Michigan Has Stories to Tell
Everyone has a story.

The Michigan Humanities Council has helped people all across Michigan tell their stories.

A grant from the Council helped Advent House Ministries produce Your Story and Mine, a multimedia exhibit of stories, poems, art and photography, using history to help homeless adults develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of their heritage. These stories have been taken to sites around Michigan, providing a forum for understanding across economic and social divides.

This is what the Michigan Humanities Council is all about Michigan People, Michigan Places, Our Stories, Our Lives.

Michigan Humanities Council
119 Pere Marquette, Suite 3B
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michiganhumanities.org
The Many Voices of Michigan

From the rocky shores of the Keweenaw Peninsula to the urban centers of Detroit and Grand Rapids, the people of Michigan are building a new future rooted in the rich traditions of their past. The people of Michigan have stories to tell, histories to explore, ideas to ponder. For more than 35 years, the Michigan Humanities Council has helped the people of Michigan discover their identity and understand the lives of others through cultural programming and grant support to community-generated humanities projects. The people of Michigan speak in many voices. The Council serves as a catalyst to engage the public with thought and dialogue about the strength of citizenry, an appreciation of heritage and a sharing of values.

Listening to Michigan

This past summer, the Michigan Humanities Council invited community leaders to a series of roundtable discussions. They shared their ideas for a project to replace the popular Great Michigan Read, which ends with the 2011-2012 selection. Meetings were held in Lansing, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Saginaw, Plymouth, Detroit, and Escanaba. The discussions were wide-ranging covering everything from our troubled economy to racial tensions to our treasured environment to the rising lack of civility in public discourse. Ideas for programs included oral histories, large scale traveling exhibits, school centered programs, field trips and genealogy projects. The humanities provide us with a platform for discussing what really matters.

Join the conversation, share your stories.

Dear Friends,

As demonstrated in this report, story is woven through each chapter of the Michigan Humanities Council’s work. It’s compelling as we review our programs and reflect on how stories have shaped our work, our lives, and our communities. It is through your continuous support that we are successful in providing this outstanding assortment of human experiences throughout the state. For that, we are ever so grateful.

Resources provided through the Council’s grant programs help stories unfold in our communities — stories about Michigan’s Native Americans through narrative and illustrations; the life and times of Lumber Schooner Thomas Hume; the relationship between artists and architects who worked in Detroit from 1919 to 1941.

Songs and interpretation create many tales on Michigan stages. The Arts and Humanities Touring Program, a partnership program with the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), enriches and fills people’s lives with music, words, and songs by providing resources to libraries, museums, art centers, schools, and other organizations.

Contemporary history, cultural understanding, and immigration were emphasized in Great Michigan Read programs. The 2009-10 Great Michigan Read, a community reading program for the entire state, featured Bich Minh Nguyen’s Stealing Buddha’s Dinner, a memoir chronicling the author’s migration from Vietnam in 1975 and her coming of age in Grand Rapids in the 1980s.

Learning great poetry by heart develops the mind and the imagination. Poetry Out Loud, a partnership program with MCACA, National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Foundation, Library of Michigan, and Michigan Youth Arts gives students the power to be the voice of some of the most influential literary icons of our time.

Reading and discussing humanities-based children’s literature helped low-literacy, low-income families with children aged 6-12 bond around the act of reading and talking about books. PRIME TIME, a partnership program with the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, is a six-week reading, discussion, and storytelling program held in public libraries.

These programs highlight our incredible outreach. It is through your support that we continue to create economic activity and bring to life so many stories woven into the tapestry of who we were, are, or hope to be.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of Michiganders!

Our Vision: The Michigan Humanities Council will be known as a unifying force throughout Michigan, whose programs help people connect with one another and the places where they live, by fostering a greater understanding and engagement in the cultures, histories, and values which tell us who we were, are, and hope to be.
**The Great Michigan Read**

**Stimulates Statewide Conversation**

Bich Minh Nguyen’s *A Rumor of War*, the 2009-2010 Great Michigan Read, was largely a chronicle of war and its consequences. In May, three writers who have written vividly about war came together to share their thoughts at two panel discussions, May 18 in East Lansing and May 20 in Marquette, as the final part of the Michigan Humanities Council’s reading program.

The Michigan Author Homecoming, “Writing War: Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam,” featured Benjamin Busch, an actor, writer and photographer who served in Iraq; Philip Caputo, author of *A Rumor of War*, a memoir of his service as a Marine lieutenant in Vietnam, and 13 other books; and Doug Stanton, author of *In Hanoi’s Way*, about the sinking of the U.S.S. Indianapolis during World War II, and *Horse Soldiers*, about a special unit that fought the Taliban in Afghanistan.

“Being in the company of great writers like Ben and Phil, with audiences from two different parts of the state, gave me another perspective on the subject we were discussing and lively, spontaneous moments for the audience and a give and take between us and readers,” said Doug Stanton, who lives in Traverse City.

Stanton said he was surprised by the “urgency that people want to talk about the issues.”

“‘They seemed to be looking for a way into current events and our experiences,’ Stanton said. ‘We offered a prism or lens to refract the cloud of news that flies by us every day. The experience of Phil in Vietnam, Ben in Iraq and that’s not surprising.’

Stanton was the only one of the three who had not been in combat but found common ground with fellow artists, quoting a poet’s observation that “poetry is news that stays news.”

“I discovered that both Phil and Ben had to step outside their experience and look back at it with new eyes to really communicate it,” he said. “‘Time and distance...’”

For the past four years, the Michigan Humanities Council has invited Michigan readers to discover themselves by reading a book with the Great Michigan Read. This May, the Council will announce a new Great Michigan Read. We’ll stimulate new conversations, gain new insights, and learn new things about our state and the diversity of its residents.

**Prime Time Engages Families**

**Through Stories and Discussions**

PRIME TIME Family Reading Time® is bringing families together from Marquette to Morenci through a six-week adventure in reading, story-telling and conversations.

PRIME TIME Family Reading Time® serves families who don’t usually visit the library through sharing children’s literature and exploring themes from everyday life. “The part that amazed me was that all the children felt they were able to contribute and even those with the smallest, quietest voices were heard,” Tackett said.

PRIME TIME® was developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities with support from the American Library Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities.
Students Discover the Magic of Poetry

Poetry Out Loud is a window to understanding for high school students.

“What I love about the program is that it is presenting something very powerful yet concurrently fragile and gives it over to students,” said Lauren Treiber, the 2010 Poetry Out Loud state champion. “Poetry, then, is made to be more than print on a page or an assignment for class; it is handed to a person (a teenager, no less!), and when that person can perceive the words, ‘Here. This is for you,’ beautiful things happen.”

Treiber was a senior at Forest Hills Central High School in Grand Rapids when she won the $200 cash award and an all-expense paid trip to the national finals in Washington, D.C.

The contest challenges students to learn three poems, understand the poems and present a recitation of the selections to an audience. Treiber chose “A Locked House” by W.D. Snodgrass, “Life In A Love” by Robert Browning and “Mortal Sorrows” by Rodney Jones.

“Snodgrass, Browning and Jones managed to work their way into my mind and grip it somehow,” she said. “Every time I had finished reciting one of these poems, I knew it differently than before.”

That process of discovery is one of the program’s biggest benefits according to Forest Hills Central English teacher Sarah Scobell.

“I actually think one of the best parts of the process, in terms of increasing poetry appreciation, is simply the search through the poems on the POL website that students go through while looking for a piece to recite,” Scobell said. “The process becomes addictive as kids scour the site and read scores of poems to determine which ones have meaning for them in terms of style, connection, theme.”

Treiber said “Mortal Sorrows” seemed to be the “scale-tipper” in her triumph. “My understanding of it both as a solitary thing and a piece of art in my life blossomed very quickly,” she said. “I went from an almost instinctual to melancholy recitation, and then to a more confident understanding of the poem.”

Treiber is now a freshman at Goshen College. She said she’s a firm believer in the power of art to express “what plain words and formalities often cannot.”

The Council sponsors Poetry Out Loud in partnership with the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the State Library of Michigan, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation and Michigan Youth Arts.

“Their path is one from almost instinctual to the skill of a recitation. If it happens that way, I’m more than happy,” said Treiber. “I go from a recitation of a poem and the emotions it gave me not to cry at that poem anymore. It means that much to me now.”

The contest is open to students in grades nine through 12. The deadline to register for the 2011 Poetry Out Loud is Dec. 1.

Program Takes Arts and Culture on Tour

Shipwrecks and the Civil War are at the top of the list for sure-fire audience appeal.

That provides a perfect opportunity for Valerie van Heest, a diver, author, underwater explorer and co-founder of the Michigan Shipwreck Research Associates.

“Using what appeals to the public in an entertainment sense provides them an educational opportunity as well,” she said.

Van Heest’s presentation is one of 204 programs offered through the Arts & Humanities Touring Program, a joint effort of the Michigan Humanities Council and the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs to help schools and communities host some of the best artistic and cultural performers and presenters in the state by providing funding of up to 40 percent for a presentation. An online Touring Directory at www.michiganhumanities.org assists communities and schools with finding dancers, musicians, storytellers, theater acts, tradition bearers, museum exhibits or visual artists.

Van Heest presents stunning photographs and dramatic film of the haunting shipwrecks in our Great Lakes waters. She combines the romantic lore of shipwrecks with the history of sailing and the science of the Great Lakes.

“Over the years I have culled a lot of information on shipwrecks and maritime history in Michigan,” she said. “About 50 times a year, I take that knowledge and her pictures to schools, libraries, historical societies and senior centers. “They seem to be thrilled, sharing their stories. One reaction I often get is, ‘I didn’t know there are so many shipwrecks.’ Everyone knows about the Edmund Fitzgerald because of the song, but I show there are many more and each has a story,” she said.

In her book Ice Bound: George Sheldon and the S.S. Michigan van Heest told of one seaman’s determination to save his ship and his shipmates. She tells the story now to teach the lessons of perseverance and following a dream. She also hopes to instill an appreciation for life. “I have a passion for my topic. I go at it full bore. We don’t give up,” she said.

The Arts & Humanities Touring Program is a community builder, attracting more than 1.5 million residents since 1998.
Empower Individuals, Enrich the State

The Council provides resources and public humanities programs to Michigan citizens to help improve their lives and enrich the state. The Council offers six main programs (listed below) used by hundreds of communities across the state and featured in this map.

- **The Great Michigan Read** encourages Michiganders to learn more about their state, their history, and their society by focusing on a single work of Michigan literature.

- **Prime Time Family Reading Time** is a humanities-based family program focusing on reading, discussion, and storytelling that takes place in public libraries.

- **Poetry Out Loud** helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage through memorization and performance of great poetry.

- **Arts & Humanities Touring Program** provides an arts and cultural experience through interpretation, story, visual arts, and performance.

- **Community Partnership** grants play a vital role in defining our culture, our state, our community, and ourselves.

- **Picturing America in Michigan** helps students gain a deeper understanding of American history through the study and understanding of art.

“The important thing is letting people know and putting Cassopolis on the map. We have a history to be proud of.”
— Adrienne Glover, president of the Minority Council of Cass County, on the Sanctuary and Deliverance project supported with a Council grant.

“Fold out (up) this sheet, and you will see an illustration of the Michigan Humanities Council’s impact in communities across the state. With its wide variety of programs and community partnerships, the Council reaches thousands of citizens every day. Our partnerships also raise public awareness of the stories, traditions, and events that shape Michigan’s communities.”

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2010 POETRY OUT LOUD
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DISCOVER THE MICHIGAN IN YOU

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PICTURING AMERICA IN MICHIGAN
The Kalamazoo Institute of Arts was one of 12 museums participating in the Michigan Humanities Council’s Picturing America in Michigan. The program helped students gain a deeper understanding of American history by learning about American art. In 2009, nine classrooms from southwest Michigan visited the “Georgia O’Keeffe and Her Times” exhibit with support of Council funds. And, 73 classrooms from all across the state received Council support to travel to museums.

COUNCIL GRANTS: The Story Line Project
The Michigan Humanities Council awarded two $15,000 grants to the Storyline Project, a project to record family histories in the Upper Peninsula’s Copper Country to promote the presentation of a new opera, “Rockland,” about a 1906 copper mine strike. This was one of 19 major grant programs. For more about grants, see pages 10-11.

GREAT MICHIGAN READ
A new Great Michigan Read will be announced in May 2011. The 2009-2010 selection, Bich Minh Nguyen’s “Stealing Buddha’s Dinner” was the subject of many community projects across the state. The exhibit “Their Journey: Vietnamese in Michigan” was presented in six Michigan Communities. Marquette and East Lansing hosted the 2010 Michigan Author Homecoming, “Writing War: Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam,” featuring writers Benjamin Busch, Philip Caputo and Doug Stanton. For more on Great Michigan Read, see Page 4.

PRIME TIME FAMILY READING TIME*
Thirteen Michigan libraries were partners in offering families an opportunity to participate in Prime Time Family Reading Time*, a program that encourages reading and understanding through storytelling and group discussion. For more about Prime Time, see Page 5.

ARTS & HUMANITIES TOURING PROGRAM
From dance companies to displays of scientific wizardry, the Arts & Humanities Touring Program offers more than 204 programs that educate, enthrall and entertain. The Michigan Humanities Council provides community groups with grants to bring programs to every corner of the state. For more about the Arts & Humanities Touring Program, see Page 7.
Grants Bring Communities Together

The forests of west Michigan spawned a lumber industry that built communities and provided work for several generations of families.

In August of 2010, the White Lake Community Library celebrated that lumber heritage, while marking its own 50th anniversary as a district library and the 150th anniversary of the City of Whitehall.

A book, an art pamphlet, an art exhibit, workshops and a lively demonstration of the great days of loggers on the shores of Lake Michigan all came together in a packed weekend of activities, Our Lumbering Heritage: A Gift from the White Lake Community Library, Aug. 13-15. This combination of history, community, artistic expression and resonant entertainment was funded in part by a grant from the Michigan Humanities Council.

A cornerstone of the Michigan Humanities Council’s success is its ability to help build communities by awarding grants. “The Council supports programs that play a vital role in defining culture, the state, communities and individuals. Grants of up to $15,000 make those community projects possible,” said Bette Carlson, retired director of the White Lake Community Library, who shepherded the project.

Carlson said the library had some experience with a large exhibit by hosting the Smithsonian’s Key Ingredients exhibit on food traditions and had even published its own cookbook. The exhibit was toured by the Michigan Humanities Council. That inspired the idea of a book on the lumbering heritage of the White Lake communities, just north of Muskegon.

““There was a retired teacher, Daniel Yakes. His specialty was lumbering in the Muskegon and White Lakes areas. He had the documentation and was willing to write the book,” Carlson said.

The local history society joined the project by reissuing a revised version of a book featuring sepia reproductions of paintings of the area’s lumbering activities by artist Frederick Norman, who lived from 1846 to 1928. In addition, PNC Bank loaned some of the original paintings for exhibit during the festive weekend.

Entertaining and educational programs are being presented throughout Michigan by creative people telling our story. Cultural organizations rely on the Council’s leadership and connections to help design quality programs. Our funding opportunities are designed to be flexible enough to meet community needs.

Quick Grants Provide a Lift

Sometimes just a little help can make a big difference.

“‘That’s where the Michigan Humanities Council’s Quick Grants come into play. The Council awards grants of up to $500 to help projects that need just a bit of help to become a reality. In addition, the Council provides up to $1,000 in planning grants to help an organization in preparation and development for a future major humanities grant project. For 2010 the Council awarded more than 30 Quick/Planning Grants.

At the Bayliss Public Library in Sault Ste. Marie, a project helped introduce the Sgwa Karen immigrant community from Burma to their Upper Peninsula neighbors through films, storytelling, a book and music. A $500 Quick Grant helped make it possible.

The Karen (pronounced Ku Ren) were brutalized by the Burmese military, used as slave labor and forced into refugee camps in Thailand. When they were allowed to seek asylum in 2006, they settled in the Sault Ste. Marie area where they work, shop, attend school and church and are learning English.

“The reason we chose to do a program with the Karen was that we wanted to do a program of cultural understanding related to the Great Michigan Read that dealt with immigrants from Asia,” said Susan James, assistant director of the Bayliss Public Library. “We wanted to welcome this new immigrant group to our community and provide more information about them in a public program. We wanted members of the Karen community to share their stories in both a book and public program.”

The book Karen Women’s Folk Food and Stories is a compilation of stories told by the Karen women describing their lives in Burma. The book includes recipes of traditional Karen folk foods. The book was compiled by Sault author Leslie Askwith and has a cover painting by Lee Moo called Home.


This past October patrons of the Rochester Hills Public Library learned about the legacy of two great American presidents from the same privileged family, Theodore and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A Quick Grant helped make the four-week film-discussion series a reality.

“It allowed us to save $500 in funds that are so hard to come by,” said Lynne Fugate, adult services librarian. “I don’t know what we’re going to do next year.”

Dr. Gregory Sumner, a professor of 20th Century American History at the University of Detroit Mercy, has been presenting a history-themed film series at the Public Library for about 11 years.
Financial Statement

The programs featured in this report and scores more are supported by the Michigan Humanities Council. By investing in the Council, you help promote a society that values ideas, reflections, critical thinking, informed discussion, and reasoned action. Nurturing these abilities is especially crucial today, both for our individual futures and that of our state.

As you can see in the charts, the National Endowment for the Humanities accounted for 88% of the Council’s income in 2010. The remaining revenue comes from state funding from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, program income and fees and donations from individuals and businesses. That money makes a big difference, providing more flexibility in using the money where it is needed most.

There is another critical piece of the Council’s financial picture that is not reflected in these charts and tables; our ability to leverage in-kind and matching dollars for public humanities programs throughout the state. Last year, the Council provided $400,516 in direct support for humanities projects to hundreds of schools, libraries, historical societies, universities, community centers, museums and other nonprofits. In turn, these institutions marshaled Council funds with approximately $1,500,000 in additional funding for their programs. That’s more than a 3-to-1 return on our investment.

The Council is privileged to serve the citizens of Michigan, thanks to the generosity of the people and institutions you see on pages 14 and 15.

Statement of Financial Position
October 31, 2010

Assets
Unrestricted Cash ....................... $276,404
Investments in Certificates of Deposit .... $46,304
Grant Receivables ....................... $640,200
Accounts Receivable – Other .......... $300
Prepaid Expenses ....................... $2,088
Endowment Investments ................. $39,232
Accumulated Depreciation .............. $13,089
Rent Deposit ............................... $1,000
Total Assets ........................... $1,018,617

Liabilities
Accounts Payable ...................... $1,995
Accrued Expenses ...................... $10,684
Grants Contract Payable ............... $266,288
Deferred Grant Revenue ............... $415,591
Total Liabilities ....................... $694,558

Net Assets
Unrestricted ............................. $262,294
Temporarily Restricted ................. $27,495
Permanently Restricted ............... $34,270
Total Net Assets ....................... $324,059

Change in Net Assets ........................... $35,448

Statement of Activities
For the 12 Months Ended October 31, 2010

Revenue
Grants .................................. $1,045,467
Events .................................. $23,445
Annual Giving ......................... $32,247
Endowment ........................... $1,570
Interest Income ....................... $2,266
Total Revenue ....................... $1,104,995

Expenses
Compensation ....................... $431,984
Grants ............................. $400,516
Professional Fees, Honoraria, Contracted Services ........... $107,205
Operating Expenses ................ $126,130
Other ................................. $3,712
Total Expenses ...................... $1,069,547

Change in Net Assets ...................... $35,448

For every dollar the Council invested in community-based humanities programs, three dollars were leveraged in additional support.

On the following pages are hundreds of individuals, businesses, and institutions who are making the Michigan Humanities Council a more powerful force for exploring, understanding, and revitalizing Michigan’s communities.
The Michigan Humanities Council gratefully acknowledges the generous support provided by the following individuals, businesses, and charitable institutions.

**Contributions During the Fiscal Year 2010**

**$10,000 or more**
- The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities
- Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs

**$5,000 to $9,999**
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- W.K. Kellogg Fund of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation

**$1,000 to $4,999**
- Edward W. & Louise Frazee
- The Founding
- Timothy Chester & Henry Matthews
- Christian & John Wessels
- Susan R. & John F. Stempfel

**$500 to $999**
- The Council's work would not be possible without these partnerships – thank you!

**$99 or less**
- The Council would like to acknowledge the in-kind services, program space, and personal time donated this year that helped to make our Council-conducted programs successful. Our very special thanks go out to:

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Annual Report 2010