

# MISSISSIPPI HUMANITIES COUNCIL SPEAKERS BUREAU

Since its beginnings in 1990, the Mississippi Humanities Council Speakers Bureau has become one of the Council's most popular programs. Its members reach far-flung rural areas of Mississippi where there is limited access to cultural programming with presentations at local libraries, civic clubs, and classrooms or go to community centers and other urban sites to reach Mississippians from all walks of life and with widely diverse interests.

Applying for a Speakers Bureau program is very simple. You do not have to complete a lot of paperwork or compete with other applicants. To participate, choose a speaker from our website listing, which is arranged by topic and also indexed by speakers' names. Contact the speaker(s) to make arrangements, then photocopy and complete the brief form below and return it to MHC **at least four weeks in advance of the program**. If you have any questions about the Speakers Bureau or other MHC programs and resources, **please call MHC at (601) 432-6752 for assistance**.

The Mississippi Humanities Council is funded by Congress through the National Endowment for the Humanities to provide public programs in traditional liberal arts disciplines to serve non-profit groups in Mississippi. Twenty-two Mississippians serve four-year terms as volunteers, five of whom are appointed by the governor and the rest elected by the council. One-half the members are public, one-half academic, and every effort is made to maintain balance by race, gender, and geographic distribution to assure representation for all Mississippians. All interested persons are invited to nominate themselves or others to the Council.

The views and opinions expressed by members of the Speakers Bureau do not necessarily represent those of the Mississippi Humanities Council or the National Endowment for the Humanities. The images used in this publication as well as the descriptions of individual topics were submitted by the speakers. The speakers are responsible for securing the right to reproduce any copyright protected material.

The Mississippi Humanities Council does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. The Mississippi Humanities Council is committed to make every reasonable effort to make its programs as accessible to as many Mississippians as possible and expects grant recipients to do the same. Copies of the Speakers Bureau and application forms are available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact MHC if you have questions regarding accessibility.

For an updated list of speakers, please consult the Speakers Bureau online at <http://www.mshumanities.org>

## Who can apply?

The Speakers Bureau is designed primarily for organizations that involve adults in lifelong learning. Speakers are available to talk to seniors, historical organizations, public library groups, churches, professional associations, or any non-profit community groups. Speakers usually deliver a talk, and then engage the audience in a discussion. Many speakers are also available to speak to students, in classrooms or as part of special programs. Other programs are more appropriate for adult audiences.

Most talks last 30 to 60 minutes, but applicants should consult with the individual speakers about time limitations. Programs which involve slides or other media formats may not be suitable for civic club luncheon programs with a rigid time frame. The applicant should discuss with the

speaker who the intended audience will be and any special requests or circumstances, as the speakers can often adapt their presentations if they have fore-warning. Please note speakers may only speak on the topic/subjects approved for listing in the Mississippi Humanities Council Speakers Bureau.

### **Is there a cost?**

Speakers Bureau programs should be free and open to the public. MHC will pay honorarium of \$300.00. **Overnight lodging and meals, if necessary, are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.**

All MHC funds must be matched in cash or in kind. Organizations that engage speakers often provide extensive volunteer services to make their programs a success. They therefore share in the cost of the program in a variety of ways: in time spent on the program, local travel expenses, promotion, printing, postage, telephone, supplies or materials, rental costs, and hospitality. Your organization's required cost-share can be met by documenting your contributions to the program, including the value of donated services and out-of-pocket cash expenses.

### **How do I get started?**

Review the website listings to select the speaker(s) you wish to invite. The talks are listed under categories, and the speakers are listed alphabetically in the index. **It is your responsibility to contact the speaker and make arrangements at your mutual convenience.** If your organization is campus-based you should avoid choosing speakers employed by that same institution.

### **What else must I do?**

This office will handle the financial paperwork to simplify procedures. You should include acknowledgment of MHC support in all promotion and publicity materials and when you introduce the speaker at the program. Once the program is over, you must send MHC the two forms you received when your application was approved (speaker evaluation and a matching contributions form). You must also send copies of promotional materials to MHC. The speaker will not be paid until we receive these materials, so please return these forms no later than two weeks following the presentation.

### **What can I do if I have questions?**

Call MHC at 601-432-6752 and the staff will be happy to assist you.