

Report Card

and Annual Honor Roll



The West Virginia Humanities Council, an independent nonpartisan nonprofit, is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council is supported by the NEH, the State of West Virginia, and 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.

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The next Board Meeting is April 23, 2021. It is open to the public.

West Virginia Humanities Council
1310 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, WV 25301
(304)346-8500 (304)346-8504 (fax)
whuman@whumanities.org

Visit the West Virginia Encyclopedia at www.wvencyclopedia.org

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In 2020, the West Virginia Humanities Council delivered grants, programs, and educational content to hundreds of thousands of West Virginians, and to audiences around the world. Our original online and digital programming was enjoyed by more than 8,600 viewers; and grants and programs were delivered to 43 West Virginia counties, even as we observed public health and social distancing advisories.



Executive Director
Eric Waggoner

◀ The Council premiered the audiobook series *Mysterious Mondays*, featuring annotated readings of the "Uncle Abner" detective stories by West Virginia author Melville Davisson Post. Featured stories were drawn from the *West Virginia Classics* book series, a collaborative project of the Council and WVU Press.

Upon nomination by State Folklorist Emily Hilliard, Clay County fiddler and banjo player John Morris was named a 2020 National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellow.

Humanities Council grants funded historic walking- and driving-tour signs in Star City, Weston, Davis, Nitro, and the Sandy Creek area in McDowell and Mingo counties.

We continued our partnership with the William G. Pomeroy Foundation to administer the national Legends & Lore Roadside Marker Program in the state of West Virginia, supporting the installation of six new roadside markers.

West Virginia Folklife collected documentation of West Virginians' creative responses to COVID-19, ▶ including music, stories, writing, craft, art, memes, mask-making, and more.

The 1863 Club, the Council's first formal cultivation society, welcomed its inaugural cohort of supporters in January 2020 and enters the new year with 28 active members.

e-WV, *The West Virginia Encyclopedia* online, was accessed by 406,973 users from every state in the USA and 192 other nations and provinces. In all, *e-WV* recorded 1.2 million page views in 2020.

The Council awarded funding for new museum exhibits in Beverly, Morgantown, Matewan, Keyser, Fort Ashby, and Lewisburg.

In 2020 the Humanities Council awarded 45 grants in 21 counties throughout the state. Also, the Council awarded over \$420,000 in CARES Act funding to 49 cultural organizations and institutions in 24 counties.

We welcomed the second class of the NEA-funded West Virginia ▶ Folklife Apprenticeship Program, supporting seven master-apprentice pairs throughout the state.

The 2020 Little Lectures series was delivered online this year, allowing viewers throughout the state to enjoy one of the Council's most popular annual programs. The full series is available on the Council's YouTube channel.

With help from the Council's CARES Act grants, organizations such as the Point Pleasant River Museum, the historic Cockayne Farmstead in Glen Dale, and the Pearl S. Buck Birthplace were able to continue operations, despite revenue lost due to the pandemic.



◀ Our Virtual West Virginia Day celebration brought a full day of Mountain State content to viewers across social media and on the Council's main website. Highlights included a pepperoni roll-making tutorial, musical performances by our West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship pairs, and a comprehensive multimedia exhibit on the history of the Council's home office, Charleston's historic MacFarland-Hubbard House.

History Alive! added six living history characters, bringing the total active roster to 15, and expanded availability to include virtual performances.

Nine fellowships were awarded to scholars in locations around the state.

◀ Civil War era cannonball discovered during MacFarland-Hubbard House renovations; photo by Michael Keller



Items collected as creative responses to COVID-19



Master Artist Kathy Evans with apprentice Margaret Bruning



Michael Keller

Dear Friends:

First and foremost, the West Virginia Humanities Council's Board and staff send you our very best wishes, and hope this letter reaches you and yours in health and good spirits.

Let's begin with a wild understatement: 2020 was a year filled with unexpected challenges. Beginning in March, like all public institutions, the Council quickly had to rethink every aspect of its daily operations. Still, though our work became much more challenging, new opportunities for innovation and expansion opened up for us as well. As we review the past year, we're happy to note that not only did the Council deliver on its standing mission, we expanded our footprint significantly and sustainably. We accomplished everything we do in a "normal" year, and much more besides; and the momentum we've created will allow us to reach wider audiences than ever in the future.

With the assistance of the National Endowment for the Humanities, through the Congressional CARES Act the Council provided over \$420,000 in general operating support funds to West Virginia cultural organizations and nonprofits that were hurt financially by COVID-19. These are the historical societies, local preservation groups, community humanities programs, and educational initiatives throughout the state that help to preserve and share West Virginia's rich, vibrant cultural life. The majority of these organizations operate on shoestring budgets, with a very small but dedicated staff, to bring the story of the Mountain State to the public. Even a minor impact to operational revenue can have a catastrophic effect. CARES Act funding provided by the Council allowed dozens of these organizations to avoid staff layoffs and meet expenses during a time of unprecedented instability.

During that same period, the Council arranged to deliver our popular Little Lectures and *History Alive!* programs in virtual and digital formats. We also secured, for the first time in our history, the capacity to develop, produce, and deliver new original digital programming entirely in-house. As a result we are reaching wider audiences, in and out of state, than ever before; last month alone, the Council delivered content to over 40,000 viewers across our social and public media platforms. Even as we gradually (and safely) return to hosting in-person events in the future, we will continue to make original programming available in digital forms to audiences everywhere in West Virginia and beyond.

Throughout 2020, the Council maintained regular operations without pause. We delivered grant funding on time and as scheduled, created new partnerships, finished the year on sound financial footing, and, per our mission, successfully promoted a vigorous program in the humanities statewide.

In this work we were, and are, joined by our supporters in the West Virginia State Legislature through the Department of Arts, Culture and History; and of course by you, our friends and members. Public support of the Council's work never once flagged throughout this difficult year. As we turn optimistically to a new year, we are committed to honoring your investment and your faith in our work.

Thank you, friends. One and all.

Sincerely,

Dr. Billy Joe Peyton, Board President

Our work in 2020 was made possible by the generous support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History, and many other organizations and individuals. Our donor honor roll follows.

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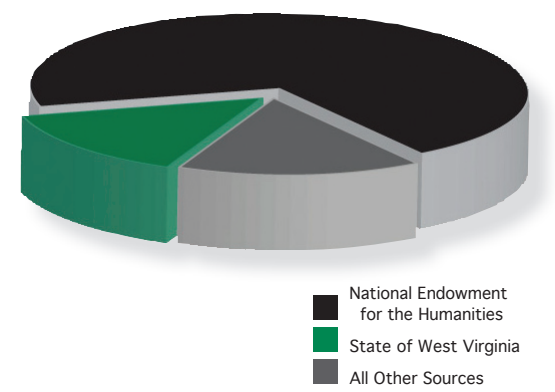
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Our finances

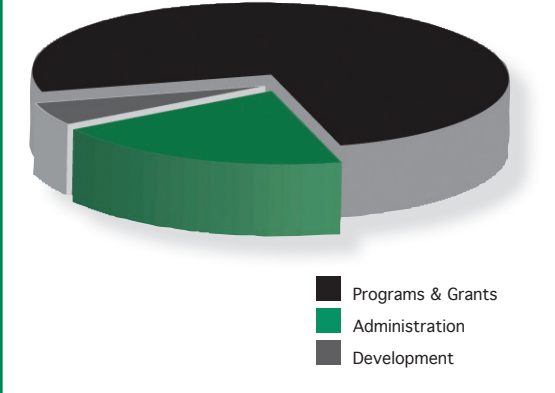
In 2020 the Council met all of its grantmaking and funding obligations on time and as scheduled. The COVID-19 pandemic caused the cancellation, postponement, or conversion to virtual delivery of most grant-related and programming events between March and December, resulting in an abnormal reduction of expected annual expenses. The Council has opted to hold the resulting net income in reserve as we enter the new year, anticipating at least some ongoing disruption of regular activity.

REVENUE	
National Endowment for the Humanities	\$754,300
Congressional CARES Act funds	\$452,667
State of West Virginia	\$250,000
All other sources	<u>\$275,068</u>
Total revenues	\$1,732,035
EXPENSES	
Programs & Grants	
grants	\$310,202
direct programs	\$258,781
Congressional CARES Act grants	\$422,231
related expenses	<u>\$185,272</u>
total programs and grants	\$1,176,486
Administrative	\$310,267
Development	<u>\$ 87,125</u>
Total expenses	\$1,573,878
Net Income	\$158,157



Where the money came from...

The National Endowment for the Humanities, a federal agency, remains our largest source of income. The NEH provided \$754,300 in regular Council operating funds in 2020, up from \$722,500 in the previous year. In addition, through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act the NEH provided the Council with \$452,667 in support and regrant funding to aid the Council in giving economic assistance to West Virginia cultural institutions impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. CARES Act funding was a one-time disbursement, and will not be repeated. Including one-time CARES Act funds, the NEH provided the Council with \$1,206,967 in 2020 (70 percent of total revenue). The West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History provided \$250,000 (14 percent), equal to the amount given in 2019. The remaining \$275,068 (16 percent) came largely from the private sector, including individual gifts and corporation and foundation support, plus \$54,350 from the National Endowment for the Arts.



...and where the money went.

In 2020, 75 percent of Humanities Council expenses went to programs and grants, 20 percent to administration, and five percent to development.

Looking back, 2020 was a period of significant one-time fluctuation in Council revenue and expenses. We rerouted resources from in-person legacy programming to virtual programming and program conversion, and significantly increased our grantmaking in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking forward, we anticipate a slow return to predictable revenue and expense patterns throughout 2021. Our Board has approved a budget of \$1,451,300 for 2021, representing an increase of \$36,800 over our 2020 budget.

The figures and charts shown here are based on actual, unaudited financial information as reported internally to management and the Board of Directors. The West Virginia Humanities Council is audited annually by an independent auditor, with each year's audit available for public inspection by April of the following year. Fiscal year 2020 ended October 31.

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