



Humanities Council Receives State Folklorist Funds from NEA

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Charleston – The West Virginia Humanities Council has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to fund a state folklorist position. The federal funds were awarded through the NEA’s State Partnership Grant Program, which the agency says “extends its reach to every community in America.” This was the second major grant announcement by the NEA for fiscal year 2015 with 1,023 awards totaling \$74,326,900 granted to nonprofit arts organizations in all 50 states plus five U.S. jurisdictions.

Following a rigorous application process, the West Virginia Humanities Council received its grant in the Folk & Traditional Arts category to support the state folklorist position. “West Virginia’s long history of folk culture and practice of folklore will be revitalized by hiring a professional folklorist to perform infrastructure programs that support folk and traditional arts in the state. The state folklorist will conduct a field survey reviewing and documenting current folk and cultural activities, expand opportunities for folk artists through consultations and assistance to folk projects, and develop a comprehensive plan for revitalizing an ongoing state program,” the NEA wrote.

The NEA also directed funds to the West Virginia Division of Culture & History Arts Section in Charleston, the Wheeling Symphony, and Allegheny Echoes in Marlinton. The Humanities Council consulted with the Division of Culture and History in developing its application for the state folklorist funds.

Founded in 1974, the West Virginia Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization serving West Virginia through grants and direct programs in the humanities. Humanities Council

executive director Ken Sullivan previously served as editor of *Goldenseal* magazine at the Division of Culture and History, as well as the state folklife director. He recently was awarded the Vandalia Award, the state's highest folklife honor. "West Virginia has a rich folk culture and a long history of the practice of folklore, but surprisingly few folklorists," Sullivan said. "We want to hire a professional who will do the job of a state folklorist, including assessing the current knowledge we have in the field, collaborating with those engaged in folklife activities, expanding the opportunities for folk artists, and developing a plan for an ongoing state program."

Those interested in applying for the job should contact the West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Blvd. E., Charleston, WV 25301, call 304-346-8500, or email Sullivan@wvhumanities.org.

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