

# Focus on the Humanities

August 2013



(Visit our web site at [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org) to learn more about us.)

## Contents:

- Council Commends National Report on the Humanities
- Mississippi Humanities Council Receives Arts Grant
- Council Welcomes Two New Board Members
- Nominations Invited for Humanities Teacher Awards
- MHC Awards Grants for Eleven Humanities Programs Statewide
- *Muslim Journeys* Reading, Discussion Series Begins in September
- Have You Seen Our Events Calendar?
- Next MHC Grant Deadline September 15, 2013

## Council Commends National Report on the Humanities



The Mississippi Humanities Council joins the call for a renewed commitment to the humanities outlined in a new national report, [\*The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences for a Vibrant, Competitive and Secure Nation.\*](#)

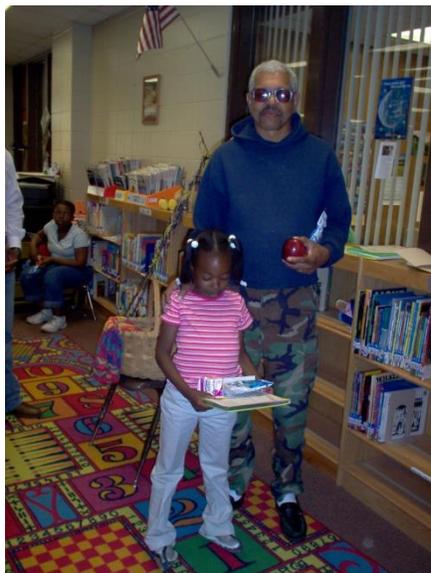
The report was requested by a bipartisan group of legislators – Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA), Rep. Tom Petri (R-WI) and Rep. David Price (D-NC) – and prepared by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences (AAAS) Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences.

The report argues that reinvigorating the humanities is essential to achieving three vital national goals:

- Educate Americans in the knowledge, skills and understanding they will need to thrive in a twenty-first-century democracy.
- Foster a society that is innovative, competitive and strong.
- Equip the nation for leadership in an interconnected world.

Read the full article [here](#).

## Mississippi Humanities Council Receives Arts Grant



The Mississippi Humanities Council has been awarded a \$4,500 grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission. The funds will be used to employ storytellers in the Council's statewide Family Literacy Project.

The grant is a portion of the \$1.27 million in grants the Commission will award in 2013–2014, made possible by continued funding from the Mississippi State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.

“The creative economy has never been more vibrant than it is today in the communities across Mississippi,” stated Sallye Killebrew, interim executive director at MAC. “This agency is honored to play a small role in assisting these organizations to continue their work of reinforcing the value of the arts and the role they play in creative place-making and economic development.”

The Mississippi Humanities Council, a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization, sponsors, supports and conducts a wide range of programs designed to promote understanding of our cultural heritage, interpret our own experiences, foster critical thinking, encourage reasonable public discourse, strengthen our sense of community and thus empower us with a vision of the future. Promoting books and literacy are among our major emphases. Read more [here](#).

## Council Welcomes Two New Board Members

Two new board members have joined the Mississippi Humanities Council, Sharman Bridges Smith of Brandon and Kathryn Lewis of Perkinston.



Sharman Bridges Smith recently retired after 12 years as executive director of the Mississippi Library Commission. During her tenure, she directed construction of the agency's \$10 million facility and oversaw adoption of a statewide accreditation program for public library systems. Smith, a Mississippi native, is no stranger to the state or the state's public libraries, having been the Clinton Librarian, the Director of the Lincoln–Lawrence–Franklin Regional Library System in Brookhaven, and at MLC for 20 years before going to Iowa in 1992.

During her nine years in Iowa, Smith served as state librarian of Iowa where she managed the renovation/restoration of the 100-year-old state library building and worked closely with the Iowa library community to secure the state's first direct state aid program for public libraries. In 2001, Smith returned to her home state to become MLC executive director.

Smith holds a master of library science degree from George Peabody College in Nashville, TN, and a bachelor of science degree in library science/psychology from the Mississippi University for Women.

Kathryn Lewis spent the first 32 years of her career teaching speech and theatre at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Perkinston, Mississippi. During that period, she performed, wrote or directed plays while maintaining her role as chair of the fine arts department. Since leaving full-time employment on the college campus, she has provided professional development workshops for teachers and demonstration lessons in schools throughout Mississippi. She has led numerous arts-focused community projects, including The Telling Trees, a project to research, document and present the history of Stone County, MS, through the arts. In 2010 she focused classroom lessons on her new children's book: *The Longleaf and Me...A-Z*. Her second book, *Watersheds and Me...A-Z*, came out in the fall of 2012.



Lewis is a field advisor for the Mississippi Whole Schools Initiative, she is a recipient of the National Storytelling Network Oracle Award for the Southeast and a Top 10 Mississippi Business Woman of the Year (2010). She received a Cowboy Maloney Award for Outstanding Contribution to Theatre in Mississippi, a Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education Distinguished Service Award, and in 2011, *The Telling Trees* project received the Mississippi Humanities Award for Preservation of Mississippi History. She is listed in Southern Artistry, an artist roster hosted by the South Arts, and on the Teaching Artist Roster of the Mississippi Arts Commission. She is a frequent presenter at arts education and education conferences in Mississippi and is a life member of the Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education.

## Nominations Invited for Humanities Teacher Awards

The Mississippi Humanities Council will observe Arts and Humanities Month in October with its annual Humanities Teacher Awards. All institutes of higher learning throughout the state will receive a call for nominations in mid August. The Humanities Teacher Awards recognize the contributions of humanities faculty at each of the state's colleges and universities. Nominations are made by the college or university president or humanities dean. Each award recipient is required to prepare and deliver a public lecture during October or November. Recipients are then recognized at the Mississippi Humanities Council's annual awards ceremony in the spring.

## MHC Awards Grants for Eleven Humanities Programs Statewide

The Mississippi Humanities Council, in a recent round of grant approvals, has awarded funding for 11 humanities programs throughout the state. Recent awards include:

- ***Institute for the Humanities Writer in Residence: Robert Olen Butler*** – Mississippi State University One-week “writer in residence,” to include public readings and book-signings by Pulitzer Prize winning author, a master class on fiction writing and office time with students and community writers.
- ***Unburied Treasures: Cover to Cover*** – Mississippi Museum of Art Annual art, literature and music series in art museum setting. The 2013 series will connect books, suggested by the University Press of Mississippi, with pieces of art in the Museum’s collection, with scholars discussing their interrelatedness.
- ***Native American Days 2013*** – Winterville Mounds Park and Museum (administered by MDAH)

Annual three-day celebration of Southeastern Native American culture and traditions, including demonstrations of traditional dances, songs and stories; sales of traditional foods and crafts; demonstrations of Native American weapons; and children's crafts and games.

- ***Me and My Kind: James Meredith's War* – Mississippi Film and Video Alliance**  
Post-production work on a documentary film about Civil Rights figure James Howard Meredith.
- ***Mississippi Archaeology Month* – Mississippi Archaeology Association**  
Annual statewide, month-long program of events centered on the state's archeological history, including lectures, guided mound tours, school programs, educational packets for teachers and the annual Archaeology Expo in Jackson.
- ***21st Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival* – Coahoma Community College**  
Annual festival examining the life and work of Mississippi playwright.
- ***Transitioning to College Writing Symposium* – University of Mississippi**  
Annual symposium for 2- and 4-year college and high school writing teachers.
- ***Emilie Blackmore Stapp* – Friends of Stone County Libraries**  
Research project on the life of a notable Stone County resident, culminating with public presentations and a public display on her life and contributions.
- ***Pass Christian Digital History Tours* – University of Southern Mississippi**  
Mobile history tour app and website about Pass Christian.
- ***The Scottsboro Boys: Outside the Protective Circle of Humanity* – Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life**  
Photo exhibit on 1933 rape trial of African American youths, as a part of southern history, an antecedent to the Civil Rights Movement and the role of Jewish activists in the case. Related events will include an opening program, public lecture and panel discussion on the current status of the criminal justice system. To be co-hosted by the Margaret Walker Center at JSU.
- ***Tennessee Williams Tribute's 13th Annual Festival to America's Greatest Playwright* – Tennessee Williams Tribute and Tour of Victorian Homes**  
Annual festival celebrating the works and literary legacy of Columbus, MS-born playwright, Tennessee Williams. Events will include a production of Williams' play, *Period of Adjustment*, reading of Williams's poetry, lectures by Williams scholars and various community-wide activities.



Rabbi Benjamin Goldstein with the Scottsboro boys. Goldstein was the only white clergyman to visit the boys in prison.

## ***Muslim Journeys* Reading, Discussion Series Begins in September**

The Mississippi Humanities Council will sponsor a reading and discussion series using materials from a *Muslim Journeys Bookshelf*, the Council recently received from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association. The *Muslim Journeys Bookshelf* is a collection of books, films and other resources that will introduce the American public to the complex history and culture of Muslims in the United States and around the world.



Developed by the NEH and the American Library Association based on the advice of scholars, librarians and other public programming experts, the *Muslim Journeys Bookshelf* is intended to address both the need and desire of the American public for trustworthy and accessible resources about Muslim beliefs and practices and the cultural heritage associated with Islamic civilizations. Each participating library will receive 25 books, three films and access for one year to Oxford Islamic Studies Online.

### Have You Seen Our Events Calendar?



Did you know that our Calendar page is updated weekly with humanities events all over Mississippi? Even better, most events are free and open to the public! Travel to Clarksdale for a *From the Archives* lecture on Delta bluesman Arthneice “Gas Man” Jones August 8, join the Mississippi Museum of Art’s *Unburied Treasures* lecture/art/music series beginning August 20 in Jackson, take in the *Picturing America/Reflecting Mississippi* poster and photo exhibit at Columbus Public Library, Columbus, before it ends August 23, watch the unveiling of a new traveling trunk exhibit on Mississippi author William Faulkner August 29 in Oxford. Keep coming back to our Calendar page; there will always be new events added each week for you to attend. Click this [link](#) to find a humanities program occurring in your community.

### Next MHC Grant Deadline September 15, 2013

September 15, 2013, is the next MHC Regular Grant application deadline for proposals up to \$7,500. Application guidelines and forms are available at [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org). Regular Grant deadlines are April 15 and September 15 each year. Regular Grant applications must be submitted a minimum of 12 weeks before the proposed program begins.

October 15, 2013, is the next MHC Mini-Grant application deadline for proposals for amounts up to \$1,500. Application guidelines and forms are available at [www.mshumanities.org](http://www.mshumanities.org). Mini-Grant deadlines are January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15 each year. Mini-Grant applications must be submitted a minimum of 8 weeks before the proposed program begins.

The Council invites grant proposals that address one or more of four focus areas: Books and Reading, Mississippi History and Culture, Civil Discourse and Capacity Building.

### MHC Welcomes Your Support

Mississippi Humanities Council programs are engaging, inspiring and free of charge. Your gift makes a big difference to our mission of cultivating an understanding of our history and culture throughout the state. You help us enrich peoples' lives through programs incorporating history, literature, music, politics, philosophy and other humanities-based disciplines that illuminate the human condition. Thanks to your support, we are able to serve all Mississippians: all ages, all geographic areas of the state, all walks of life.

**A small gift of \$25** will purchase two books for children participating in the Mississippi Humanities Council's [Family Reading Bonds](#) program.

**A larger gift of \$250** will fund a lecture in a school classroom, local library or civic club, by a member of the Mississippi Humanities Council [Speakers Bureau](#).

**A \$2,500 contribution** will underwrite a six-week [Family Reading Bonds](#) series, part of the Mississippi Humanities Council's literacy program.

**A gift of any amount** can support any one of our ongoing programs:

- [Oral History Projects](#)
- [Lecture Series](#)
- [Smithsonian Exhibits](#)
- [Public Humanities Awards](#)

To donate online, visit <http://www.mshumanities.org/Donor/Donations.asp>. Or call 601-432-6752.



#### **Disclaimer**

The MHC is supported by Congress through the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and by the generosity of individual donors. The MHC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the NEH.

#### **Unsubscribe**

You are receiving this email from the Mississippi Humanities Council because you have shared your email address with us at some time in the past. If you wish to be removed from this mailing list, please reply with the word "REMOVE" in the subject line.