

## RECENT GRANTS

*Proposal for Support of a Keynote Speaker for the Second Annual Conference on Human Rights* Annual human rights conference; 2007 focus on genocide.

**University of Southern Mississippi, \$2,000**

*USM Gulf Coast Katrina Oral History Public Program and Transcription Project* Consultant will convert 40 hours of Katrina-related oral history interviews into searchable forms. **University of Southern Mississippi, \$2,000**

*Historic Preservation Curriculum* Curriculum for primary schoolchildren on historic preservation in Mississippi. **Mississippi Heritage Trust, \$2,000**

*Sharing the Legacy of the Founders of the Prentiss Institute* Symposium examining the legacy of the founders of the Prentiss Institute. **Prentiss Institute Centennial Committee, \$1,570**

*New Harmonies Companion Exhibit* Exhibit to complement Smithsonian Institution's "New Harmonies" exhibit during its stay in Meridian, MS. **Jimmie Rodgers Foundation, Inc., \$2,000**

*Degas' Dancers* Community project exploring art, music, classical ballet, theatre, symphonic music, opera, history and theory using the art of painter Edgar Degas. **Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra, \$2,000**

*Down From the Hills Heritage Music and Folk Life Festival* Annual festival with elements that coordinate with Smithsonian Institution's "New Harmonies" exhibit during its stay in New Albany, MS. **Union County Historical Society, \$2,000**

*Unita Blackwell: A Delta Woman's Life Journey* Five presentations in northeast Mississippi on Unita Blackwell's autobiography. **Friends of the Starkville Library/Starkville Reads, \$2,000**

*Expenses for New Harmonies Companion Exhibit* One-day music festival for national kick-off for Smithsonian Institution's "New Harmonies" exhibit in Mississippi. **Jimmie Rodgers Foundation, Inc., \$2,000**

*Oral History Project: Hurricane Katrina and South Mississippi Hispanic Immigrants* Thirty first-generation Hispanic immigrants to the Mississippi Gulf Coast will be interviewed for oral history collections, examining their experiences before, during and after Hurricane Katrina. **University of Southern Mississippi, \$2,000**

*Moss Point Oral History Project* Continuation of an oral history collection project begun in fall 2006 with African American population in Moss Point, MS. **University of Southern Mississippi, \$1,972**

*New Harmonies Exhibit* Creation of local exhibit to complement Smithsonian Institution's "New Harmonies" exhibit during its stay in Vicksburg, MS. **Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation, \$2,000**

*The Blueberry Jubilee Storytelling Festival* Annual storytellers festival June 8-10, 2007. **Poplarville Storytellers Guild, \$1,620**

## Teachers' Institute to explore music heritage

The Mississippi Humanities Council will lead an exciting workshop for teachers next month titled "From the Birthplace of America's Music: The Music and Musicians of Mississippi." The workshop will explore the wonderful diversity of musical creativity that has flowed out of our state, including the genres of country, blues, jazz, gospel, classical, opera and hip-hop, along with other forms ranging from shape note singing to pop music.

The goals of the workshop are to promote the understanding of Mississippi's contributions to the world's music and to then use that understanding to creatively teach Mississippi history to students.

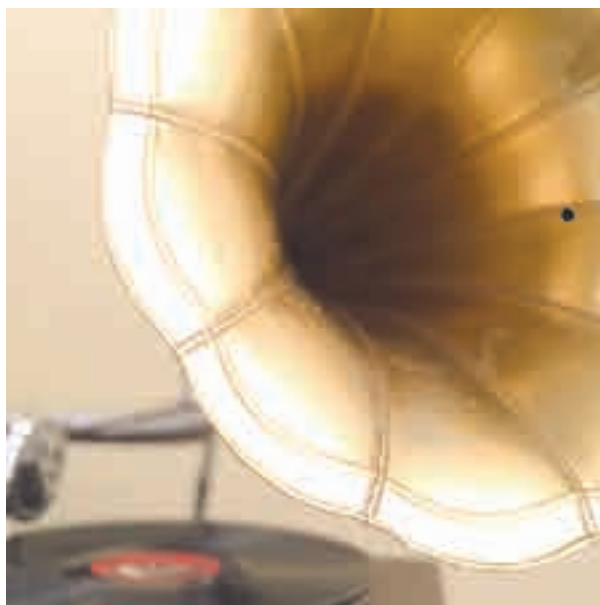
The workshop will be held June 17 to June 23 and will include live performances by internationally known performers like Mose Allison and Dorothy Moore, along with presentations that include live music in many forms. Lectures will illustrate the work of Mississippians ranging from William

Grant Still and Leontyne Price to Bo Diddley, Elvis, and Jimmie Rodgers, among many others. Participants will take field trips to music heritage sites in Memphis, Jackson and the Tupelo area.

This workshop is funded through the Mississippi Humanities Council, using money received from the National Endowment for the Humanities. It is presented by the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University.

The theme of this workshop was chosen to complement a Smithsonian Institution exhibit now traveling Mississippi titled *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*.

Only 20 teachers will be able to take advantage of this opportunity. Demand is expected to greatly exceed available positions, so early application is advised. For more information and an application form, please visit [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org).



## American roots music tours Mississippi

The Mississippi Humanities Council-sponsored Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition, *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*, began its Mississippi tour in Meridian with roots music performances at the MSU Riley Center March 24. The program was broadcast live on Mississippi Public Broadcasting radio and will air five times between now and December on MPB television.

The exhibit is now on display at the Union County Heritage Museum in New Albany and will move next to the Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation in Vicksburg. After Vicksburg, it moves to the Jefferson Davis Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Gulfport and the Marion County Historical Museum in Columbia before ending its tour at the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale next January

Numerous musical and educational events are planned at each local site to complement the exhibit. Please visit [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org) for more details.

### Exhibit Dates and Associated Events

May 6 — June 21  
Union County Heritage Museum, New Albany

June 28 — August 9  
Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation, Vicksburg (shape note singing, July 28)

September 1 — September 28  
MS Gulf Coast Community College, Gulfport (Diversity Week, Sept. 17-23)

October 2 — November 14  
Marion County Historical Society Museum, Columbia (Legends of Country & Bluegrass Festival, Oct. 10-12)

November 21 — January 16 (2008)  
Delta Blues Museum, Clarksdale (Issaquena Street: The New World District, dates TBA)

## Mississippi Timeline under construction



A National Endowment for the Humanities special "We the People" initiative is providing funding for a joint project of the Mississippi Humanities Council and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The *Mississippi Timeline* will be an online timeline of Mississippi history and culture, envisioned as infinitely expandable, accessible by dates, names,

events, places and other attributes.

Intended for students and teachers, scholars, travelers and others interested in Mississippi, and designed to complement proposed exhibits in the planned new Museum of Mississippi History, this web site will provide links to numerous other sites as well as the information it encompasses. Rich in access to documents and graphics, easy to navigate, the Timeline will serve as a gateway to the riches of the state's culture.

A model segment for the Timeline is being devel-

oped on the 1960s Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi, a period rich in material from a variety of media and numerous perspectives.

The Timeline will be accessible from kiosks in the museum and on the Internet and readily accessible by the public.

## Speakers Bureau

One of the most visible programs of the Mississippi Humanities Council is the Speakers Bureau. Created in 1990, it provides scholarly programming for regions of the state with limited access to cultural experiences. Speakers' topics range from Mississippi history and ethnic and cultural experiences to women's studies, philosophy and ethics, southern literature, archaeology and the visual arts. More than 100 speakers are available to nonprofit organizations for lecture and discussion programs. A complete list of topics and speakers is available at [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org).



# Focus on the Humanities

MISSISSIPPI HUMANITIES COUNCIL NEWSLETTER — SPRING 2007



## A clever look at the life of a painter

GULFPORT) - Gulf Coast audiences were treated to an enchanting multi-media production recently that illuminated the art of Edgar Degas through music, classical ballet, theatre, symphonic music and opera.

Degas' Dancers, produced by WINGS Performing Arts, a program of the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, told the story of the little ballerina who modeled for Degas' famous sculpture, *Petite danseuse de quatorze ans* (Little Dancer Aged Fourteen), using local ballet students, the Gulf Coast Symphony Youth Orchestra and musical performers. The production was supported by a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council.

Edgar Degas became known as the painter of dancers due to his magnificent portrayals of the dancers in the Paris Opera Ballet Corps in the 1870s. Numerous books have been written about Degas and his sculptures, but

very little is known of the young girl, Marie Van Goetham, who modeled for his well-known ballerina sculpture. Degas' Dancers shed light on Marie and her sisters, Antoinette and Charlotte, as well as the relationship the dancers had with Degas, while introducing the audience to the music, dance, art and theatre of Degas' era.

The production featured David Delk as Degas, dancer Val Salinikov, Dr. David Knowles and 50 young dancers, singers, musicians and actors. The original score was composed by George Mason.

Lynn Meadows Discovery Center and the Gulf Coast Symphony Youth Orchestra were recipients of a 2006 Humanities Educator Award from the Mississippi Humanities Council for a similar project last year titled *Shakesongs* examining the work of playwright William Shakespear

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Greyhound Speaker Series**  
One in a series of six speakers, Barbara Carpenter will present *Kiss Me, I'm Italian — and Irish, Chinese, African, French...And So Are You: Ethnic Heritage in Mississippi*.

Greyhound Bus Station  
Clarksdale, MS  
June 15, 2007

★  
**Historic Mobile Renaissance Festival**

Day-long festival celebrating the rich musical and cultural heritage of Mobile Street, the historic black business and entertainment district of Hattiesburg.  
Hattiesburg, MS  
June 30, 2007

★  
**The Needle's Song: The Folk Art of Ethel Wright Mohamed**

Exhibit featuring 30 works by Belzoni stitchery artist Ethel Wright Mohamed. Various complementary events will include classroom activities for local schoolchildren, tours and on-site demonstrations. Lauren Rogers Museum of Art  
Laurel, MS  
Through July 8, 2007

★  
**Katrina Oral History Public Program**

Public program celebrating the re-opening of the USM Gulf Park Auditorium featuring Hurricane Katrina-related oral history interviews.  
Long Beach, MS  
October 30, 2007

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## Reflections on civic engagement

The Mississippi Humanities Council is among 14 states selected to participate in nationwide expansion of a reading and discussion program for youth service workers titled Meaning of Service.

Meaning of Service (MoS) is a unique discussion series which gives participants an opportunity to reflect on their chosen form of civic engagement. MoS generates challenging, open discussions about service, justice and civic engagement. Each session is oriented around one or two brief but provocative readings. Group size stays below 15, when possible, and all sessions are facilitated by an instructor attentive to the questions raised by the participants as well as the readings. Whether looking at Jean-Jacques Rousseau's consideration of our obligation to others, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's portrait of service gone awry or Langston Hughes' treatment of the consequences of difference, the goal of the MoS series is to think, speak and listen carefully, with the goal of



enhancing our understanding of why we do what we do—and thereby improve what we do.

The Meaning of Service project is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, which awarded the Illinois Humanities Council a grant to expand the project into other states, including Mississippi. In Mississippi, the Mississippi Humanities Council is partnering with the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service to offer the discussion series to participants in the AmeriCorps program. To date, discussion series have been held with five AmeriCorps groups serving in Mississippi and one group of United Way youth volunteers serving in Jackson.

Participant evaluations have been very positive. "I need to stop looking down on people," wrote one participant, after completing a reading/discussion session. "If I can see past the color of skin, I should be able to see past the size of a pocketbook."

## MHC elects new chair, Rod Risley



Phi Theta Kappa Executive Director Rod A. Risley has been elected chair of the Mississippi Humanities Council.

Risley was elected to a two-year term, succeeding Dr. Willis Lott, president of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

Phi Theta Kappa International Honor

Society, headquartered in Jackson, MS, is the largest honor society in American higher education with 1,200 chapters on two-year and community college campuses in all 50 United States, Canada, Germany, the Republic of Palau, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, the British Virgin Islands, the United Arab Emirates and U.S. territorial possessions.

Community colleges have a tradition of involvement with the Mississippi Humanities Council, Risley said. The Council's founding executive director, Dr. Cora Norman, is a Phi Theta Kappa alumna, and past chairs of the Council also include Dr. Ted Alexander, former president of Pearl River Community College.

"If ever there was a perfect marriage of missions, it would be a marriage of community colleges and state humanities councils," said Risley. "Community colleges

serve as community and cultural building institutions. State humanities councils build community and cultural appreciation by conducting and sponsoring community-based programs that serve to inform, educate and unify diverse audiences. Often, it is only through open discussion of important and sometimes contentious issues, that we are able to build cultural understanding and appreciation, and find common ground."

Risley was named Phi Theta Kappa's second executive director in 1985. He is a graduate of San Jacinto College and received a baccalaureate degree from Sam Houston State University. Risley received a master of business administration degree from Millsaps College. He is currently completing his doctoral dissertation in the Community College Leadership Program at Mississippi State University.

Risley serves on the National Commission for Academic and Student Development for the American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC), has served as a grant reviewer for the National Science Foundation and AACCC and a national judge for the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship Foundation and Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation. In 2001, he was named a Fellow in the Mid-South Community College Fellowship Program. Risley has been named a Distinguished Alumnus by the American Association of Community Colleges and San Jacinto College.

## Easterling joins MS Humanities Council



Thomas Easterling, an instructor at Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science, was elected to a four-year term on the Mississippi Humanities Council. The 22-member board governs the operations of the Council.

Easterling earned M.A. and Ph.D degrees in English from the

University of Mississippi and a B.A. degree in humanities and social thought from Louisiana Scholars' College at Northwestern State University of Louisiana. He taught at Northwestern State University, the University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University and Mississippi University for Women before joining the Mississippi School for

Mathematics and Science in 2004.

"The Council is pleased to welcome Dr. Easterling, whose scholarly background and connection with secondary education through the Mississippi School for Math and Science provide important connections to two of our target audiences," said Dr. Barbara Carpenter, executive director of the Mississippi Humanities Council.

Other Council members include Rod Risley, Dr. John G. Thornell, Dr. Mabel Pittman Middleton, Carla Falkner, Dr. Kathy Baxter, Dr. David L. Beckley, Mimi Goodyear Dossett, Nancy Ellis, Dr. E. Harold Fisher, Ricki R. Garrett, Betty Lou Jones, Theodore Levi, Dorothy Roberts McEwen, Dr. George T. Mitchell, Dr. Andrew P. Mullins Jr., Justice Lenore L. Prather, Pamela Pridgen, Dr. W. Charles Sallis, Alex Thomas, Gayle Wicker.

The Mississippi Humanities Council accepts nominations throughout the year to the Council, with new members selected at the first regular meeting of each year.

## MISSISSIPPI Humanities COUNCIL *the humanities are for everyone*

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\*Governor's Appointee

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## 2007 Public Humanities Achievement Awards

Nearly 400 Mississippians gathered to celebrate the work of the Mississippi Humanities Council at its annual awards banquet February 9 at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson. The Public Humanities Achievement Awards honor individuals and institutions who made outstanding contributions in the arena of public humanities during the previous year.

### Humanities Scholar Award

Dr. Deborah Kehoe

Dr. Kehoe was selected to receive the Humanities Scholar Award for her work with council projects, her service as an evaluator and her research and publications on the work of Thomas Merton.

### Public Humanities Achievement Award

Dr. Michael Harrington

Dr. Michael Harrington has been active in the work of the MHC since its inception 35 years ago, serving as scholar, consultant, project director and evaluator. He served two terms as a Council member. Retired as chairman of the philosophy department at Ole Miss, he continues to speak and teach on behalf of the Council.

### Humanities Educator Award

Lynn Meadows Discovery Center  
Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra

The Humanities Educator Award goes to an organization whose work moves beyond the classroom and uses innovative techniques and formats to reach a wide audience with the ideas and techniques of the humanities. The Lynn Meadows Discovery Center and the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra were selected for this year's award for their years of outstanding programming for children, specifically the 2005-2006 *Shakesongs* project.

### Chair's Award for Special Achievements in the Humanities

Dr. Robert Jenkins  
Mississippi Museum of Art

The Chair's Award goes to an individual or organization that has made special contributions to the public humanities. Two awards were given this year, the first to Dr. Robert Jenkins, professor of history at Mississippi State University, for his many years of participation in Council programs and humanities projects. The second went to the Mississippi Museum of Art for the *Unburied Treasures* series, which brings together writers, scholars, artists, performers, musicians and others to demonstrate the rich, complex tapestry of Mississippi culture and reaches a diverse audience.

### Director's Award for Preservation of Mississippi Culture

Dr. Bruce Cole

The Council gave its inaugural Director's Award for the Preservation of Mississippi Culture, recognizing an individual or organization for

extraordinary efforts to protect and promote the cultural traditions and assets of the state, to Dr. Bruce Cole, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Within days of Hurricane Katrina, Dr. Cole rallied Endowment resources to provide over a million dollars to affected cultural institutions.

### Special Recognition Awards

Dr. James Hollandsworth  
Ms. Diane Williams  
Moss Point School District

From time to time, individuals or groups carry out work for the public humanities that does not fit the above categories. To recognize these contributions, MHC presents Special Recognition Awards. Dr. James Hollandsworth received one of three awards given this year, recognizing his work on the Alfred H. Sloan collection at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The second recipient, Ms. Diane Williams, a professional storyteller, participated in the original *MHC Prime Time* reading program. She was instrumental in adapting this national program specifically for Mississippi parents and children, helping create and coordinate the *Family Reading Bonds* series and continuing to serve as storyteller, trainer, facilitator and volunteer. The Moss Point School District undertook a *Family Reading Bonds* series in 2006, under the guidance of Stephanie Mayo, Patrice McCullum and Leah Rollins. Their enthusiastic work with new adult readers and their elementary school children was well received and extremely successful.

### Humanities Teacher Awards

As part of the celebration of Arts and Humanities Month in October, the Mississippi Humanities Council funded awards to 32 teachers. The 2006 recipients included: Dr. Donzell Lee, Alcorn State University; Dr. Melissa Hause, Belhaven College; Jeremy Owens, Blue Mountain College; Vera Griffin, Coahoma Community College; Mark LaFrancis, Copiah-Lincoln Community College; Everette Carraway, Copiah-Lincoln Community College; Emily Weaver, Delta State University; Tony Kinton, East Central Community College; Mickey Roth, Hinds Community College; Mark Rummage, Holmes Community College; Ann Arnold, Itawamba Community College; Charles Carraway, Jackson State University; Dr. Sharon Gerald, Jones County Junior College; Beth C. Calderon, Meridian Community College; Dr. William K. Storey, Millsaps College; Dr. Thomas K. Ford, Mississippi College; Wallace Mallette, Mississippi Delta Community College; Dr. Chance Harvey, Mississippi Gulf Coast; Marilyn Moss, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College; Robin Lyons, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College; Dr. Kelly Marsh, Mississippi State University; Dr. Gloria Bunnell, Mississippi University for Women; Dr. Solomon Terfa, Mississippi Valley State University; Ray Harris, Northeast Community College; Ginny Miller, Pearl River Community College; Dr. Elaine M. Coney, Southwest Mississippi Community College; Dr. Candice L. Jackson, Tougaloo College; Dr. Ann Fisher-Wirth, University of Mississippi; Dr. Ellen Weinauer, University of Southern Mississippi; Dr. J. Elaine White, University of Southern Mississippi; Dr. Wilson Thompson, William Carey University



Dr. Michael Harrington



Dr. Deborah Kehoe



From left, Tim Bergman, Gulf Coast Symphony Youth Orchestra; Tonya Hayes, WINGS director; Flo & Bob Williams, WINGS board members.



Betsey Bradley  
Mississippi Museum of Art



Dr. Bruce Cole  
National Endowment for the Humanities



Ms. Diane Williams



Dr. Robert Jenkins



Leah Rollins and Patrice McCullum  
Moss Point School District



Dr. James Hollandsworth