlighten viewers around the world about the holy month of Islam through the art of photography. MHC supported a local exhibit of this astonishingly beautiful photography at the International Museum of Muslim Cultures in Jackson in 2015.



Patterned after the Free Southern Theatre, which began with a group of students at Tougaloo College as a means to share stories dealing with real human problems, current Tougaloo students presented "#WAKEUP!" as their spring 2017 production. Involving music, dance, and stage play, the story explores contemporary African American cultural identity.

*"There is always a reluctance of asking people to relive historical events that were shaped by violence and terror...This commemoration sparked a range of reactions in people (and) fostered a renewed interest and awareness of the Grenada Freedom Movement."*

—Dianna Freelon Foster, project director, *The Movement is the People: 50 Years Ago Today—Grenada 1966 Freedom Movement*



The Chickasaw Inkana Foundation was created in 2014 to preserve, protect, and interpret Chickasaw history and culture in the historical Chickasaw homeland, including much of north Mississippi and parts of Tennessee, Alabama, and Kentucky. With grants from the MHC, the Foundation hosts public festivals that feature ethnic demonstrations and scholarly presentations on the Chickasaw culture.



**Activists With a Purpose** Summer Extended: The Movement is the People—50 Years Ago Today—Grenada 1966 Freedom Movement ■ **Activists With a Purpose** The Movement is the People: 50 Years Ago Today—Grenada 1966 Freedom Movement ■ **African American Military History Museum** 1940s Community Day ■ **Amory Regional Museum** Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America ■ **Arts Council of Clinton** Inspirations by Welty ■ **Beauvoir, The Jefferson Davis Home & Presidential Library** Beauvoir—The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library Summer/Fall Lecture Series ■ **Bountiful Blessings Broadcasting, Inc. DBA WYAD-MAX 94.1** Celebration of the History of Black DJs ■ **Calling Panther Heritage Foundation** Oral and Written History of Hazlehurst, Mississippi ■ **Canton Convention & Visitors Bureau** Thea’s Turn: A Bicentennial Celebration of Cultural Learning ■ **Carnegie Public Library of Clarksdale** Sports in American History (“Sports Talk”) ■ **Central MS Blues Society, Inc.** 200 Years of Shared History: Mississippi and The Blues ■ **Chickasa-Leaf Quilt Trail Committee** Chickasa-Leaf Barn Quilt Trail ■ **Chickasaw Inkana Foundation** Chickasaw Celebration (Bicentennial) ■ **Chickasaw Inkana Foundation** Chickasaw Celebration ■ **City of Biloxi** History of Biloxi Video ■ **City of Biloxi** Yanki Barhanovich and Biloxi’s Musical Legacy ■ **City of Clinton** Clinton Historical Interactive Trail ■ **City of D’Iberville** Discover D’Iberville—A Mississippi Bicentennial Celebration ■ **City of Gautier** Mississippi Masterpieces ■ **City of Moss Point** South Mississippi Bicentennial Celebrations ■ **City of Pascagoula** The Last Modern Shipyard: Ingalls West Bank ■ **City of Raymond** City of Raymond Mississippi Bicentennial Celebration and International Record Store Day 2017 ■ **Claiborne County Economic Development District** United States Colored Troops of the Vicksburg Campaign ■ **Coahoma Community College** 23rd Annual Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival ■ **Coahoma Community College** 24th Annual Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival ■ **Coahoma Community College** 25th Anniversary of Coahoma Community College’s Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Celebration ■ **Coahoma Community College** Mudd: A Delta Blues Story ■ **Columbus-Lowndes Public Library** Through the Lens of Carl Brown:

# Grants in Our State

Processing, Developing and Exhibiting the History of Columbus, Mississippi, 1940s–1950s ■ **Community Foundation of Greater Jackson** Eyes on Mississippi: Part II ■ **Copiah-Lincoln Community College** A Literary Journey: From Statehood to Civil War to Civil Rights and More—The Events that Shaped the History and Culture of Mississippi ■ **Copiah-Lincoln Community College** Natchez Tricentennial Legends and Lore: Natchez as Place—Three Centuries of Influences, Inspiration and Impact on Six Outstanding Writers ■ **Copiah-Lincoln Community College Foundation, Inc.** Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration (2016): “Natchez at 300: A River Runs By It” ■ **Craftsmen’s Guild of Mississippi, Inc.** Mississippi’s Craft Heritage ■ **Crossroads Film Festival** Yazoo Revisited (A Film Screening at Crossroads Film Festival) ■ **Crossroads Museum** Historic Depot Hometown Teams Programs ■ **Daughters of the American Revolution, Gulfport Chapter** Celebration of Our Heritage: Live Oaks Cemetery ■ **Delta Blues Museum** Monday Movie Nights Celebrating Mississippi’s Music History and Heritage ■ **Delta Blues Museum** Mississippi Blues Trail Teacher Workshop ■ **Delta Film Institute LLC** Holt Collier Featurette ■ **Delta Health Center** National Rural Community Health Center Museum ■ **Delta Jewels Support Foundation** Cotton Pickin’ Hands ■ **Delta State University** Mississippi History & Culture Bicentennial Celebration at Delta State University: Imagining for the Future ■ **Delta State University** Winning the Race Conference 2017 ■ **Delta State University** 2015 Sammy O. Cranford Memorial History Lecture ■ **Delta State University** 2016 Sammy O. Cranford Memorial History Lecture ■ **Delta State University** 2016 Winning the Race Conference: Advancing Social Justice in Communities and Institutions ■ **Delta State University** 2017 Sammy O. Cranford Memorial History Lecture ■ **Delta State University Archives & Museum** Documentary Unplugged: Finding Cleveland ■ **Delta State University Archives & Museum** Grocery Stor(i)es: Life in Chinese Grocery Stores in the MS Delta ■ **DeSoto County Museum** Taking Our History to the People, Creation of a New Traveling History Exhibit for the DeSoto County Museum ■ **Eudora Welty Foundation** Pearl McHaney on Welty’s Nonfiction, Photographs and Short Stories ■ **Eudora Welty House** Adaptations of Austen’s Fiction: A Mini Film Festival in the Welty Garden ■ **Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Garden & Museum Foundation** Fannie Lou Hamer Exhibit ■ **FlyZone, Inc.** L.I.F.E. (Love Is For Everybody) Summit 2017 ■ **Foundation for New Media, Inc.** How They Got Over ■ **Freedom House** Canton, Inc. Reenactment of the “March Against Fear” ■ **Friends of the Mississippi River Basin Model** Mississippi River Basin Model Presentation ■ **Friends of the Stone County Libraries** Celebrating Mississippi’s Bicentennial ■ **Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign** Mississippi Bicentennial Symphony at Sunset ■ **From the Heart Productions** Fannie Lou Hamer’s America ■ **GRACE** Mississippi, Inc. Mississippi Native Daughters Speak ■ **GRAMMY Museum** Mississippi (Cleveland Music Foundation) A Journey Through the Soul of American Music ■ **Greenville History Museum** Plantations to the Grave ■ **Greenville Renaissance Scholars** Greenville Renaissance Scholars’ Bicentennial Performance ■ **Hancock County Community Development Foundation** The Old Spanish Trail—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow ■ **Hancock County Tourism Development Bureau** A Bicentennial Look Back...Explore Hancock County ■ **Hancock Performing Arts Center** Freedom to Vote: Perspectives from 1900-2017 ■ **Harrisburg Cultural & Social Service Center** The Open D.O.O.R.S. Project ■ **Harrisburg Cultural & Social Service Center** The Open D.O.O.R.S. Project: Phase Two ■ **Hattiesburg Civic Chorus & Concert Association** FestivalSouth 2017 ■ **HealthWorks!** 200 Years of Family Fun ■ **Historic Natchez Foundation** Telling Our Own Story: Untold Natchez History of African American Women and Girls ■ **Historic Ocean Springs Association** Mississippi Bicentennial Public Art Mural by Chris Stebly, featuring the History and Culture of Ocean Springs ■ **Historical Mule Train Society** Video Production of the 1968 Marks Mule Train Experiences ■ **Historical Society of Gulfport** Purchase Mississippi Department of Archives and History Historical Marker for Location of Centennial Plaza, Gulfport, MS ■ **International Museum of Muslim Cultures** “Capture the Spirit of Ramadan”—Photography Exhibit and Companion Programs ■ **Itawamba County Bicentennial Committee** Mississippi’s Bicentennial in Itawamba County: The History of This Place ■ **Jackson County Historical and Genealogical Society** Preserving the Past—Celebrating the Future ■ **Jackson State University** The COFO Mural & Mount Olive Cemetery Project: “Celebrating the Legacy of West Jackson’s Pioneers” ■ **Jackson State University** 2017 African American Read-In: A Discussion on the Value and Oppression of Black Lives ■ **Jackson State University** 45th Recollection and Commemoration of Gibbs-Green ■ **Jackson State University** 50th Anniversary of Jubilee ■ **Jackson State University** Conference on the Liberal Arts: (Re)Defining Liberal Arts Education in the 21st Century ■ **Jackson State University** Jackson Africana Drum and Dance Symposium ■ **Juanita Sims Doty Foundation** A Legacy Retrospective of Jay D. Johnson: Rays of Hope in Mississippi ■ **Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.** Empathy Workshop ■ **Khafre, Inc** Sweat Equity Investment in the Cotton Kingdom Symposium, 2016 ■ **Knights & Daughters of Tabor** Living in the City that I.T. Montgomery Built ■ **Laurel Main Street** Cachin’ in on Laurel’s History ■ **Library of Hattiesburg, Petal, and Forrest County** Beatlemania ■ **Lincoln Penny Films** The 30th of May ■ **Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library System** Mississippi Bicentennial: Literacy in Our Story—Lincoln, Lawrence, and Franklin Counties ■ **Lynn Meadows Discovery Center** A Celebration of Mississippi Heroes Film Festival ■ **Lynn Meadows Discovery Center** From Page to Stage ■ **Lynn Meadows Discovery Center** From Tolerance to Empathy ■ **Margaret Walker Alexander Research Center** This Is My Century: The Life and Times of Margaret Walker ■ **Martin & Sue King Railroad Heritage Museum** Explore Cleveland and Bolivar County: Our Past and Our Present (Driving Map) ■ **Millsaps College** Freedom Walks: Civil Rights Activism in Downtown Jackson ■ **Millsaps College** “This is how you are a citizen”: Humanities and Civic Life in Mississippi ■ **Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education** A Bicentennial Celebration Recounting Unheard Stories of Unsung Heroes ■ **Mississippi Archaeological Association** 2015 Mississippi Archaeology Month ■ **Mississippi Archaeological Association** Mississippi Archaeology Month ■ **Mississippi Arts Commission** The Magic of Magic: A Tool for Arts Integration ■ **Mississippi Book Festival, Inc.** Conversations about Civil Rights ■ **Mississippi Boychoir** Mississippi’s Music: A Bicentennial Celebration Concert by the Mississippi Boychoir ■ **Mississippi Center for Justice** The Roots of Sunflower County Strategic Planning Project ■ **Mississippi Center for Justice** The R.O.O.T.S of Sunflower County: Reclaiming Our Origins Through Story ■ **Mississippi Center for Justice** “Wade In Witness” Remembrance Program and Roll Call ■ **Mississippi Chambre Music Guild**

**Mississippi Bicentennial Fanfare Festival** ■ **Mississippi Cultural Crossroads** Comfort My Soul: A Celebration of Gospel Music in Southwest Mississippi & Beyond ■ **Mississippi Department of Archives and History** Native American Days 2015 ■ **Mississippi Department of Archives and History** Icons of Statehood ■ **Mississippi Department of Archives and History** Native American Days 2016 ■ **Mississippi Fiddlers Association** The Great Big Yam Potatoes Old Time Music Gathering and Fiddle Contest ■ **Mississippi Heritage Trust** What Makes Us Mississippi: Historic Places Saved, Lost and Endangered ■ **Mississippi Heritage Trust** 10th Listing of the 10 Most Endangered Historical Places in Mississippi Exhibit and Traveling Exhibit ■ **Mississippi Heritage Trust** 10 Most Endangered Historic Places in Mississippi ■ **Mississippi Historical Society** Mississippi History Now ■ **Mississippi Historical Society** Mississippi History Now, an online publication ■ **Mississippi Library Commission** Mississippi Literary Map ■ **Mississippi Museum of Art** The Art of War ■ **Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame & Museum** Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame Multi-Media Curriculum Development ■ **Mississippi State University** Community Forum: “A Shaky Truce”—Civil Rights Struggles in Starkville, Mississippi, 1960–1980 ■ **Mississippi State University** Writer in Residence Program ■ **Mississippi State University** Classical Week 2016: Another Look at Seneca’s Phaedra ■ **Mississippi State University** Writer in Residence Program: Rita Dove ■ **Mississippi State University** Classical Week 2017: Laughing with the Romans—Plautus Onstage ■ **Mississippi State University Libraries** Mississippi Literature and Land Series at Cotesworth Culture and Heritage Center ■ **Mississippi Symphony Orchestra** Rooted Voices ■ **Mississippi Talent Education** Walking in Their (Musical) Footsteps: A Journey from Africa to the Americas ■ **Mississippi University for Women** Borderlands: Mississippi and Alabama Statehood in the Bicentennial Year ■ **Mississippi’s Lower Delta Partnership** Lower Delta Talk Series ■ **MS LIGHT** Collaborative Mississippi Light Festival ■ **MS State University Museums & Galleries** Symbols of Our State: A Walk Through Mississippi Culture & Industry ■ **Museum of the Mississippi Delta** Greenwood Spirit of the Yazoo Mississippi Bicentennial Celebration ■ **Museum of the Mississippi Delta** The Lebanese/Syrian Diaspora in the Mississippi Delta ■ **Museum of the Mississippi Delta** The Power of Children: Making a Difference Programs ■ **Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American History and Culture** Documentary The Parchman Ordeal: The Untold Story ■ **Natchez Opera Festival, Inc.** Southern Musical Theatre Conference ■ **Neshoba County Public Library** Neshoba County Red Clay Hills Bicentennial Celebration Series ■ **New Hope Baptist Church** A Bicentennial Black History Celebration of Gospel Music, Education and Culture ■ **New Hope Baptist Church** 2015 “Back in the Day” Black History Celebration ■ **New Hope Baptist Church** 2016 “Back in the Day” Black History Celebration ■ **North Carolina State University** Understanding and Preserving History and Culture in Mississippi’s Lebanese-American Community ■ **Northeast Mississippi Community College** Just By Listening: Honoring Veterans Through Their Stories ■ **Olive Branch Arts Council** Olive Branch Arts Council Historic Mural in Old Towne ■ **Oxford Film Festival** Women of Mississippi on Film ■ **Oxford Film Festival** The Reemergence of the Craft Industry in Mississippi ■ **Pearl River Community College** Pearl River Community College Celebrates Mississippi’s Bicentennial ■ **Prentiss County Historical & Genealogical Society** Booneville Celebrates the Bicentennial ■ **Preserve Marshall County & Holly Springs, Inc.** Behind the Big House Program & Tour ■ **Preserve Marshall County & Holly Springs, Inc.** Behind the Big House Tour: Preserving the Histories and Architecture of Slavery ■ **Ripley Main Street Association** History of Ripley ■ **Rosedale Community Youth Center** Filmmaking for Freedom ■ **Rust College** Claiming Histories: Engaging the Past through Memorialization of Slave Past ■ **Scott Ford House, Inc.** A Day of Sharing Stories About African American Midwifery at the Scott Ford House: Sources and Methods ■ **Scott Ford House, Inc.** More Days of Sharing Midwife Stories ■ **Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp #265** Mississippi Bicentennial Civil War Show ■ **Sun & Sand Film & Music Society** Sun and Sand Film and Music Festival ■ **Sunflower County Freedom Project** 2017 Sunflower County Freedom

The Mississippi Humanities Council **invested more than \$830,000** supporting more than **214 humanities projects** through its grants in 2015 and 2016.

**Project’s Civil Rights Drama Program** ■ **Sunflower River Blues Association** The Sunflower River Blues Association’s 30th Anniversary ■ **Teaching for Change** Racial Equity Partnership: MS Civil Rights Teachers and Training Institute (MSCRTTI) ■ **Tennessee Williams Tribute & Tour of Victorian Homes** 14th Annual Tennessee Williams Tribute & Tour of Victorian Homes: Table Talk and Scholars Panel ■ **Tennessee Williams Tribute & Tour of Victorian Homes** 14th Annual Tennessee Williams Tribute: Coffee Talk and Scholars’ Panel Discussion ■ **The Archaeological Conservancy** Prospect Hill ■ **The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks** Bicentennial and Veterans Celebration Dinner ■ **The Fannie Lou Hamer National Institute on Citizenship and Democracy** Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Integration of Schools in Drew, MS ■ **The Negro in Mississippi Historical Society** Our Forgotten Roots ■ **The New Orleans Photo Alliance** Yazoo Revisited: Integration and Segregation in a Deep Southern Town ■ **The Oaks House Museum** A Time Gone By: History at the Oaks ■ **The Oprah Winfrey Boys & Girls Club of Kosciusko/Attala** Carthage Boys and Girls Club Music Informances ■ **The University of Mississippi Office of Research and Sponsored Programs** Porter Fortune Jr. Symposium on Southern Religious Culture and History ■ **Tishomingo County Historical & Genealogical Society** Bicentennial of Art—Portraits of the Past ■ **Tishomingo County Historical & Genealogical Society** 2016 Old Tishomingo County Genealogy Fair ■ **Tougaloo College** #WakeUp! 2017 Spring Production ■ **Tougaloo College** Tougaloo Art Colony 2015: The Meeting of Modern and Post Modern Styles ■ **Town of Carrollton** Carrollton Walking Tour App for Smart Phones ■ **Town of Oakland** Oakland Bicentennial Celebration Events ■ **Tupelo Convention and Visitors Bureau** “Tupelo Spirit” Video Production ■ **Union County Heritage Museum** Hallelujah Trail and Associated Programming ■ **University of Mississippi** Mississippi: 200 Years of Statehood Official Exhibition Opening Lecture and Reception ■ **University of Mississippi** Bicentennial Publication Events for The Mississippi Encyclopedia ■ **University of Mississippi** Hispanic Heritage Series ■ **University of Mississippi** Race and Moral Leadership in the U.S. Judicial System ■ **University of Mississippi** The 23rd Oxford Conference for the Book ■ **University of Mississippi** Planning Communities of Philosophical Conversation: Planning Grant, Step 1 of 2 ■ **University of Mississippi** Modern Dante: The Humanities, the Academy and the Public in the 21st Century ■ **University of Mississippi** Earth Day Speaker: Linda Hogan ■ **University of Mississippi** The 24th Oxford Conference for the Book ■ **University of Mississippi Medical Center** The Second Marston Symposium on Race and Health ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Lectures, Lores and Lessons: Mississippi at the Bicentennial ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Celebrating Mississippi’s Culture Through Music—A Bicentennial Celebration ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Public Panel Discussing the Impact of Mississippi’s State Flag ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Can We Achieve This Togetherness in Our Time?: A Clyde Kennard Lecture Series ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Measure of Progress: The Clyde Kennard Story ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** 2015 Petal Southern Miss Powwow ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** 2016 Petal Southern Miss Powwow ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** 2015 Philosophical Fridays ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** 2016 Philosophical Fridays ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Fall 2016 Philosophical Fridays ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** The Photographer as Participant Observer ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Faure Lecture Recital ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** National History Day in Mississippi Workshops ■ **University of Southern Mississippi** Bodies of Work: The Human Body in Various Forms ■ **upGrade Mississippi** Well-Behaved Women Don’t Make HerStory: Dorie Ladner ■ **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9573** Mississippi World War II Veterans Oral History Project ■ **Wayne County Library System** Wayne County Historical Art Mural: Preserving the Past, Embracing the Future ■ **Wesson Chamber of Commerce** Wesson Founders’ Day—A Celebration of State, County and Town History ■ **Winterville Mounds Park and Museum** Native American Days 2017 ■ **Women Make Movies, Inc.** Wednesdays in Mississippi—The Conversation Continues ■ **Woodville/Wilkinson County Main Street Association, Inc.** Woodville and Wilkinson County’s Story: Prehistory to the Present in Photo Stories and Walkable Galleries ■ **Write for Mississippi** What Can We Do for Our Country? ■ **Yoknapatawpha Arts Council** Mississippi Visions: Works by Contemporary Mississippi Artists ■ **Yoknapatawpha Arts Council** 2015 Mississippi Prison Writes

*“Tonight a truly amazing event took place in Jackson. Nearly 100 people—black, white, young, old, Democrats, and Republicans—packed Hal and Mal’s to discuss the Mississippi state flag as part of a forum hosted by Mississippi Humanities Council.”*

—Audience member



As part of the Spring 2017 “Mississippi 50th” Ideas on Tap series in Jackson, panelists well-versed in fields such as technology-based economic development, medical research, and hi-tech discussed opportunities for improving our state’s performance in technological innovation.

A diverse audience discussed ways to encourage young people to stay in Mississippi at an Ideas on Tap gathering in July examining why the state’s best and brightest often leave.



Ideas on Tap fosters civil conversations about important issues faced by Mississippians, inviting people with

## Ideas on Tap

differing viewpoints to come together over a beer.

Ideas on Tap, the MHC’s newest Council-conducted initiative, is a monthly series of humanities-based community discussions about important contemporary issues. Each program includes a panel discussion featuring knowledgeable participants who present a wide spectrum of opinions on the topic and a chance for audience members to share their thoughts and responses. The program began in Jackson in 2016, and has since expanded to other communities around the state, including Cleveland and Oxford.

The Ideas on Tap model allows the MHC to respond quickly to emerging issues at the local, state, and national level. Past programs have examined topics such as the state’s brain drain, the 2016 presidential election, the Mississippi state flag, public education, and women in politics. Panelists have included state and local legislators, business leaders, educators, and community activists from across political, economic, and cultural spectrums.

**The conversations are often focused on difficult and controversial subjects, but the goal of Ideas on Tap is to provide a forum for the civil and respectful sharing of thoughts on these issues.** Ideas on

Tap shows that there is still room in our society for civil discourse, compromise, and conversation that brings people together for dialogue across differences.

In October 2016, Ideas on Tap went on the road for the first time with a trip to Hey Joe’s in Cleveland. The program, “Why Are Young People Leaving Mississippi,” featured Delta residents who spoke about how the state’s brain drain has manifested itself in the Delta and how public education can help reverse its effects.



The inaugural three-part Ideas on Tap series, “How Do We Keep Young People in Mississippi?” took place at Hal in Mal’s in Jackson. Panelists focused on issues such as the creative economy, statewide politics, and social issues to discuss ways to encourage young Mississippians to stay in the state.





The MHC has developed several council-conducted projects. **In 2016, we sponsored a year of programs marking the centennial of the Pulitzer Prizes and exploring Mississippi’s literary and journalism winners.** This initiative

culminated with the daylong symposium “Celebrating the Legacy of the Black Press.” In 2018, we look forward to a year of programming about the importance of journalism to an informed citizenry.

Inspired by the National Endowment for the Humanities’ “Standing Together Initiative,” we presented two different productions of the “Telling Project,” which gave a group of military veterans the unique opportunity to share their own stories of service and sacrifice from the stage. In 2017, we partnered with NEH on the “Legacy of Race” initiative, organizing programs that examine how our state’s often difficult history has shaped the issues we continue to face today.

Following our belief that the humanities are for everyone, we have supported multiple college-level history and literature classes at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman and the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility. We have also helped develop several oral history projects through our “Mississippi: State of Change” initiative, which has collected stories about school integration and the experiences of Mississippi’s GLBT community.

We have been an active partner in the Mississippi Book Festival, which has quickly emerged as the state’s signature cultural event. Each August, book lovers descend on the State Capitol to hear from a diverse array of authors.

Each of these special initiatives reflect our commitment to interpreting our history and culture and enriching communities through the humanities.

## The Mississippi Humanities Council

# Special Initiatives

regularly creates special initiatives that explore different aspects of our cultural heritage and fulfill our motto that “the humanities are for everyone.” These programs reach diverse audiences around the state.



*“These students became part of history as the first incarcerated women to receive college credit while in prison. Their work and their names will one day be studied as the first to participate in a program like this—they are now connected with the larger story of humanity. We believe this is the kind of inspiring and dignifying effect that a humanities education can have.”*

—Dr. Otis Pickett, Assistant Professor of History, Mississippi College, and instructor, Prison-to-College Pipeline program



Acclaimed authors like Jaqueline Woodson have helped make the Mississippi Book Festival a roaring success. The MHC has been closely involved with Mississippi’s “Literary Lawn Party” since its inaugural year in 2015.



The MHC supports two different prison education initiatives: “Mississippi Prison Writes,” which teaches inmates literature and creative writing, and the “Prison-to-College Pipeline,” a partnership with Mississippi College and the University of Mississippi to teach humanities courses at the State Penitentiary at Parchman and the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility.



As part of the NEH’s “Standing Together” Initiative, MHC partnered with the Theater Department at USM to present “Telling: South Mississippi,” in which veterans told their personal stories of military service from stages in Hattiesburg, Poplarville, and Long Beach.

photo credit: Courtesy Sun Herald/John Fitzhugh



*“The exhibition gave us insight into American history and culture by taking a look at one of the best parts of our country’s history, its love of sports. It is truly something that each person can connect with no matter what age or background.”*

—Hometown Teams site director



Hometown Teams opens at Historic Natchez Foundation in Natchez, May 2016.

Young fans explore the exhibit and enjoy refreshments during the opening of Hometown Teams in Natchez, May 2016.



Sportswriters Rick Cleveland and Wright Thompson share thoughts on Mississippi sports culture and history during a Hometown Teams program at the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum in Jackson, April 2016.

*“Attaching our name next to the Smithsonian Institution and an exhibit that engages such a cross section of society allowed us to generate a great deal of publicity for our organization.”*

—Hometown Teams site director

The Smithsonian’s newest Museum on Main Street exhibit, *Water/Ways*, will open in Mississippi in May 2018 and will travel to six different Mississippi communities during its nine-month stay in the state.



The Museum on Main Street program enriches communities by bringing Smithsonian exhibits to small towns throughout the state so that Mississippians can experience quality exhibits that explore our history and culture.

Since 2001, the MHC has partnered with the Smithsonian Institution’s Traveling Exhibition Service to bring exhibits to small towns across Mississippi. These exhibits are part of the Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street division, which is designed to reach smaller communities and rural areas.

**In Mississippi, nearly 50 communities have hosted seven different exhibits, all at no cost to the host sites.**

Past exhibits have focused on topics such as the role of sports in American society, the history of immigrants and migration to America, and roots music like blues and jazz that formed in the U.S.

Each exhibit comes to Mississippi for nine months and visits six sites, where it stays on display for six weeks. While the exhibit is on display in each community, the host site also presents its own exhibit highlighting the town’s connection to the topic at hand. Local sites collect artifacts, photographs, and stories to display so that the community gains a better understanding of the topic explored in the Smithsonian exhibit and how it affects them and their roles in history and culture. Host sites also host weekly programming in conjunction with the exhibit, so that the community has additional opportunities to interact with the content of the exhibit.

The newest Museum on Main Street exhibit, *Water/Ways*, will be on display in Mississippi in 2018 and 2019. The exhibit examines the environmental, cultural, religious, and economic significance that water plays in society.



An English travel writer on a nomadic journey through the American South settles for a spell in Pluto, an unincorporated community in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, where he experiences a culture unlike any he has encountered in his world travels. He visits the ruins of the grocery store where Emmett Till was accused of whistling at a white woman and parties with a blues legend on his front yard. And through it all, he discovers this truth about the South: “The more you learn, the more complicated it gets.”

Richard Grant, author of *Dispatches From Pluto*, is one of **99 speakers presenting on 144 topics in the Mississippi Humanities Council Speakers Bureau. Speakers are available to nonprofit groups for public programs and events, at no cost to the organization.** The MHC selects speakers based on their credentials and the quality of their program and pays them an honorarium for presenting their lectures around the state.

Whether it is a presentation about contemporary blues music, the history of Mississippi’s prisoner of war camps, or how the Civil Rights Movement has transformed our state, the MHC Speakers Bureau brings informative and thought-provoking programs to even the most rural communities in the state. **From 2015 to 2017, Speakers Bureau members presented more than 140 talks in 34 counties**, making it one of the Council’s most important tools for connecting humanities scholarship with the citizens of Mississippi.

## The Mississippi Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

Speakers Bureau features our state’s finest historians, writers, and storytellers talking on a wide variety of subjects related to the history and culture of Mississippi and beyond.



The Mississippi Insane Asylum was established in Jackson in 1855 and operated there until 1935. The University of Mississippi Medical Center now occupies the site where, during expansion construction, burial plots of several thousand deceased patients were discovered, raising administrative, ethical, and cultural challenges in the long-term management of these burial sites. Ralph Didlake, director of UMMC’s Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities, discusses the history of the asylum and the site’s potential as a research and education resource in “The Asylum Hill Cemetery Project.”

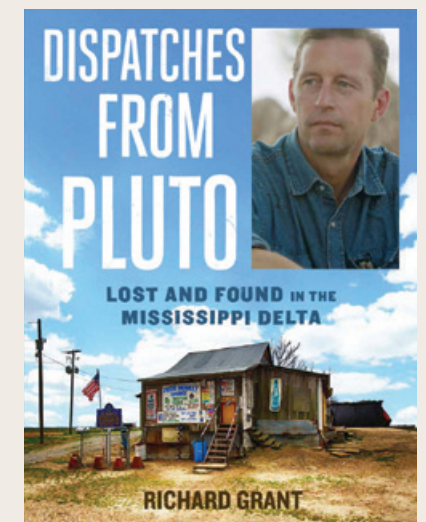
*“The Speakers Bureau enables the Columbus-Lowndes Public Library to engage numerous speakers on a variety of topics that our patrons may not otherwise have access to. We always have positive feedback from our attendees. The program is an invaluable resource in helping us reach different communities and provide services that otherwise would we would not be able to with our restricted budget.”*

—Mona Vance-Ali, Archivist, Columbus-Lowndes Public Library

Shennette Garrett-Scott recounts the story of the first African American woman appointed federal postmaster in Mississippi, Minnie Geddings Cox, who, after receiving threats, resigned her post. President Theodore Roosevelt refused to accept her resignation and instead closed the post office. Cox’s experience sparked the first major national debate since Reconstruction about race, states’ rights, and federal power.



In “Boll Weevil Blues: Cotton and Myth in Mississippi,” James Giesen uses blues and country songs, family stories, rumors, and historical records, to explain how an array of Mississippians—from sharecroppers to planters to college professors—changed the course of the state’s history as they tried to manage the boll weevil’s invasion of the South.



English travel writer Richard Grant, author of the much-loved novel *Dispatches from Pluto: Lost and Found in the Mississippi Delta*, gives a behind-the-scenes account of researching and writing the popular book and explores the unique culture of the Mississippi Delta.



The MHC has long been an advocate for the importance of the humanities to our state. To recognize significant achievements in the public humanities, MHC gives out annual awards to scholars, educators, and institutions who have developed or sponsored outstanding programs that educate the public about Mississippi's history and culture. In addition, the Council awards one extraordinary recipient the "Cora Norman Award," named for the MHC's founding director, who guided the Council for its first

24 years. **The Cora Norman Award honors individuals who have made significant lifetime contributions to the public humanities in Mississippi.**

Recent recipients of these prestigious awards have included the founder of a prison education program who teaches literature and writing courses to inmates at Parchman prison, an oral historian who spent a year collecting the recorded memories of African American "church mothers," and a Mississippi Delta-based museum that not only presents exceptional exhibits examining our state's shared heritage, but also encourages thoughtful public engagement with our state's complicated history.

Additionally, the MHC honors a Humanities Teacher of the Year at each of our state's institutions of higher learning every fall during National Arts and Humanities Month. Recipients of these awards then present public lectures related to their research and scholarship. The incredible diversity of their topics each year reflects the tremendous breadth of humanities education in our state.

Each year,  
the Mississippi  
Humanities Council  
**Humanities Awards**  
recognizes outstanding  
humanities teachers at all  
of the state's colleges and  
honors people who have made  
extraordinary contributions to  
the public humanities.

*"Tonight, we honor individuals and organizations who demonstrate the ability of the humanities to reflect honestly on our history, foster cultural understanding, and humanize those who may be different from us."*

—Shannon Warnock, MHC board chair

*"Families came in . . . eager to participate in the discussion that followed the storytelling. After week six, families were asking when we would have the program again."*

—Site director

The Family Reading Program makes reading come alive for families in underserved areas across the state and engages them in thoughtful discussion about the themes in the best children's literature.

**At the conclusion of the program, families are given free books to keep as encouragement to continue reading as a family.**



Children participants read along together during a Prime Time family reading program in Perkinston, February 2016.

For nearly 20 years, the MHC's Family Reading Program has fostered a love of reading and discussion for literacy-challenged families across the state. The Family Reading Program is designed for lower elementary-aged children and their parents and features award-winning children's books. The programs include the English-based Prime Time Family Reading Time, which operates in partnership with the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, and the bilingual Luciérnagas program for families that speak English and Spanish. By partnering with schools, community centers, libraries, and churches throughout the state, the MHC has been able to reach hundreds of families in underserved communities.

During the six-week programs, professional storytellers engage families with vivid tales from well-known children's books. Discussion leaders guide the families through open-ended questioning that leads to meaningful conversations and higher-level thinking skills, thus assisting families in moving from basic, functional reading to thoughtful literacy. At the end of each session, families bring home copies of the next week's books to read together and prepare for the next program.



Left: Dr. Jodi Skipper, on the right, with MHC board member Wilma Clopton, was honored at the 2017 Public Humanities Awards gala for her work to preserve and interpret the history of enslavement in Mississippi. Right: Peggy Prenshaw, with USM President Emeritus Aubrey Lucas, was celebrated for her distinguished academic career in the humanities and her work with the Council to bring the insights of the humanities to the larger public.



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Werle, Elizabeth  
Werle-Smith, Frances  
Wicker, Roger F. & Gayle  
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Williams, Michael  
Wolverton, Robert E.  
Young, Julia Marks

**2015 Funding Sources**

National Endowment for the Humanities.....	\$ 665,630
Mississippi Arts Commission.....	3,488
Mississippi Legislature: Oral History.....	50,000
Private Donations.....	14,420
Interest and Miscellaneous Income.....	16,265
Shell Oil Subgrant.....	15,000
Community Foundation of Greater Jackson.....	1,650
Federation of State Humanities Councils 2016 Pulitzer Centennial Grant.....	20,000
Mississippi Department of Archives and History Grant.....	5,000
Entergy Services, Inc.....	3,000
In-Kind Contributions.....	117,182
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>\$ 911,635</b>

**Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2015**

Program Services.....	86%
Administrative and General.....	13%
Fundraising.....	1%

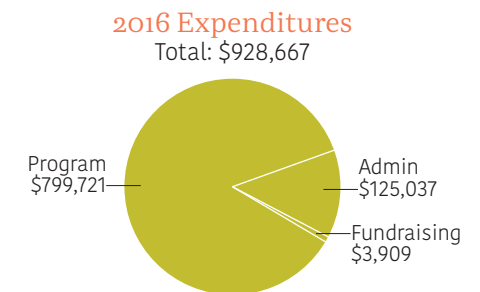
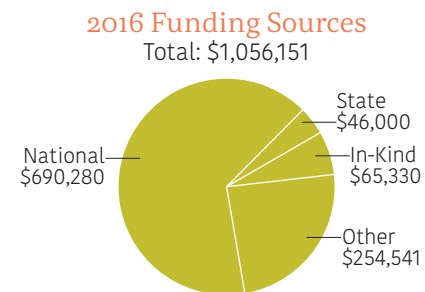
**2016 Funding Sources**

National Endowment for the Humanities.....	\$ 690,280
Mississippi Arts Commission.....	3,795
Mississippi Legislature: Oral History.....	46,000
Private Donations.....	13,530
Interest and Miscellaneous Income.....	21,832
Shell Oil Subgrant.....	15,000
Community Foundation of Greater Jackson.....	2,150
W.K. Kellogg Foundation.....	100,000
Other Income.....	98,234
In-Kind Contributions.....	65,330
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>\$ 1,056,151</b>

**Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2016**

Program Services.....	86%
Administrative and General.....	13%
Fundraising.....	1%

*Based on audited financial statements for fiscal years ending 10/31/2015 and 10/31/2016.*



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