



December 2006 – Mississippi Humanities Council Newsletter
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Mississippi Humanities Council Gives \$38,750 for Humanities Programming

The Mississippi Humanities Council approved eight Regular Grant projects in November for a total of \$33,155. The Council also approved three Mini Grant projects in December for a total of \$5,595.

Mini-grant applications are reviewed bi-monthly and regular grant applications are reviewed twice a year. The approved projects span a variety of humanities disciplines. The successful proposals include:

Mississippi History Now. Sponsor: Mississippi Historical Society. Award: \$5,650. Online publication featuring articles on the state's history and lesson plans for teachers.

Victorian Homes: Culture and Comfort Symposium. Sponsor: Manship House Museum. Award: \$4,500. Two-day symposium in January 2007 involving performances, lectures and demonstrations by scholars examining the lives of Victorian-era Mississippians.

Development and Public Opening Celebration: Special Collection of African American Literature, Criticism and Cultural Documents. Sponsor: William Carey University. Award: \$3,000. Public program to celebrate inauguration of a new collection of African American documents.

Fourteenth Oxford Conference for the Book. Sponsor: University of Mississippi. Award: \$5,000. Annual literary conference celebrating books, writing and reading.

18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration: Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South. Sponsor: Copiah–Lincoln Community College. Award: \$5,000. Festival focusing on the language of the Deep South in history, literature and film.

Reading Richard Wright on the Eve of his 100th Birthday. Sponsor: Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro–American Culture. Award: \$3,005. Month–long celebration of the 13 works of Mississippi author Richard Wright.

The Blues Today: A Living Blues Symposium – 2007 Theme: Blueswomen Today. Sponsor: University of Mississippi. Award: \$3,000. Three–day symposium focusing on blues music and culture. Events will include public panel discussions, documentary film screenings, lectures, workshops, photography exhibits, a blues jam session and tours.

The Needle’s Song: The Folk Art of Ethel Wright Mohamed. Sponsor: Lauren Rogers Museum of Art. Award: \$4,000. Two–month museum exhibit examining the cultural life of rural Mississippi in the late 19th and early 20th centuries through the quilts of Ethel Wright Mohamed.

Bringing It All Together: The Challenges of Creative Writing. Sponsor: Itawamba Community College. Award: \$1,595. Two professors will share their experiences as successful fiction writers with students, faculty and community members.

A Forty–Year Retrospective of Robert Clark’s 1967 Election – A Symposium. Sponsor: Margaret Walker Alexander National Research Center. Award: \$2,000. Four scholars will explore the era of Robert Clark, the first black Mississippian since Reconstruction to be elected to the state house of representatives.

Greyhound Speaker Series. Sponsor: Delta Blues Museum. Award: \$2,000. Monthly speaker series at restored Greyhound bus station in Clarksdale.

Awards Dinner Honors Outstanding Humanities Contributions

The Mississippi Humanities Council will host its 2007 Annual Awards Dinner Feb. 9, 2007, to present 2006 Public Humanities Achievement Awards and recognize the 2006 Humanities Teacher Awardees. Award categories include Humanities Scholar Award, Public Humanities Achievement Award, Chair’s Award for Special

Achievements, Special Recognition Award and Humanities Educator Award. Invitations will be mailed to special guests in January. Others interested in purchasing tickets may contact the Mississippi Humanities Council at 601-432-6752.

This year's Public Humanities Awards recipients include: Deborah Kehoe, Humanities Scholar Award; Michael Harrington, Public Humanities Achievement Award; the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra and the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, Humanities Educator Award; Robert Jenkins and the Mississippi Museum of Art, Chair's Awards for Special Achievement in the Humanities; Bruce Cole, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Director's Award for Preservation of Mississippi Culture; James Hollandsworth, the Moss Point School District and Diane Williams, Special Recognition Awards;

Educators Recognized for Humanities Contributions

The Mississippi Humanities Council has selected 32 educators from around the state to receive Humanities Teacher Awards. Awards are made in October - Arts and Humanities month - to one humanities faculty member at each institution of higher learning in the state. The title carries a cash award of \$500, which is matched in-kind by the nominating institution. Award recipients will be honored at the Mississippi Humanities Council's 2007 Annual Awards Dinner in Jackson.

Charrette Examines Gulf Coast's Unique Culture

GULFPORT— The Mississippi Humanities Council co-sponsored a cultural charrette December 1-2, 2006, on the Jefferson Davis Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College to encourage collaborations among cultural entities and interested residents as recovery from Hurricane Katrina continues.



Cultural leaders from across the Mississippi Gulf Coast participated in a Cultural charrette co-sponsored by the Mississippi Humanities Council.

The unique culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, with its history, architecture, cuisine, unique way of life and ethnic diversity, is a creative center for the state. The charrette offered residents an opportunity to be part of reweaving the fabric that constitutes the heart and soul of the coastal area.

Cultural leaders from across the Gulf Coast attended. On Friday, participants gathered in breakout groups to define Mississippi Gulf Coast culture and to discuss how they can collaborate to restore what the hurricane damaged. Ricky Mathews, publisher of the Sun-Herald, was Friday's featured speaker.

Jill Conner Browne, world renowned Mississippi author of *The Sweet Potato Queens' Book of Love*, delivered an uplifting message on Saturday. "My husband Kyle and I have done whatever we could, whenever we could to help out on our beloved Coast and if I can say a few words that perk up even ONE person for a little while, well, then slap me in the car and drive me on down there! I have never grieved more for my state nor been prouder of her than through the Katrina ordeal. We will get through this....we are getting through this....one day at a time....together," Browne said.

The focus Saturday was a "town hall" type meeting to gather the ideas and thoughts of local residents regarding the Coast's cultural revitalization.

The charrette was the result of a collaboration forged by the Mississippi Humanities Council, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History the Mississippi Library Commission and the Mississippi Arts Commission as the agencies came together to respond and rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. The event was funded by the National Humanities Council.

Please watch the Mississippi Humanities Council web site (www.mshumanities.org) for follow-up reports and information resulting from the charrette.

MHC Sponsors Upcoming Events

The Mississippi Humanities Council is assisting Mississippi Public Broadcasting in bringing *StoryCorps* to Jackson. The public is invited to visit the *StoryCorps* mobile StoryBooth near the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum on Lakeland Drive January 11 through February 3, 2007, to share their stories. A trained facilitator will guide participants through the interview process. At the end of the session, participants receive a CD of their interview. With their permission, a second copy will be sent to the American Folklife Center at The Library of Congress where it will become part of a high quality digital archive. This collection will eventually grow into an oral history of America. Reservations are required to participate. Beginning Thursday, Dec. 28, at 10 a.m., those interested may schedule appointments by calling 1-800-850-4406, or by

logging onto www.mpbonline.org and clicking on the *StoryCorps* link. For more information about *StoryCorps*, visit www.mpbonline.org.

The Council will also sponsor the 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, scheduled Feb. 22–25, at the Natchez Convention Center. This annual conference is devoted to exploring various angles of Southern history and culture. The 2007 theme is “Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South.” The subject of language will be examined through lectures, films, exhibits, discussions, concerts, a play, book signings, special meals, writing workshops and receptions. Most of the conference is free. Information about the conference is available at www.colin.edu/nlcc; by calling 601–446–1289 or 866–296–6522; by writing beth.richard@colin.edu or P.O. Box 1307, Natchez, MS 39121. Registration is not required, though seats to ticketed events must be purchased in advance since space is limited.

Mississippi Will Host National Kick–Off for Smithsonian Exhibit

(MERIDIAN) The Mississippi Humanities Council will host the national kick–off for a new traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibit, “New Harmonies”, March 24, 2007, at the MSU Riley Center for Performing Arts in Meridian.

Through a partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, the Mississippi Humanities Council is bringing this portable seven–kiosk exhibit to where it will appear in six communities from March 2007 through January 2008, including Meridian, New Albany, Vicksburg, Gulfport, Columbia and Clarksdale.



“New Harmonies” is an interactive exhibit portraying the ongoing cultural process that has made America the birthplace of more music than any place on earth. The exhibition provides a fascinating, inspiring and toe–tapping listen to the American story of multi–cultural exchange. The story is full of surprises about familiar songs, histories of instruments, the roles of religion and technology, and the continuity of musical roots Native American chanting and drumming to the latest hip hop CD.

“New Harmonies” is part of the Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street (MOMS) program. MOMS serves small– to medium–sized communities by bringing Smithsonian–quality exhibitions to local museums, historical societies, libraries and community centers that traditionally have limited access to traveling

exhibitions due to space and cost limitations. Each exhibition consists of free-standing structures that contain interactive components and artifacts. In addition to the MOMS structures, each host community will add elements to their installation of the exhibit and produce a series of local programs related to the “New Harmonies” theme.

For information about “New Harmonies,” contact David Morgan at 601-432-6752 or by email at david@mhc.state.ms.us. Information about the traveling exhibit may also be obtained by visiting www.mshumanities.org or www.museumonmainstreet.org.

Council Member Takes Public Office

Mimi Dossett, a member of the Mississippi Humanities Council, has been named county administrator for Bolivar County. Congratulations, Mimi!

Nominations Invited for Mississippi Humanities Council

The Mississippi Humanities Council needs members who are able to make a substantial commitment of time and energy to the work of the public humanities. Members must be able to attend meetings and spend time on grant evaluation, planning, assessment, fund-raising, member recruitment, and other committee work. New members are selected annually for four-year terms. Questions about Council membership may be directed to 601-432-6752. Nomination forms are available at www.mshumanities.org.

Next MHC Grant Deadline is January 1, 2007

January 1, 2007, is the next Mississippi Humanities Council minigrant application deadline for proposals up to \$2,000. Application guidelines and forms are available at www.mshumanities.org.

Mississippi Humanities Council Announces New Grant Deadlines

The Mississippi Humanities Council has revised its deadlines for grant applications exceeding \$2,000. Applications for Regular Grants will now be accepted September 15 and April 15 annually. Decisions will be announced November 15 and June 15. Visit www.mshumanities.org and click on “Downloads” to review and/or download grant guidelines and application forms. The deadlines for Mini-grants, less than \$2,000, remain unchanged.

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