



West Virginia Folklife Seeks Applications for 2017-2018 Statewide Folklife Apprenticeship Program

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Charleston—The West Virginia Folklife Program, a project of the West Virginia Humanities Council, is now accepting applications for its inaugural statewide Folklife Apprenticeship Program. The program offers up to a \$3,000 stipend to West Virginia master traditional artists or tradition bearers working with qualified apprentices on a year-long in-depth apprenticeship in their cultural expression or traditional art form. These apprenticeships, offered to masters of traditional music, dance, craft, foodways, storytelling, and more—in any cultural community in the Mountain State—aim to facilitate the transmission of techniques and artistry of the forms as well as their histories and traditions. Applications are available at wvhumanities.org/folklifeapprenticeships or by calling state folklorist Emily Hilliard at (304)346-8500 and are due October 15, 2017.

The West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program will support up to five pairs of master traditional artists and their apprentices, culminating in a final free public showcase in Charleston in September 2018. Master/apprentice pairs will also hold a public presentation in their home communities. “We are thrilled to launch this new program that will strengthen the transmission of cultural heritage traditions between generations in communities across the state, inspire new practitioners, and recognize existing masters,” says state folklorist Emily Hilliard. This initiative reinvigorates a similar program run by folklorist Gerry Milnes at the Augusta Heritage Center from 1989-2011. Milnes is a member of the Humanities Council board and serves as a West Virginia Folklife advisor.

The apprenticeship program grants are administered by the West Virginia Folklife Program at the West Virginia Humanities Council in Charleston and are supported in part by an Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. West Virginia Folklife is dedicated to the documentation, preservation, presentation, and support of West Virginia’s vibrant cultural heritage and living traditions.

For more information on the West Virginia Folklife Program, visit wvfolklife.org and <http://wvhumanities.org/programs/west-virginia-folklife-program/> or contact Emily Hilliard at hilliard@wvhumanities.org or (304)346-8500.

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The West Virginia Humanities Council is a nonprofit corporation governed by a board of directors whose members are drawn from all parts of West Virginia. It is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, supported by the NEH, the State of West Virginia, and by contributions from the private sector. The purposes of the West Virginia Humanities Council are educational, and its mission is to support a vigorous program in the humanities statewide in West Virginia.