



**West Virginia Folklife Program Partners with William G. Pomeroy Foundation to Bring National Folklore Roadside Marker Program to the Mountain State**

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**Contact: Emily Hilliard 304.346.8500  
hilliard@wvhumanities.org**

Charleston – Stories of West Virginia’s rich folklore and cultural heritage will be featured on roadside markers at sites across the state, thanks to a partnership between the West Virginia Folklife Program at the West Virginia Humanities Council and the William G. Pomeroy Foundation.

The West Virginia Folklife Program at the West Virginia Humanities Council will serve as a grant evaluator for the Pomeroy Foundation’s expanding national Legends & Lore Marker Grant Program, helping to commemorate and share West Virginia folklore and cultural heritage. The Folklife Program is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and is dedicated to the documentation, preservation, preservation and support of West Virginia’s vibrant cultural heritage and living traditions. Established by the Pomeroy Foundation in 2015, the Legends & Lore marker program is designed to promote cultural tourism and commemorate legends and folklore as part of cultural heritage.

“The Pomeroy Foundation is thrilled to partner with the West Virginia Humanities Council on our expanding Legends & Lore program,” says Bill Pomeroy, founder and trustee of the Pomeroy Foundation. “We feel this is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the folklore near and dear to West Virginia. We’re proud to work with your communities in celebrating and preserving your folklore and legends.”

The Pomeroy Foundation is a private, grant-making foundation based in Syracuse, NY, that helps people celebrate their community’s history through a variety of historic signage grant programs, including Legends & Lore. The Foundation’s grants cover the entire cost of a marker, pole, and shipping.

“West Virginia’s folklore and cultural heritage are among the Mountain State’s greatest assets,” says state folklorist Emily Hilliard. “These living traditions belong to all West Virginians and showcase our unique history and vibrant creativity. We look forward to working with the Pomeroy Foundation to bring awareness to these stories through partnerships with diverse communities across the state.”

As a Legends & Lore grant evaluator, the Folklife Program will be responsible for reviewing applications, as well as confirming the legitimacy and accuracy of folklore and legends that applicants in West Virginia intend to commemorate on a marker. Legends & Lore marker grants are available to 501(c)(3)

organizations, nonprofit academic institutions and municipalities in West Virginia. The first round of grant applications are due May 1, 2019.

Working with its first partner organization, New York Folklore, the Pomeroy Foundation's Legends & Lore program has already helped more than 35 communities in New York State to commemorate their own fascinating local stories. One of those Legends & Lore markers celebrates Ichabod Crane of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." It's said that this famous Washington Irving character was based on a real schoolteacher named Jesse Merwin in Kinderhook, New York.

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

#### **About the West Virginia Humanities Council**

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 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.

#### **About the Pomeroy Foundation**

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation is a private, grant-making foundation established in 2005. The Foundation is committed to supporting the celebration and preservation of community history; and to raising awareness, supporting research and improving the quality of care for patients and their families who are facing a blood cancer diagnosis. To date, the Foundation has awarded more than 800 grants for historic signage in New York State and beyond. Visit: [www.wgpfoundation.org](http://www.wgpfoundation.org)

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