Michigan Humanities Council
Michigan People, Michigan Places
Council Announces
Picturing America in Michigan
Supporting Programs for Picturing America Schools

The Michigan Humanities Council announces Picturing America in Michigan, a series of supporting programs for Michigan’s 900-plus Picturing America schools and libraries. Funding for Picturing America in Michigan is provided in part by a $149,450 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Picturing America is a National Endowment for the Humanities initiative that utilizes art as a tool for exploring American history. Participating schools and libraries receive a set of 40 large-format reproductions of American art masterpieces ranging from Native American baskets to photographs from the Civil Rights era. A resource guide augments the prints.

The Council’s supporting programs include a museum partnership, a high school documentary program, and a teacher seminar series.

Twelve of Michigan’s leading art museums are partnering with the Council to offer museum visits and in-class programs designed to complement the Picturing America prints. Programs range from docent-led tours of American art at the Detroit Institute of Arts to in-class programs featuring Native American art from the DeVos Art Museum at Northern Michigan University.

The Council offers funding to offset program fees and transportation (including busing) for eligible classrooms and libraries. The museum partnership begins November 1, 2008 and concludes at the end of the 2008-09 school year.

Students at 14 Picturing America high schools will develop their own visions of America in the Picturing Your Community in America documentary program. Producers from Michigan Television (WFUM) will teach the basics of documentary filmmaking to teachers and students, who will shoot still photographs and record audio interviews to create a short film exploring their community’s role in American history.

In-class producer visits begin in January 2009. In May 2009, the documentaries will be exhibited online, creating a mosaic of videos from high school students in all corners of the state.

Teachers from Picturing America classrooms are eligible to attend a seminar series presented by museum professionals and college professors. Held at museums and universities statewide, topics include themes in American art history and suggestions for incorporating art into social studies curricula. The Council will cover seminar fees and travel expenses. Seminars are scheduled for January-May 2009.

Program descriptions and application instructions for the Michigan Humanities Council’s Picturing America in Michigan program can be found online at www.michiganhumanities.org/picturingamerica.

Applying for Picturing America
Teachers may apply to the National Endowment for the Humanities to receive the Picturing America prints and resource guide (next deadline: October 31, 2008) at picturingamerica.neh.gov

For a listing of participating Museums and Schools Offering the Picturing America in Michigan program, see page 2.

Quick Grants
Help Boost Public Humanities Programming
How Kellogg Community College used quick grants to support a dialogue on Jewish identity

Engaging the public through programs that enhance cultural understanding is an important goal of the Michigan Humanities Council. One way the Council accomplishes this is by providing resources to nonprofit organizations in the form of quick grants of up to $500 each. Organizations can apply year-round to help bring humanities opportunities to communities throughout the state.

A recent program funded by a quick grant was “Let’s Talk About It,” hosted at Kellogg Community College (KCC) in September and October. The program was a reading and discussion series focusing on Jewish identity and culture. Each meeting in the bi-weekly series used a different piece of Jewish literature to frame discussion on the theme of “Between Two Worlds: Stories of Estrangement and Homecoming.” Literature selected for the program series included: Exodus; Lost in Translation by Eva Hoffman; The Centaur in the Garden by Moacyr Scliar; Katerinka Falls by Allegra Goodman; and, Out of Egypt by André Aciman.

“The series has far exceeded our expectations,” said Martha Stilwell, director of library services at KCC and the project’s director. “We are seeing people who have not come together before become engaged in meaningful cultural conversation.” Up to 40 individuals participated in each of the sessions, including members from the community, Lakeview High School, and Temple Beth El. Stilwell noted the success of the program was demonstrated with a majority of the participants coming from outside the KCC campus. Furthermore, two college courses incorporated sessions from the series into their fall curriculum—“Narratives of the Immigration Experience in America” at KCC and “Significant Literary Works” at Miller College.

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Three Civic Leaders Join Council’s Board of Directors

In 2008, the Michigan Humanities Council welcomed three new members to its Board of Directors: two appointed by Governor Jennifer Granholm and the other elected by the board.

Marcia Warner of Grand Rapids is the director of the Grand Rapids Public Library, a position she has held since 2004. Prior experience includes being the director of the Public Libraries of Saginaw from 2001-2004 and as an associate director of the Library from 1998-2001. Other prior experiences include serving at the head of the Hoyt Library in Saginaw, as a library development coordinator of the White Pine Library Cooperative, and as the director of the Battleford Sanford Memorial Library in Vassar. She served as the president of the Michigan Library Association and currently serves on the boards of directors of the Public Library Association, the West Michigan Women’s Study Council, and the North American Choral Company Board.

Ed Bagale of Bloomfield Hills is the vice chair of the Hauenstein College of Business at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Bagale is the president of government relations office, serving in that capacity.

Eva Evans of Lansing is a retired internist and assistant superintendent for human resources and diversity superintendent for the Lansing Public School District. She has more than 30 years of experience with the Lansing schools, including service in educational planning, as an assistant principal, English teacher, and elementary school teacher. Evans is a founder of the Lansing Association of Black Organizations and a former commissioner to the state.

The vision of the Michigan Humanities Council is to encourage individual initiative for public understanding and engagement in the cultures, histories, and values which will sustain the arts, music, and the humanities.

Mission

The Michigan Humanities Council connects people and communities by fostering and creating quality cultural programs.

Designed by: Media Graphics, Inc. Lansing, MI
Changing School Culture with Poetry Out Loud

Transportation Grants Available to Help Schools Attend Cultural Programs

The Michigan Humanities Council has awarded grants to help schools attend cultural programs.

Be a Part of Michigan’s Arts & Humanities Touring Directory

The Michigan Humanities Council is now accepting applications for the 2009-12 Arts & Humanities Touring Program.

Cultural Tourism, Arts Education, and the Arts & Humanities Touring Program in Lapeer

Aims and humanities programming in Michigan's school system has an important role in the ability of youth to learn from the arts and humanities programs and to experience their potential impact on the community. We want students to have their work exhibited gives them a whole new perspective and it inspires them. And, the student artwork will remain on display through November 14, 2008. The exhibit display of student artwork will remain on display through November 14, 2008.

Transportation Grants Available for Arts and Humanities Programs

The Michigan Humanities Council received a $225,000 grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) to implement a variety of statewide arts and cultural programs over the next year. The grants will provide nonprofit organizations to help fund the cost to best practices and performance in the state.

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I have been involved in public programming in the humanities in Michigan for over 20 years, and I find myself reflecting from time to time on this question: “What is needed for involved in public humanities to prosper?” What, in other words, needs to be present for our communities and state to be enriched by the insights that the humanities bring to our lives?

A good place to start is with members of the public. The level of public interest in the humanities is overwhelming. One of the things I learned this year when I participated in The Great Michigan Read was how many book clubs there are in Michigan. These clubs meet regularly and enthusiastically discuss和支持 the richness of our common past.

Thank you for your support.

Doug Haneline
Executive Director
In September, South Haven Memorial Library concluded its session of PRIME TIME Family Reading Time® using a bilingual Hispanic book syllabus. Approximately 20-25 families attended, many of whom were seasonal workers. To their credit, the workers brought their children (preschoolers and 6-10 year-olds) into the library after working in the fields until sundown. Several families did not speak English or spoke very little English. Scholar and storyteller, Ruth Heinig, used an expressive and engaging reading style to tell the week’s designated story in English while showing the pictures to everyone in the room. The children sat in rapt attention. Translator and storyteller Leonor Murphy would repeat the reading in Spanish. Oftentimes there was chuckling and shaking of heads by the parents as Leonor interpreted and dramatized the story. Hands shot up in the air when the children were asked to express their feelings about the story’s theme. While bouncing in their seats, their unsolicited answers tumbled out. The children gave their parents’ insight into what they were thinking and how they interpreted the reading. Parents were able to respond in a positive way that reflected nurturing and direction without seeming parental.

As part of PRIME TIME®, South Haven’s local businesses donated food each week for families to partake in a meal prior to reading and discussion. The public school system purchased $10 gas cards each week to enable families to drive in from outlying areas. Without the meals and the transportation support, many families would have been unable to participate in this unique literacy program. Maybe the most telling statement was from South Haven librarian Deborah Root Jones, who noted that the favorite door prize for all participating families was their new library card.

"The Michigan Humanities Council clearly supports and is looking forward to continuing PRIME TIME®," said Jan Fedewa, the Council’s executive director. "The Saginaw and South Haven programs have had tremendous impact on families’ lives. PRIME TIME® has succeeded in getting people to read and into libraries."

PRIME TIME® continues through October 29 at the Butman-Fish Branch of the Public Libraries of Saginaw, and through November 5 at the Detroit Public Library’s Campbell Branch Library at Lawndale Station.