

EXPLORING THE HUMAN ENDEAVOR

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
FOR THE HUMANITIES

ANNUAL REPORT

2014

SEALASKA HELPS
PRESERVE ALASKA'S
INDIGENOUS CULTURE;
PHOTO BY MARK KELLEY, COURTESY
OF SEALASKA

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

NOVEMBER 2015

Dear Mr. President,

It is an honor to present the 2014 Annual Report for the National Endowment for the Humanities. The establishment of this agency in 1965 began a noble endeavor to emphasize the importance of the humanities through federal funding of education, research, preservation, digital projects, and public programming in the fields of history, literature, philosophy, archaeology, and other disciplines.

As an Army veteran, I was pleased take the helm of an agency that had so recently undertaken a new program devoted to veterans. *Standing Together: The Humanities and the Experience of War* promotes programs around the country that address veterans' issues and helps empower veterans to shape their own narratives in the broader discourse concerning military service. These programs include YouStories, which uses classic Greek texts to connect with modern-day soldiers; the Telling Project, which has veterans and their families develop their own scripts for innovative theater; and the Warrior-Scholar project piloted at Yale University to support veterans going to college, which has now spread to 11 more campuses across the country.

Soon after NEH's founding, its champions in Congress and elsewhere charged the Endowment with bringing the humanities to all Americans. The reverberations of this mission continue even today as NEH supports programs acknowledging the role of history in all the communities that make up American society. During 2014, this imperative took the form of a major agency-wide program called Created Equal.

Launched one year earlier, Created Equal distributed four exceptional documentary films made with NEH grants to 500 communities around the country for screening and discussion programs at local libraries and other venues. The films covered more than a century of civil rights struggles for African Americans, from the abolitionist movement, to forced imprisonment during Reconstruction and into the 20th century, to the Loving court case reversing laws on mixed marriages, to the dramatic story of the Freedom Riders, who challenged segregated interstate travel across the South. As part of Created Equal, a new traveling exhibition began in 2014 linking two events a century apart. "Changing America: The Emancipation Proclamation, 1863 and the March on Washington, 1963" stops for six weeks at each of 50 sites around the nation, accompanied by public programs about the exhibit.

Through initiatives such as these, and NEH's continued dedication to fund excellence in the humanities, the Endowment is helping fulfill its mission by providing all Americans the foundational elements for genuine democratic citizenship.



William D. Adams



NEH CHAIRMAN WILLIAM D. ADAMS
—PHOTO BY FRED FIELD, COURTESY OF COLBY COLLEGE

SUMMARY OF GRANTS AND AWARDS FY 2014

Division/Program	Number ¹	Amount Obligated ²		
		Outright	Matching³	Total
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	106	13,336,025	--	13,336,025
PRESERVATION AND ACCESS	156	16,265,390	820,961	17,086,351
PUBLIC PROGRAMS	89	13,373,524	306,700	13,680,224
RESEARCH PROGRAMS	219	14,613,391	608,526	15,221,918
CHALLENGE GRANTS	78	--	9,085,340	9,085,340
DIGITAL HUMANITIES	37	4,693,617	--	4,693,617
FEDERAL/STATE PARTNERSHIP	71	\$43,127,161	\$448,500	\$43,575,661
MISC. HUMANITIES PROJECTS	6	853,373	--	853,373
Total	762	\$106,262,481	\$11,270,027	\$117,532,508

FOOTNOTES:

1/ New grants, supplemental awards on previous years' grants, transfers to other agencies, and program contracts.

2/ Totals include obligations for new grants, supplemental grants, program contracts, and other program-related purposes. Included are awards that are (a) made by NEH using appropriated funds, including funds appropriated to the We the People and Bridging Cultures initiatives,(b)made by NEH using program funds transferred to the Endowment by other federal agencies, and (c) made by NEH using funds contributed by nonfederal entities.

3/ Totals include definite program funds used to match gifts.

Note: Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2014, the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded \$117,532,508 to 762 grantees through 7 separate funding offices (Education Programs, Preservation and Access, Public Programs, Research Programs, Challenge Grants, Digital Programs, and Federal/State Partnership). With the advice of 861 peer review panelists and a 26-member presidentially appointed council, the Endowment's chairman reviewed their recommendations and made all final decisions on the awarding of grants. Appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, William D. Adams was sworn in as the tenth chairman of NEH on July 23, 2014.

As Chairman Adams took the reins, several Endowment-wide initiatives were opening new lines of funding for timely topics and expanding the audience for innovative humanities programming. In February 2014, the exhibition "Changing America: The Emancipation Proclamation, 1863 and the March on Washington, 1963" opened and became the latest program of the NEH initiative Created Equal. The exhibition travels to 50 sites across the United States through 2017. Standing Together: The Humanities and the Experience of War was launched in April 2014 to explore war and its aftermath through research, public programs exploring the American military experience, and projects directly involving veterans and their families. This initiative continues to grow, encompassing education programs, anthologies, writing projects, documentaries, and theater work with veterans.

Earlier in the year, author Walter Isaacson presented the 43rd Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities—the highest honor the federal government confers for distinguished intellectual achievement in the humanities. His talk on "The Intersection of the Humanities and the Sciences" described those exceptional minds who cross disciplines in their search for innovation, and was informed by Isaacson's biographies of Benjamin Franklin, Albert Einstein, and Steve Jobs.

President Barack Obama bestowed the 2014 National Humanities Medals on nine individuals and one organization at a White House ceremony on September 10, 2015. The recipients were the Clemente Course in the Humanities for impoverished adults, authors Annie Dillard, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Larry McMurtry, architect Everett L. Fly, scholars Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, and Fedwa Malti-Douglas, Vicki Lynn Ruiz, and food activist Alice Waters. The National Humanities Medal honors individuals or groups whose work has deepened the nation's understanding of the humanities.

After 31 years of residing at the historic Old Post Office Building, the Endowment moved to its new headquarters at the Constitution Center in the southwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., in May 2014. Although the space is new, the mission of NEH and the dedication of its staff remain constant.



TEACHERS STUDY HISTORIC SITES SUCH AS THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL — PHOTO BY DIANE NELSON

Division of Education Programs

Projects funded through NEH’s Division of Education Programs help strengthen the teaching of the humanities at all levels of instruction, from K–12 classrooms, to community colleges, to the halls of great universities. Through intensive summer programs with recognized scholars, teachers deepen their mastery of humanities subjects. Other grant programs support institutional endeavors, such as developing new curricula or programs, or enhancing existing course content.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

The **Warrior-Scholar Project**, funded with a \$100,000 NEH grant to Operation Opportunity Foundation, supports academic boot camps for returning military veterans who intend to earn four-year undergraduate degrees. Veterans spent one to two weeks at Yale, Harvard, and the University of Michigan, studying with renowned professors, learning the skills of close reading, note-taking, and expository writing, and reading key works on democracy and freedom.

A summer institute at the East-West Center in Hawaii received a \$199,835 NEH grant to introduce undergraduate educators to **Buddhism and its cultural manifestations**, artistic productions, and political and economic effects spanning more than 2,500 years. Through engagement with key traditions, practices, and primary texts in translation, the institute shows how Buddhism served as a powerful cultural bridge in Asia, comparable to Christianity in the West. Participants also developed curricular materials for humanities courses in religion, philosophy, history, art history, and literature.

At a Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshop for Schoolteachers supported by a \$172,039 NEH grant, educators studied the circumstances and legacy of **the assassination of Abraham Lincoln**. Under the auspices of Ford’s Theatre Society in Washington, D.C., teachers visited historic sites and artifacts in the region to explore events surrounding the assassination, the political aftermath, the South’s surrender, and the enduring legacy of our sixteenth president.



PARTICIPANTS IN SEALASKA'S GRAND ENTRANCE EVENT — PHOTO BY MARK KELLEY, COURTESY OF SEALASKA

Division of Preservation and Access

Projects funded through NEH's Division of Preservation and Access help ensure the longevity and accessibility of the nation's cultural heritage. Much of our cultural legacy resides in books, serials, manuscripts, sound recordings, still and moving images, works of art, and digital collections at museums, libraries, and archives. NEH helps these institutions to preserve these collections and make them accessible for the public.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Chicago's Adler Planetarium is digitizing its collection of celestial maps, photos, and sky charts with a \$109,164 grant. The Adler maintains one of the nation's largest archival collections pertaining to **the history of astronomy**. Among its holdings are 1,000 star charts from rare books and atlases dating to the early 1600s, along with 3,750 photographic maps of the sky from the late 19th to mid 20th century, produced by observatories in North America, Europe, Australia, Africa, and Asia. The Adler is digitizing the items for use through multiple access points, including its online catalog and national data repositories. Selected items will go to the WorldWide Telescope, a web resource that displays the cosmos in virtual form to create interactive guides for exploring parts of the universe.

The Sealaska Heritage Institute in Alaska received an NEH grant of \$182,654 for the purchase and installation of compact storage shelving, and for the construction of specialized mounts for 100 fragile ethnographic artifacts for their safe transport to a new facility and long-term storage. The institute houses the **largest single collection of Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian materials** in the nation, including 3,100 linear feet of collection materials, containing thousands of manuscript documents, 60,000 photographs, thousands of hours of oral narratives and indigenous Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian language recordings, 1,000 art and cultural objects, and extensive Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian texts. These collections facilitate research, strengthen teaching, and provide opportunities for lifelong learning in the humanities.

The Image Permanence Institute of the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York received \$350,000 from NEH to develop tools to quantify how paper-based humanities materials respond to various environmental scenarios and test new ways of managing relative humidity. Extreme fluctuations in temperature and humidity can irreversibly damage cultural heritage materials such as books, manuscripts, maps, and prints; however, **maintaining consistent climate control** in these spaces is energy-consuming and expensive. By establishing how long it takes for library materials to reach moisture equilibrium with the interior climate, the institute will identify specific environmental management profiles to significantly reduce energy costs while maintaining a safe environment for humanities collections.



BRIAN BALOGH, ED AYERS, AND PETER ONUF ARE THE AMERICAN HISTORY GUYS ON THE RADIO SERIES *BACKSTORY*—PHOTO BY TOM COGILL

Division of Public Programs

Projects funded through NEH’s Division of Public Programs bring a variety of humanities topics to a diverse and wide audience through museum and library exhibitions, reading and discussion series, television and radio documentaries, the interpretation of historic sites, digital media projects, and history and literature programs at hundreds of local libraries and cultural organizations..

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

An NEH grant of \$176,151 supported 22 episodes in *Backstory*’s “Finding the American Way” series. *Backstory* is a weekly, hour-long program broadcast on 217 radio stations in 32 states and the District of Columbia. Each week the hosts, Ed Ayers, Brian Balogh, and Peter Onuf, known as “**The American History Guys,**” select a topic from current events and drill down to its historical roots. Interviews with scholars, conversation among the hosts, and questions from callers shed light on connections between the past and the present in everyday events.

The Folger Shakespeare Library received \$500,000 from NEH to produce “**Shakespeare and his First Folio,**” a national traveling exhibition that will stop in libraries in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Organized to coincide with the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare’s death, three exhibits of “First Folio” will travel simultaneously, featuring original copies of the 1623 First Folio, the first collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays. Without this book, published seven years after the author’s death, 18 of his plays, including *Macbeth* and *As You Like It*, would have been lost. The exhibition will also include six interpretive panels that will place the Folio in historical context and a kiosk accessing digital material from the Folger’s website.

The Chattanooga History Center in Tennessee is establishing a new permanent exhibition with \$400,000 from NEH, whose support is helping the museum raise additional funds (a total of \$10.5 million) to complete this project. Interactive kiosks and listening stations that present diverse views on the city’s rich history are among the tools that will bring the city’s complex past to life at the center. Opening in 2016 on **Chattanooga’s historic riverfront**, this landmark project will be a tourist draw and a complement to heritage walking tours and other sites in the area.



AUTHOR WILLA CATHER'S LETTERS ARE BEING DIGITIZED AND PUT ONLINE—ILLUSTRATION BY GARY KELLEY

Division of Research Programs

Projects funded through NEH's Division of Research Programs support scholarly research that advances knowledge and understanding of the humanities. Awards are made to individuals and groups of scholars for projects of significance to specific fields and to the humanities as a whole. Through grants for research, translation, scholarly editions, and archaeological work, NEH-funded research brings forth knowledge that has long-term benefits for humanities education and public programming.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Nathaniel Levtow of the University of Montana in Missoula received a \$50,400 fellowship to write a book both cataloging and explaining acts of **text destruction from the beginning of writing** to the formation of the Bible. Using literary and archaeological evidence, Levtow's work will be the first to explain how and why early texts were destroyed as well as attempt to understand the status and symbolic power of writing among ancient cultures.

Ongoing fellowships programs at the **Newberry Library in Chicago**, Illinois, were supported by a \$323,400 grant. One of the premier archives of historical materials in the United States, the Newberry will support the research of as many as fifteen scholars in areas as diverse as 20th-century U.S. history, medieval Italian mapmaking, and early Native American culture in the Midwest. NEH funds also promote fair, open-review processes, ensuring wide access to scholarly resources.

A \$271,980 NEH grant to the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, supported the editorial preparation and production of the complete letters of **American novelist Willa Cather** (1873–1947). Cather's novels document the settling of the Great Plains, and her works influenced other American writers, intellectuals, and readers. The Cather Archive will provide free and open access to 1,500 of the author's letters, which document her relationships with family, friends, and publishers and describe her business dealings, writing process, and inspirations for her novels.



JOHNNY AND JUNE CASH VISIT HIS CHILDHOOD HOME IN ARKANSAS—INCLUDED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE JOHN R. CASH REVOCABLE TRUST

Office of Challenge Grants

Projects funded through NEH's Office of Challenge Grants have helped local, state, and national institutions secure their humanities resources and activities for the long term. Historically, recipients of a challenge grant have matched every federal dollar with three (in some cases, two) nonfederal dollars. These funds have been used to purchase equipment and upgrade technology, to build or renovate facilities, or to increase a library's holdings or a museum's collections. Challenge grants have also supported endowments for staffing or programming well into the future.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Arkansas State University received \$500,000 from NEH, matched by \$1.5 million in private funds, to restore buildings in **the Dyess Colony**, a community created in 1934 under the New Deal for struggling farm families, including the parents of Johnny Cash. The Cashes' first new home there, the Dyess Colony Administration Building, and the theater are structures being restored to house humanities programming and activities for the public.

Northwest Indian College in Bellingham, Washington, received \$500,000 from NEH, matched by \$1 million in nonfederal gifts, to support an endowment and construction of a new facility to house its **Coast Salish Institute**. The new 12,710-square-foot building will be used to preserve the endangered Coast Salish culture and language, and be equipped with language labs; video production areas; distance learning capabilities; and the lecture, archive, and classroom spaces needed for program and research expansion.

The **Harry Ransom Center**, a humanities research library and museum at the University of Texas at Austin, received an NEH grant of \$500,000 to be matched by \$1.5 million in private funds. The Ransom Center will use the grant to establish an endowment supporting the center's exhibitions and related activities. Each year the center attracts more than 10,000 researchers and has more than 80,000 visitors. Its holdings include more than 42 million manuscripts, 5 million photographs, 1 million rare books, and 100,000 works of art and design. Highlights of the collection include one of five complete copies of the Gutenberg Bible in the United States, the film archives of David Selznick and Robert De Niro, and paintings by Mexican artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera.



—IMAGE BY AIDAN ZANDERS, CENTER FOR DIGITAL HUMANITIES, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Office of Digital Humanities

Projects funded through NEH’s Office of Digital Humanities support efforts in the area of scholarship in which modern computing tools are used for research and teaching, such as programs in data visualization, putting archival material searchable online, or crowdsourcing transcriptions of texts. The field is changing the ways material can be searched, mined, displayed, taught, and analyzed. These grants often facilitate partnerships with other funding bodies in the United States and abroad.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

A \$174,977 NEH grant to the University of Minnesota brought about a collaboration with Oxford University to study Christian identity in Greco-Roman Egypt. By developing a transcription tool for the Coptic language, the project enlists citizen scholars to help transcribe thousands of Egyptian papyrus scraps that help tell the story of **early Christian life**. The tools and results of the research will be made available to other developers and scholars.

An NEH grant of \$36,524 produced a two-day workshop in October 2014 on military history, hosted by Northeastern University in Boston in cooperation with the **Society for Military History**. The workshop brought leading scholars from the digital humanities field to provide hands-on instruction on GIS, deep mapping, network analysis, and other topics. Participants learned about the newest digital methods and tools to conduct research.

Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon, received \$88,778 from NEH to hold a five-day institute addressing the lack of a **digital humanities at community colleges**. Twenty-five faculty members from different institutions met in July 2015 to gain knowledge about digital humanities practices and build portfolios using methods such as data visualization, crowdsourcing, and digital storytelling. The teachers brought these practices back to their students and now share an online hub for continuing work and topics.



WAR INK WAS A PART OF CALIFORNIA'S "WAR COMES HOME" PROJECT—PHOTO BY JOHANN WOLF, COURTESY OF CAL HUMANITIES

Office of Federal/State Partnership

Through the Office of Federal/State Partnership, grants are made to 56 state and territory humanities councils for operating costs and special projects. This partnership makes humanities education and lifelong learning available through projects that are tailored to local interests and needs. The councils—operating in all 50 states and in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa—employ more than 500 staff members and engage over 1,000 board members.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

California Humanities convened a multiyear project called **“War Comes Home”** that brings programming about the experiences of veterans and the aftermath of war to venues across the state. Included are scholar-led discussion programs, teacher development, an interview series, a book tour, and a reading series on Karl Marlantes’s *What It Is Like to Go to War*, and a traveling exhibit focusing on centuries of veterans’ perspectives through their letters and journals.

Pennsylvania Humanities Council is working with other cultural, educational, and arts organizations to help revitalize **the downtown of the city of Chester**. It is using grassroots storytelling and interactive theater as tools to create a local team of business owners, seniors, youth, artists, and preservationists, and other residents to help plan and participate in the new arts and culture district.

Georgia Humanities Council partnered with Georgia Council for the Arts, Georgia Museum of Art, and Explore Georgia to bring the exhibition **“Inspired Georgia”** to nine venues across the state. Two years in the making, the exhibition showcased 28 varied works from the 1970s to 1990s to give an overview of different representations of the state, its culture, and its artists.



@NEHgov



National Endowment for the Humanities

www.neh.gov