



THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES:
ACCESS TO THE HUMANITIES FOR ALL AMERICANS







The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) was established in 1965 in recognition of the unique role the humanities play in fostering the wisdom, vision, and knowledge required to participate in a thriving democracy. To this day, the NEH supports excellence in humanities research, teaching, and lifelong learning opportunities that provide millions of Americans the knowledge of our history and culture that is essential for engaged citizenship.

Here, we offer examples of five of the crucial impacts the NEH has on our educational and cultural landscape: engaging youth; reaching rural communities; serving veterans; catalyzing local tourism; and preserving our cultural heritage for generations to come. These impact areas are illustrated through NEH-funded programs, each representing the extraordinary work carried out by the humanities community across the country.

(Left) Joanne Cash Yates, sister of Johnny Cash, describes growing up on the Dyess Colony to visitors. The Historic Dyess Colony was restored and opened to the public with the assistance of an NEH challenge grant.

One of 11 million pages of historical newspapers digitized with the support of the NEH.



REACHING RURAL COMMUNITIES

The NEH ensures that programming reaches rural communities across the country.

NEH funding, with the support of 56 state and territorial humanities councils, reaches not only every state and territory, but also every congressional district. This funding is especially important to rural communities, which benefit from grants that support traveling museum exhibitions, literacy programs, and the preservation of local cultural heritage.

A CULTURAL HUB IN RURAL UTAH Brigham City Library, Brigham City, Utah

Since 1991, Brigham City Library has hosted NEH-sponsored exhibitions on American presidents, authors, and other figures, as well as the Civil Rights Era and World War I. People from the surrounding area travel as far as 90 miles to see the exhibitions and take part in accompanying public programs. The success of these exhibitions has enabled the library to build a regular programming budget, which supports a variety of community events. In addition to NEH-supported programs, the library is now able to host parent and child reading groups, writing workshops, and LEGO play nights and STEM activities for children.

THE VIRTUAL HUMANITIES CENTER
Great Basin College, Elko, Nevada

Funded by an NEH challenge grant, the Virtual Humanities Center (VHC) at Great Basin College provides in-person and online humanities access to 87,000 square miles in rural Nevada. In addition to its academic offerings, the VHC provides live humanities programming to the community: one recent event was a World War II film screening accompanied by a veterans' panel discussion. The VHC's online archive is a collection of Shoshone oral histories and materials representing northern Nevada's Basque heritage. By hosting event recordings online and archiving documents of local interest, the VHC provides the region with access to its local heritage and stories.

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REACHING RURAL COMMUNITIES

YAKIMA VALLEY MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY **Yakima, Washington**

The Yakima Valley Museum provides visitors with an in-depth look at the region's history and culture through exhibitions focused on the land, people, community, and technology that has kept the Yakima Valley connected to the rest of the nation and world. The NEH has provided support to the museum at critical junctures, offering foundational grants to build the museum's current space, develop quality exhibitions, and maintain public humanities programming that is unique to its area—the museum is the only cultural institution of its kind in Yakima, Washington. The museum's educational and enriching programming runs a wide gamut, which includes hosting an annual TEDx event and maintaining an interactive learn-and-play space for children.

(Right) Built with support from the NEH, the Yakima Valley Museum's modern building is a hub for community events.



ENGAGING YOUTH

The NEH supports programs that engage youth with history and culture.

The NEH supports engaging programs that pique young people's interest in American history and culture. These programs support the development of school-based humanities curricula, provide reading and discussion programs for at-risk youth, and ensure access to local museums and historic sites.

PEOPLE & STORIES/GENTE Y CUENTOS

Arizona, California, Georgia, Louisiana, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington

Through a series of grants to People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos, an educational nonprofit dedicated to introducing new audiences to their literary heritage, the NEH has supported various projects, including a grant to support the youth-focused Story Talk program. Hosted in 20 libraries across 11 states and offered in English and Spanish, this discussion program for at-risk youth begins with a reading of a short story to help participants reflect on personal experiences and communicate with their peers.



In addition to programs geared toward youth, People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos runs NEH-supported programs that reach individuals in residential treatment facilities, prisons, homeless shelters, adult education programs, libraries, and senior centers.

(Left) A Story Talk group in a San Diego high school receives certificates acknowledging their completion of the program.

ENGAGING YOUTH



LEGACY YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM **Birmingham Civil Rights Institute,** **Birmingham, Alabama**

With the support of a challenge grant from the NEH, the Legacy Youth Leadership program at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) trains local high school students to become certified docents at BCRI over the course of a summer. Through the training, 20 to 25 students learn about BCRI's permanent galleries and archival holdings. They also delve into American history from Columbus forward with a specific focus on the Civil Rights Movement. The summer program offers leadership training, preparing participants to lead tours for BCRI visitors of all ages and to become community leaders in the longer term.



(Above) Participants in the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute's Youth Leadership Program visit Washington, D.C.

(Left) Participants in NEH-funded National History Day, which engages more than 600,000 students and 20,000 to 30,000 teachers annually in history competitions in each state and territory.

CULTURAL PASS PROGRAM

**Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government,
Louisville, Kentucky**

The Cultural Pass Program distributes passes to youth 21 and under, enabling them to visit Louisville's art and cultural institutions for free. Through an NEH grant and local partnerships, the city has improved this program, increasing capacity by hiring a project director and mitigating barriers to access by providing transportation. Since 2014, 46 percent of the passes have gone to children in low-to-moderate-income zip codes, and the 38 participating institutions have hosted 25,000 passholders each year. Meanwhile, the library has seen a 16 percent increase in completion of its summer reading program.

(Right) Louisville's Cultural Pass Program gives youth the chance to take art classes, in addition to providing them access to museums and other cultural institutions.

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SERVING VETERANS



The NEH aids veterans in the transition back to civilian life.

The NEH supports innovative humanities programs that address needs of veterans not being met elsewhere, helping them to grapple with the experience of war and share these experiences with their families and communities. The NEH also supports the preservation of documents related to our military heritage, documenting the experience of war and the home front.

DIALOGUES ON THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR **Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama**

Dialogues on the Experience of War is an NEH program that uses the literature of war to connect veterans with their communities. Through Auburn University's program, six groups from Alabama rural communities shared their thoughts and personal experiences over *Scarlet Fields* (World War I), *The Things They Carried* (Vietnam), and other works of literature and film. In addition, through the university's Alabama Prison Arts + Education program, two related courses were offered to veterans who are imprisoned. All of the programs helped veterans find welcoming places in their communities to share their stories, much as they helped community members learn to talk to veterans about their war experiences.

(Left) A participant in Auburn University's "Dialogues on the Experience of War" program shares family pictures.



PROJECT UNPACK

North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota

Project Unpack gave veterans and their families the opportunity to reflect upon their experiences at war and at home through a variety of media. Public programming included a lecture by Vietnam veteran Tim O'Brien, community forums, book discussion groups, the collection and discussion of oral histories, workshops on memoir writing, and ceramics workshops in which veterans were able to tell their stories through fine art. The program closed with a multimedia exhibition at the Rourke Art Museum, where veterans were invited to share their works of art and memoir.



(Upper) Project Unpack concluded with an exhibition at a local art museum, where veterans shared the works of art and memoir they created during the program.

(Lower) Participants in the NEH-funded Warrior Scholar Project, which prepares veterans for college through a weeklong academic boot camp grounded in humanities texts and writing assignments.

SERVING VETERANS

RICHARD I. BONG VETERANS HISTORICAL CENTER **Superior, Wisconsin**

The Richard I. Bong Veterans Historical Center honors and educates the public about those who served in World War II and subsequent American wars. Preserving archival materials related to veterans and the home front is key to the Center's mission. It has collected more than 10,000 letters, diaries, weapons, uniforms, and other items since 2000. The NEH provided crucial support as the Center developed a system to preserve these items in stabilized environments. With this assistance, the Center hired expert consultants and purchased materials for preservation, ensuring that our military heritage is preserved for future generations.



(Right) The Richard I. Bong Veterans Historical Center preserves veterans' war-related artifacts and stories and displays them in exhibits.

CATALYZING LOCAL TOURISM

NEH grants have an outsized economic impact on the communities they serve.

The institutions funded by the NEH—such as museums and historic sites—attract significant tourism revenue, creating jobs in communities throughout the country. According to the 2009 Cultural & Heritage Traveler Study, cultural and heritage tourism accounted for 78 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers, or 118.3 million adults per year, and contributed over \$192 billion to the national economy per year. In addition, NEH grantees are often able to leverage their award for greater, local investment.

HISTORIC DYESS COLONY & JOHNNY CASH CHILDHOOD HOME **Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Arkansas**

Nearly 500 families lived on the Dyess Colony during the Great Depression. Though it was the largest such New Deal agricultural settlement, designed to help destitute farmers, it is best known as the childhood home of Johnny Cash. In partnership with the City of Dyess and with an NEH challenge grant, Arkansas State University restored the Colony's historic buildings. The Federal Administration Building now houses a museum connecting visitors with the history of the New Deal and the Depression, while the Cash homestead has been meticulously restored. Since opening in 2014, Historic Dyess Colony has attracted visitors from every state and 48 foreign countries to the rural area.

(Right) The Federal Administration Building at Historic Dyess Colony is now a museum dedicated to the history of the New Deal and the Depression.



CATALYZING LOCAL TOURISM

The “Remembering Our Indian School Days” exhibition inspired such an enormous response from visitors—nearly doubling the museum’s annual attendance—that it has remained on view as a permanent exhibition.



“REMEMBERING OUR INDIAN SCHOOL DAYS” Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona

In 2000, the Heard Museum opened with NEH support what has since become its most visited exhibition, “Remembering Our Indian School Days.” The exhibition inspired such an enormous response from visitors—nearly doubling the museum’s annual attendance—that it has remained on view as a permanent exhibition. Recently, the NEH allocated funding to update the now 17-year-old installation by incorporating new technologies, stories, and materials, many of them donated by Native American visitors to the museum. The Heard Museum is also developing two traveling exhibitions that will bring the boarding school story to the nation.

(Left) An image from the exhibition “Remembering Our Indian School Days” at the Heard Museum shows children entering a boarding school designed to assimilate Native Americans.

LIVING HISTORY FARMS

Urbandale, Iowa

Living History Farms is a community hub and world-class museum that teaches 300 years of American agriculture through historically-authentic simulations and reenactments. As construction began in the 1970s, the NEH supported the museum as it undertook research and developed its living exhibitions. More recently, Living History Farms has advanced its educational mission in partnership with the NEH's On the Road program. Through traveling exhibitions, including "House & Home," "Spirited, Prohibition in America," and "Farm Life," Living History Farms has been able to provide high-quality exhibitions and programming to its visitors without the significant financial investment required to create new exhibitions.

(Left) NEH on the Road exhibit, "Our Lives, Our Stories: America's Greatest Generation," on view at the Eastland County Museum in Eastland, Texas.

(Right) At Living History Farms, visitors can take part in traditional farm chores such as spinning wool.



PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE

The NEH Safeguards Our Historical And Cultural Legacies.

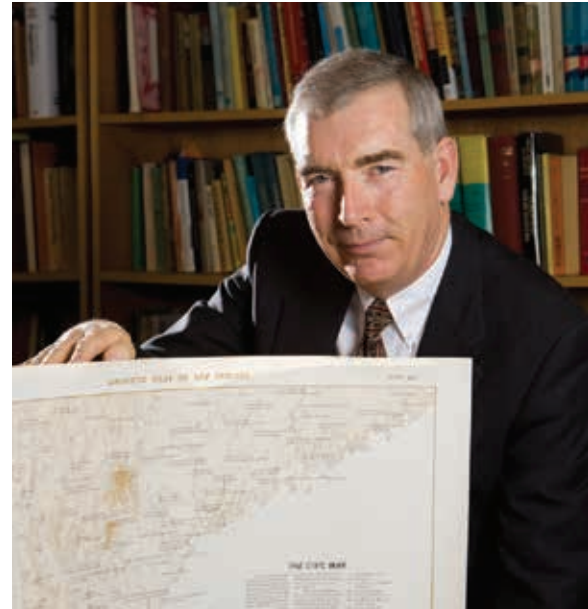
The NEH ensures that cultural heritage from all parts of the country, including newspapers, government records, photographs, and sound and video recordings, are preserved and made widely accessible to American citizens for generations to come. Without these investments, key components of our cultural heritage would ultimately be lost.

LINGUISTIC ATLAS PROJECT

University Of Georgia, Athens, Georgia

Bill Kretzschmar, editor of the Linguistic Atlas Project (LAP), describes himself as the “guardian of a national treasure.” The LAP is a record of spoken American English, much of it in audio form, that documents the wide range of accents and dialects in the United States over the course of 100 years. It also offers an invaluable record of ordinary Americans’ everyday lives as they spoke to researchers about their work, homes, beliefs, and families. In the early 2000s, this work was at risk. Audiotape degrades over time, and the recordings were in danger of being permanently lost. The NEH provided funding to save this research and make it publicly available.

(Right) Bill Kretzschmar, editor of the Linguistic Atlas Project, holds a Linguistic Map of New England. In 2012, the University of Georgia recognized Kretzschmar’s work on the LAP by presenting him with the Albert Christ-Janer Award for outstanding work in the humanities.





Indian Island, Maine, which is home to the Penobscot Nation. Courtesy of DigitalCommons@UMaine.

PENOBSCOT DICTIONARY

University of Maine, Orono, Maine

When Frank T. Siebert visited Old Town, Maine in the 1930s, the Penobscot language was already endangered. He would spend the rest of his life documenting the language in partnership with its few remaining fluent speakers. With funding from the NEH, two of Siebert's former assistants are preparing his work—including a dictionary drafted in the 1980s—for digital and print publication. An advisory committee, composed of representatives from the Penobscot Nation's Recovering Our Voices Language Immersion Project, is assisting with the dictionary, helping to add thousands of words and examples to the final product and creating teaching materials for young learners of the language.

PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE

LOST KANSAS COMMUNITIES

Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas

Lost Kansas Communities is a digital project that preserves the memory of Kansas's lost and disappearing locales. Kansas State students perform primary research, combing archives, creating maps, and documenting oral histories. Initially funded in 2008 by an NEH grant, the program has since become a major initiative of the Chapman Center for Rural Studies. Lost Kansas has driven the creation of the Bruntzel Award for excellence in local history, partnerships with local agencies, a major exhibition at the Flint Hills Discovery Center, and many, many donations, including a \$3 million bequest given by the center's initial donor, Mark Chapman.

(Right) Students at Kansas State University scan documents for the Lost Kansas Communities Archive.



(Far right) Cedar Point Mill in Cedar Point, Kansas, now and c.1910.







National Humanities Alliance



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