



## ***Preserve America Summit Issue Areas Panel Report***

### **Coordinating the Stewardship and Use of Our Cultural Patrimony**

#### ***Executive Summary***

The Preserve America panel on “Coordinating the Stewardship and Use of Cultural Patrimony” brought together local, state and national professionals engaged in preserving and nurturing our nation’s cultural patrimony.

The group of 13 experts from nonprofit cultural organizations and 11 officials of five cultural agencies met in Jackson, MS and discussed the preservation and conservation needs of our nation’s cultural and historic collections, consisting of documents, artifacts, artistic works, and other cultural expressions. The panel discussed five issue areas:

1. Rescuing and Restoring Gulf Coast Cultural Resources and Collections
2. Coordinating Gulf Coast Cultural Conservation and Preservation Activities
3. Health of U.S. Artifacts and Cultural Collections
4. Cultural Development for Economic Revitalization
5. Private and Public Funding for the Preservation of U.S. Cultural Patrimony.

With a panel consisting of representatives from all of Mississippi’s cultural agencies, there was full discussion of how they prepared for, survived and, now a year later, are beginning to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. It became apparent that survival and recovery had forged new bonds and common purpose that could serve as a model for other states and communities. The panel learned what had worked and what had not in securing recovery assistance in Mississippi.

The panel also heard of the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the “culture bearers” of New Orleans and the need to rebuild housing for artists, musicians and others so they can pass on traditions to new generations in the city. The issues of historic preservation without displacing low income housing, the impact of urban sprawl on America’s landscape, and the role cultural institutions play in the vitality of America’s cities were discussed. All agreed that culture must be rooted in place and that culture gives a community distinctive characteristics that should be documented, sustained and valued as essential assets for a vital future.

The panel focused on the findings of the Heritage Health Index, a 2005 project of Heritage Preservation and the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the first comprehensive survey ever conducted of the condition and preservation needs of our nation's cultural, historic, and scientific collections, consisting of more than 4.8 billion artifacts, rare books and documents, natural science specimens, and art, historic and ethnographic objects. The panel discussed the need for more public recognition and understanding of the value of the collections held in public trust by our nation's more than 30,000 museums, libraries, and archives and the requirements for the safe care of these collections. Reminded that most hurricane survivors had saved photographs first and used local libraries as community centers, the panel opined that perhaps advocacy for libraries, archives, museums and historic houses should focus on their role as keepers of memories and as “glue” that holds a community together.

In response, the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services announced a major conference on conservation of collections to be held in Washington, D.C. in June 2007.

The panel’s discussions resulted in **five findings**:

1. The nation’s cultural collections are in danger.
2. National, state and local efforts to conserve cultural collections should be undertaken and sustained; the private sector also has an important role to play in conservation.
3. Cultural institutions and collections should be included in state emergency preparedness plans.
4. Working artists and cultural institutions are essential to the vitality of a community.
5. Collaboration across disciplines and institutions will result in a stronger voice and more effective advocacy for stewardship of our cultural patrimony.

**Based on these findings, the panel provided five ideas for consideration:**

**Idea 1:** The conservation of cultural collections must become an essential and central aspect of the basic mission of every cultural institution.

**Idea 2:** Cultural organizations must give the highest priority to educating board members, donors, and members of the general public about the critical importance of providing funds for the conservation of core collections and preservation of historic properties.

**Idea 3:** Cultural organizations, state agencies and associations should work together to shape local and statewide preparedness and to use regional collaboratives for response to and recovery from disasters.

**Idea 4:** Artists and cultural institutions are essential to the economic vitality of a community.

**Idea 5:** State and local cultural institutions should collaborate to build support and public recognition of how their services benefit the community.

## ***Expert Panel Focus and Methodology***

### Federal Agency Co-Chairs

Anne-Imelda Radice, Director, Institute of Museum and Library Services  
Ann Guthrie Hingston, Director of Government Affairs, National Endowment  
for the Arts  
Carole Watson, Acting Deputy Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities  
Henry Moran, Executive Director, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

### Non-Federal Partner

Diantha Schull, President, Americans for Libraries Council

### Expert Panelists

Carol Coletta, President, CEOs for Cities  
Claudia Garofalo, Director of Development, National Performance Network  
H.T. Holmes, Director, Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Patrick Hotard, Executive Director, Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis Home &  
Presidential Library  
Kristen Overbeck Laise, Director, Heritage Health Index, Heritage Preservation, Inc.,  
Rick Lowe, Founding Director, Project Row Houses  
George McDaniel, Executive Director, Drayton Hall  
David Preziosi, Executive Director, Mississippi Heritage Trust  
Sharman Smith, Executive Director, Mississippi Library Commission  
Nick Spitzer, Professor of Folklore & Cultural Conservation, University of New Orleans;  
Host/Producer of public radio program, "American Routes"  
Malcolm White, Executive Director, Mississippi Arts Commission  
Julia Marks Young, Director, Archives and Library Division, Mississippi Department  
of Archives and History

### Facilitation and Staff

Andrea Anderson, National Endowment for the Humanities  
Michael McLaughlin, National Initiatives Coordinator, National Endowment for the Arts  
Malcolm Richardson, National Endowment for the Humanities  
Marsha Semmel, Deputy Director for Museums, Institute of Museum and Library  
Services  
Ellen Schlachter, Assistant to the Director, Institute of Museum and Library Services  
Jeff Speck, Director of Design, National Endowment for the Arts  
Anthony Tighe, Federal Partnerships Coordinator, National Endowment for the Arts

## Findings

### 1. The nation's cultural collections are in danger.

The nation's cultural patrimony resides in its collections of cultural and historic objects – documents, artifacts, artistic works, and other cultural expressions – under the care of public and private institutions. Some 4.8 billion objects are held in public trust by America's cultural and historical institutions including more than 30,000 archives, historical societies, libraries, museums, historic sites, scientific research collections, archaeological repositories, and cultural centers.

The participants in the Jackson meeting heard a presentation by Kristin Laise of Heritage Preservation, Inc., on *A Public Trust at Risk*, the report from the IMLS-funded Heritage Health Index (HHI). The HHI, the first comprehensive survey ever conducted of the conditions and preservation needs of our nation's cultural and historical collections found that roughly 190 million objects are in need of conservation treatment. Immediate action is needed to prevent the loss of millions of irreplaceable artifacts, manuscripts and other cultural records.

The report concluded that:

1. Sixty-five percent of collecting institutions have experienced damage to collections due to improper storage.
2. Eighty percent of U.S. collecting institutions do not have an emergency plan that includes collections, with staff trained to carry it out.
3. Forty percent of collecting institutions have no funds allocated in their annual budgets for preservation/conservation.

The report calls on individuals in the private sector and at all levels of government to assume responsibility for providing support that will allow collections to survive.

The Heritage Health Index reports that the collections held in our institutions need attention – 40% of the institutions surveyed do not have conservation/preservation built into their annual budgets. How can we gain public interest and public support for the collections held in our cultural institutions?

There was also discussion of the serious needs of museums of Native American tribal groups and African American historical and cultural collections. IMLS is engaged in providing funding to help conserve their artifacts. All federal cultural agencies – National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, Institute of Museum and Library Services – provide grants for conservation of collections.

Participants noted that often cultural institutions chose to apply for funding not for conservation needs but for more visible projects. Also, some cultural and historical organizations, particularly smaller organizations, do not have the capacities or training to prepare grants to federal, state, or private organizations, leading to gaps in documentation

and care of local collections that may have broader cultural significance. The panel discussed the need for individuals, and government and foundation/corporate funders to provide support necessary for collections to survive. They also discussed the fact that in some institutions and locales there are still incomplete inventories of existing cultural and historic resources.

Dr. Anne Radice announced that, in honor of the tenth anniversary of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, IMLS will place a national spotlight on the state of collections in the United States and develop strategies to address four key issues raised in the Heritage Health Index. The initiative activities include a national summit on conservation on June 27-28, 2007; a series of regional meetings around the country to bring national attention to collections care and preservation; and a conservation bookshelf for small institutions that will provide basic texts and resources on conservation planning and treatment, disaster readiness, and other conservation issues.

**2. National, state and local efforts to conserve cultural collections should be undertaken and sustained; the private sector also has an important role to play in conservation.**

Across the nation, cultural organizations should be supported in ways that enable them not only to survive but also to fulfill their mission of conservation for the long term. There needs to be more public recognition and understanding of the value of cultural collections held in public trust by our nation's museums, libraries, and archives and the requirements for the safe care of these collections. These collections constitute not only the "memory" of our communities, but collectively tell America's story. They are irreplaceable. Objects, images and documents are to our communities what our family Bibles, family photo albums and wedding dresses are to individuals. For their part, our nation's repositories need to make these collections more accessible to the public, teachers, students and other audiences so that their significance in the local community, as well as the American story, can be understood and appreciated.

The panel found that the governing boards of our cultural and historical organizations need more education regarding the critical importance of allocating funds for the conservation of core collections and historic properties. Grant programs can be incentives for giving higher priority to the conservation function; public agencies at the state and federal levels can provide leadership and can coordinate message and educational activities to encourage more attention to documenting and conserving historic and cultural assets as a core function. For instance, there are seven regional preservation field service programs across the nation that offer cultural organizations surveys, workshops, and disaster assistance necessary for preservation efforts.

Private funding for the arts has been uneven with relatively little funding designated for collections care outside of major museums. There needs to be a strategy for reaching private and foundation grantmakers to change this trend. The Heritage Health Index Report is an important example of how important research can be to provide the evidence necessary for cultural resource advocacy. The cultural community could also do more to showcase effective examples of public-private partnerships.

### **3. Cultural institutions and collections should be included in state emergency preparedness plans.**

The panel that met in Jackson, Mississippi included the Director of the Mississippi State Department of Archives and History, the State Historic Preservation Office and representatives of the Mississippi Humanities Council, the Mississippi Arts Commission, and the State Library Commission, all of whom reported on the devastation Hurricane Katrina brought to the state's museums, libraries and historic structures. There was full discussion of how they prepared, survived and, now a year later, are beginning to recover.

In telling their story, it became apparent that the experience of Mississippi cultural officials should be written, archived and distributed for the benefit of other states and communities. The panelists focused on what worked and what did not. Among the many recommendations is the need for cultural institutions to have their own disaster preparedness plans and have staff trained in them. Another key recommendation is for coordination across agencies on an ongoing basis and sharing of information about potential sources of expertise and assistance in future emergencies.

The Mississippi participants underscored the need for communication above all. They discussed the importance of having a network for speedy alerts of pending disasters and a plan in which the needs of the cultural buildings, collections and staff are known by State emergency preparedness officials. A representative of cultural organizations should be part of the state emergency communications network.

Emergency funding from the federal cultural agencies and assistance teams of museum conservators were applauded. Yet there were basic practical issues involved in deploying or accessing emergency funding. How can a donor agency reach staff? How can an organization write a grant application without electricity or telephone service? How do you give traffic directions when landmarks are gone?

In Mississippi, it became apparent that survival and recovery had forged new bonds and common purpose that could serve as a model for other states and communities. Led by the state humanities council, key representatives of the major historical and cultural agencies have established a "Culture Club" that continues to share information and meet regularly.

### **4. Working artists and cultural institutions are essential to the vitality of a community.**

Several participants also noted that America's cultural patrimony includes artists and living practitioners of folk and traditional arts as well as the texts, objects and buildings of the nation's libraries and museums. These "bearers" of culture represents a significant and irreplaceable part of our collective national memory. Culture activities are an authentic expression, a reminder of who we are, and are essential for the preservation *and* ongoing evolution of American culture.

Culture must be rooted in place. Collections of material culture, artistic activities, historic sites and buildings, attract investment and economic development professionals are increasingly including the arts as a component of community development. Artists, cultural institutions and historic preservation entities working together can create the environmental characteristics of a vital city: talented, connective, innovative and distinctive. Including culture in economic development or revitalization strategies is promising, but requires clarity and thoughtfulness.

We have lost many historic and cultural assets – particularly in low or moderate income working class neighborhoods. How do low-income communities honor history and become economically viable? Rick Lowe’s experience renovating “shotgun” houses as part of Project Row Houses in one of Houston’s poorest neighborhoods has taken on this challenge. He and his colleagues have revitalized a community by renovating historic homes and celebrating their history, without displacing lower income residents. He attributes his success to working with good, relevant architecture; sense of culture; education and wisdom sharing; social safety net; and sense of economic development.

There was discussion of how we should value and nurture our living artists and culture bearers. How do you ensure that traditional arts are passed to the next generation? The current situation in New Orleans showcases the problem. There is a need to rebuild both physically and culturally and a need for artisans and craftsmen to train apprentices to carry on traditions.

##### **5. Collaboration across disciplines and institutions will result in a stronger voice and more effective advocacy for stewardship of our cultural patrimony.**

The panel found that Mississippi’s “Culture Club” is an example to other cities and states on how to cross “discipline” barriers. This example can be an inspiration not only in planning for disasters but also in forging a new blueprint for documenting, sustaining and interpreting our cultural patrimony.

The “culture community” has not made a strong enough case, as a community, for preserving our historic and artistic heritage and our living culture. This is in part because each component of our overall cultural and historical community has been working separately. To build a larger voice and expanded resources we must build critical mass. We need to join together to assert the value of conserving and nurturing the arts and history and we must elevate them within public discourse. Electronic media should become a partner in showcasing culture.

The National Endowment for the Arts’ “Arts Journalism Institutes” provide an example of how to strategically build a larger voice: reporters from small and mid-sized media markets are provided 15 days of extensive training in an art form and how to write about it.

## Ideas for Consideration

***Idea 1: The conservation of cultural collections must become an essential and central aspect of the basic mission of every cultural institution.***

The Heritage Health Index serves as a telling example of the situation. Funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, it is the first comprehensive survey ever conducted of the condition and preservation needs of our nation's collections. Its findings are a "wake up call" regarding of the state of the nation's cultural and historic documents, artifacts, artistic works, and other cultural expressions that are under the care of public and private institutions. Some 4.8 billion objects are held in public trust by more than 30,000 archives, historical societies, libraries, museums, scientific research collections, archaeological repositories, and cultural centers in the United States.

It found that:

- Sixty-five percent of collection institutions have experienced damage to collections due to improper storage;
- Eighty percent of institutions do not have an emergency plan that includes collections; and
- Forty percent of collecting institutions have no funds allocated in their annual budgets for preservation or conservation.

In honor of its tenth anniversary year, the Institute will place a national spotlight on the state of collections in the United States and develop strategies to address four key issues raised in the Health Heritage Index:

1. To help collecting institutions provide safe conditions for the collections they hold in trust;
2. To encourage every institution to develop an emergency plan to protect its collections;
3. To encourage all collecting institutions to assign responsibility for caring for collections to members of its staff; and
4. To act as a catalyst so that individuals at all levels of government and in the private sector assume responsibility for providing the support that will allow these collections to survive.

The initiative activities include:

- A national summit on conservation on June 27-28, 2007 at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC;
- A series of regional meetings around the country to bring national attention to collections care and preservation; and
- A conservation bookshelf for small institutions that will provide basic texts and resources on conservation planning and treatment, disaster readiness, and other conservation issues.



**Idea 2: *Cultural organizations must give the highest priority to educating board members, donors, and members of the general public about the critical importance of providing funds for the conservation of core collections and preservation of historic properties.***

Large disasters like Katrina command our attention to the loss of heritage, but small disasters are occurring daily across the nation as cultural and historical resources are lost or misused. Historical houses and landscapes are destroyed by will or neglect; collections are not maintained and crumble; and artists, tradition-bearers, and elderly people with important oral histories to tell are displaced or die without having their legacies recorded. Small, medium, and even large institutions lack adequate funding and public support to respond to these needs. Yet Americans do care, and every historic house, museum, archives, library and cultural institution should be dedicated to educating the public and inspiring people to embrace historic preservation. Visitors to these institutions should hear from docents and others about the importance of conservation and how their membership enables the collection to be conserved.

The panel recommended that cultural organizations give a higher priority to educating board members and external donors of the critical importance of providing funds for the conservation of core collections and the preservation of historic properties. They should understand that the artifacts and documents held in local repositories preserve the nation's heritage.

Cultural institutions should work together to instill the conservation of our cultural heritage as a core American ethic and integrate it into the basic mission of every cultural organization. Just as the environmental movement has mainstreamed environment conservation into the core set of American values, especially among the young, so too should cultural organizations instill the conservation of our cultural heritage.

Over the last 40 years, the nation's federal cultural agencies – the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services – have provided grants for conservation of historic, cultural and artistic collections. The explosion of interest in ethnically and culturally specific materials, such as Native American artifacts, has also presented new challenges and opportunities and required new thinking about conservation strategies and practices.

An example of collaboration on the federal level has been the successful "Save America's Treasures" program that provides federal funds for the conservation of collections of national significance and important historic structures. Managed by the PCAH, this is a joint program of the NEA, NEH, and IMLS working with the National Park Service. Some 181 major collections of artifacts, documents and artistic works of national significance have been saved and conserved ranging from Revolutionary War documents to archival film footage of performances by Martha Graham and George Balanchine.

With the latest findings of the Heritage Health Index of the risks to our cultural and archival collections, there is urgency for federal, state, and local level and private funders to do more to ameliorate the serious threats to our nation's cultural patrimony identified by the Heritage Health Index. Many institutions simply do not have conservation or preservation support built into their annual budgets. It is often difficult and challenging to find the financial resources to support the necessary planning, implementation, staffing, and preventive care required for the responsible stewardship of these resources. Hence, the urgency of a call to action regarding the conservation and preservation of the nation's cultural patrimony.

New digital tools aid in the discovery and dissemination of knowledge about our past and our culture by museums, libraries and other cultural institutions. In 2006 the Institute of Museum and Library Services joined with the National Endowment for the Humanities to dedicate \$1.5 million to help teachers, scholars, museums, and libraries take advantage of developing technology. With the explosion of "born digital" material as an ever greater part of our shared culture, new conservation questions are being posed to be addressed by leading practitioners and scientists.

With coordinated and sustained strategic efforts, the risks to the 4.8 billion artifacts, images and structures held in public trust by more than 30,000 archives, historical societies, libraries, museums, scientific research collections, and archaeological repositories in the United States can be deemed safe and secure. Institutions will have emergency plans that include collections in the event of disasters that range from hurricanes and tornadoes to floods and broken water pipes. Institutions will have staff assigned to such basics of collections care as monitoring conditions and ensuring safe storage, transport, and display. Private and corporate foundations will understand their role as partners with the public sector in providing funding for collections care and for the staffing and capital improvements that proper collections care requires.

**Idea 3:** *Cultural organizations, state agencies and associations should work together to shape local and statewide preparedness and to use regional collaboratives for response to and recovery from disasters.*

Looking back on the hurricane disasters of 2005, the panel recommends that States have emergency preparedness plans and strategies for cultural institutions and promote the use of regional collaboratives for disaster relief. For instance, following Hurricane Katrina non-profit regional organizations provided invaluable assistance to cultural organizations. Among these were SOLINET, the Southeastern Library Network, a not-for-profit library cooperative with more than 2,600 library members serving the Southeast; the Southeast Museums Conference (SEMC) that served as a clearinghouse for donations for museums and museum employees affected by hurricanes on the Gulf Coast; and the Southern Arts Federation (SAF) that served as a clearinghouse for donations to individual artists and arts groups.

Mississippi recovery efforts after Katrina offer an excellent example of local coordination and cooperation among different public and private agencies and among state and local government agencies and institutions. Just as cultural organizations must make the conservation of collections an essential and central part of their basic institutional mission statement, state cultural agencies and statewide associations should work together to shape local and statewide preparedness plans. As one participant warned, “the worst can happen.”

Immediately after the hurricane, those libraries left standing became key providers of information and gathering places for volunteers offering help and survivors needing to talk and seek consolation. One of the items most needed by the libraries were local maps. Many municipal records were lost. Title disputes will arise because of the inability to do surveys with buildings and landmarks gone. The panel recommends that copies of records of historic districts be stored in another location. The panel also recommends thorough inventories of the historically and cultural significant artifacts, images and documents maintained by local organizations.

Recovery efforts are expected to continue for at least five years. Reflecting on the last year, Mississippi officials realized that they could make a valuable contribution by documenting their own experience. George McDaniel, Director of Drayton Hall in South Carolina, said he would like to hear the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina because his historic site is located near the South Carolina coast and on an earthquake fault line.

Recommendations were made for the establishment of fast response teams consisting of representatives from various federal agencies to avoid duplicate efforts and wasting local people’s time giving tours of the devastation. The Mississippi Arts Commission was helped by the Department of Labor’s temporary worker relief program to hire employees to work on hurricane recovery along the Gulf Coast.

Hurricane Katrina survivors said that emergency grants are vital. They opined that the federal funds must come first to secure private sector support and to be in a position to utilize the generosity of private donors. They were most appreciative of emergency assistance from the federal cultural agencies but found it difficult to write grant applications without electricity and sometimes without experience. The federal cultural agencies agreed that grant assistance would continue to assist in the recovery of Gulf Coast cultural institutions – buildings, collections and living artists. Artists are resilient but many have left Mississippi, as well as New Orleans, and are not planning to return.

A wide range of donors -- including individuals, corporations, private foundations, national and regional preservation organizations, and government agencies -- provided an impressive amount of emergency support to cultural organizations along the Gulf Coast. In the months following this national disaster, Americans gave nearly a half billion dollars in emergency relief. Nonetheless, according to a survey of private foundations conducted by the Foundation Center, support for preservation of cultural properties and for other activities in the arts and humanities accounted for only two percent of all emergency foundation giving. In the first weeks following the hurricanes, attention by donors focused on housing, health, job creation and economic recovery.

As the immediate relief needs were addressed, private foundations have increasingly turned their attention to planning for local and regional rebuilding, especially by local nonprofit service groups. Examples are the \$12.2 million donated by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to help libraries establish up to 22 temporary facilities in Mississippi and Louisiana so that community members can access books and computer and internet services and the \$5 million grant from the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund to the Americans for Libraries Council to support reconstruction and recovery of Gulf Coast public libraries.

***Idea 4: Artists and cultural institutions are essential to the economic vitality of a community.***

Visual and performing artists and literary writers are living ties to a community's past. As culture bearers, they help create and sustain our cultural patrimony by carrying on those traditions and reinterpreting them for present and future generations.

Numerous studies, local, statewide, regional, and national, have documented the economic impact of the arts so that economic development professionals now readily consider the arts in their planning. Many cities and states are striving to expand what Richard Florida, author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, has labeled as the "creative economy." Artists, many of whom are self-employed or small business entrepreneurs, help redevelop neighborhoods, stimulate the economy, and enhance the quality of life enjoyed by citizens and tourists.

Cities must attract talented and innovative labor necessary for a creative economy. A recent study found that 25-34 year olds chose the city where they want to live before looking for a job. This has implications for economic developers who need to be increasingly concerned with the development of cultural amenities to attract and support the local job market.

Cultural institutions, especially performing arts centers and museums, help form the community's identity and attract investment and tourism dollars. A panelist pointed out that there are "destination" libraries in Denver, Chicago, and Seattle.

What should be done with fragile communities like New Orleans? The region's indigenous musical styles, such as jazz and Delta blues, are assets that should be promoted and nurtured. The Blues Trail in Mississippi is an example of an investment that blends an appreciation for history and music and attracts tourism dollars.

Music education previously provided in New Orleans public schools should continue in public and charter schools. In a city known for jazz and spectacular marching bands, music instruction should be required in all elementary and secondary schools.

Louisiana had begun efforts to showcase its creative economy before hurricanes Katrina and Rita; through *Louisiana Rebirth: Restoring the Soul of America*, the state plans to link culture and tourism in its recovery efforts. To reestablish cultural organizations, the state must first convince individual artists to return; to do that, basic services – particularly housing – have to be restored first. Artists and cultural institutions must play a substantial role in rebuilding the Gulf Coast and New Orleans. A vibrant culture will attract investment and encourage artists to return.

The panel considered how to provide resources to people who are working outside of organizational frameworks, such as artists, artisans and craftspeople. One proposed solution for New Orleans is to institute a WPA-like program that would employ craftsmen and provide dignity, knowledge and traditional skills to a new generation. Some 150 skilled craftsmen and artisans could be hired to recruit and teach young apprentices to work in such media as wood and glass. A similar program was provided by Cornerstones Community Partnerships in Santa Fe that trained disadvantaged youth in the traditional techniques of adobe construction providing them with a skill and work in repairing adobe structures.

***Idea 5: State and local cultural institutions should collaborate to build support and public recognition of how their services benefit the community.***

The panel opined that cultural organizations working together have an opportunity to make a stronger case for the significant roles played by artists, humanists, libraries, museums, architectural preservation groups and arts organizations in the life of their communities. By broadening the definition of culture, we can build a larger public constituency with a bigger voice to more effectively assert culture's value.

The panel proposed many models for collaboration. Since the preservation of our cultural heritage is vital also to education, economic development, tourism, and quality of life, partnerships need to be developed with state and local departments of education, commerce, tourism, parks, and transportation. For example, the federal and state departments of transportation have partnered extensively with cultural organizations through their funding of "enhancements" projects and could provide models. Departments of commerce, for example, might provide assistance to entrepreneurial cultural organizations. State and local departments of education could provide funding for the host of remarkable school programs offered by cultural organizations, whether on site or as outreach.

Every historic house, museum, archives, library and cultural institution should be dedicated to educating the public and inspiring people to embrace history and historic preservation. Historic preservation should be used as a way to continue appreciation of the humanities. In South Carolina, for example, state lottery dollars are being used by the Charleston County School District to enable every 4<sup>th</sup> grader to participate in a standards-based program free of charge to them at Drayton Hall, a National Trust historic site, and to learn about the importance of their culture and need for its preservation.

Cultural districts and other significant cultural institutions such as museums, theaters, performing arts centers, and libraries are a key part of a community's identity in attracting new residents. Libraries, museums, symphony orchestras, and other cultural institutions should partner with each other and school districts as valuable resources for the teaching of history and the arts, and other subjects.

The local arts and humanities communities can be utilized as assets in the renovation of historic buildings and their adaptive reuse. Architectural forms are perhaps the clearest statement of a community's identity. Saving an historic structure by finding an appropriate

reuse is an important way to maintain a community's sense of place even as it grows and changes. Often this adaptive reuse involves artists or arts organizations; for instance, Project Row Houses in Houston is an excellent example of low-income housing that preserves historic integrity.

Cultural heritage tourism is another opportunity for partnerships between the private and public sectors. For example, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Appalachian Regional Commission support *Share Your Heritage* workshops, managed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, that help communities to engage their artists, cultural organizations, and historic preservation efforts in marketing historic, cultural, and natural resources to visitors.

Electronic and print media should be engaged as partners in elevating public discourse about the arts and culture. Collections important to local and national history should be digitized. The recently announced partnership between NEH and IMLS will foster and support such efforts.

## **Conclusions**

1. Interwoven into the American ethic should be public recognition and understanding of the value of historic sites and historic and cultural collections held in public trust by our nation's museums, libraries, and archives, as well as the requirements for the safe care of these collections. These sites and special collections represent our nation's cultural patrimony. The institutions that house our cultural treasures should make their collections accessible to teachers, students and the public so that their significance in telling America's story can be understood and appreciated by the public.
2. A major lesson learned by Gulf Coast cultural organizations after hurricanes Katrina and Rita is the essential role culture plays in shaping a community's identity. Cultural institutions across all disciplines – the arts, humanities, historic preservation, museums, libraries, and archives – must work together to be prepared for emergencies and to assure their role and importance in their communities. Now is the time to claim and promote the importance of our heritage and marshal support for its conservation. The media and the private sector must become our partners to create the climate and the resources required to ensure stewardship of our nation's cultural patrimony.

Appendix: Support for Conservation, Preservation and Promotion of  
Our Cultural Patrimony by Federal Cultural Agencies

**Appendix to**  
**Coordinating the Stewardship and Use of Our Cultural Patrimony Panel Report**  
**Support for Conservation, Preservation and Promotion of Our Cultural Patrimony**  
**by Federal Cultural Agencies**

**Save America's Treasures**

Save America's Treasures grants are critical investments in the preservation of our nation's most significant and endangered cultural treasures, which illustrate, interpret, and embody the great events, ideas, and individuals that contribute to America's history and culture. This legacy includes the built environment as well as collections of documents, records, artifacts, and artistic works. Collectively, Save America's Treasures projects tell our nation's story and ensure that our legacy is passed on to future generations.

Administered by the National Park Service in collaboration with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, Save America's Treasures grants are reviewed and awarded by other federal agency partners, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

From 1999 through 2005, Save America's Treasures awarded nearly \$116 million competitively to 431 projects. These awards helped restore 247 historic properties and supported 181 projects that restored and conserved collections of artifacts, documents, and artistic works.

**Institute of Museum and Library Services**

Since 1984, the Institute of Museum Services (IMS), and, subsequently, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), has invested more than \$74 million in conservation project support (matched by an even greater private investment), through more than 5,400 grants for research, training, environmental improvements, survey, treatment for living and non-living collections.

Since 1990, the agency has supported the Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) a non-competitive program that has awarded more than \$13 million in technical assistance grants that enable museums to work with conservation professionals to determine their conservation needs. Beginning in 1999, IMLS has encouraged museums to increase public awareness of the importance of conservation by inviting applicants to add up to \$10,000 to conservation requests for various public education programs. IMLS provides support for conserving, preserving, and sustaining our cultural and scientific heritage in many other programs. A recent leadership grant to the Northeast Document Conservation Center supported "dPlan: The Online Disaster-Planning Tool," an online training program for writing institutional disaster plans.

In response to the 2005 hurricanes the Institute of Museum and Library Services worked with state government in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas to encourage the use of federal library funds to help evacuees use library computers to find housing and apply for FEMA funds. Libraries throughout the area also helped first responders, providing space and phone and Internet service. In addition, IMLS awarded \$670,000 to seven museums for conservation of

collections and historic sites and for educational programs for displaced people. The IMLS announced an additional \$1.5 million to support staff at museums and libraries in disaster areas and is dedicating a portion of these funds to work in partnership with the Gates Foundation and the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund to restore library service in the affected areas. IMLS continues to help libraries and museums to prepare for disasters; a recent grant will make it possible for cultural institutions nationwide to use a new and effective online service to develop comprehensive disaster plans.

### **National Endowment for the Arts**

The National Endowment for the Arts is committed to promoting the best of America's cultural patrimony through *American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius*, a major initiative to acquaint Americans with the best of their artistic legacy. Programs presenting acknowledged masterpieces selected from a wide variety of art forms – visual arts, dance, choral music, musical theater and literature – are touring to large and small communities in all 50 states; arts education is a substantial part of the initiative, both by bringing an unprecedented number of students to the exhibitions, presentations, and performances, and by creating substantial and engaging in-school programs.

Twenty-seven exhibitions are touring to 136 cities across the nation, reaching an estimated audience of 4.1 million. Choral music festivals in seven states and the District of Columbia are featuring works by American composers from the days of the American Revolution to the present. New generations are being introduced to dance choreography of American greats such as Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham made possible by 42 American Masterpieces grants. In musical theater, 13 professional theater companies in 11 states are reviving and touring classical works of American musical theater. And more than 120 towns and cities will be engaging their citizens in the reading of the same American classical novel as part of *The Big Read* during 2007.

The NEA also provides national recognition to exemplary artists for their lifetime achievement, artistic excellence, and contributions to the cultural traditions of jazz and folk arts through its NEA Jazz Masters awards and NEA National Heritage Fellowships.

The National Endowment for the Arts supports conservation and collections management through its Access to Artistic Excellence grants category. Recent NEA grants have supported conservation treatment of, for example, paintings, sculptures, murals, works on paper, photographs, textiles, pottery, and baskets. The NEA supports digitization of objects and training in conservation techniques.

In response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the National Endowment for the Arts provided \$700,000 in emergency grants to help arts organizations in the Gulf Coast region in FY 2006. These grants included \$500,000 to individual organizations and state and local arts agencies in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Texas. Additionally, the NEA provided \$200,000 to conduct NEA's Mayors' Institutes on City Design and Your Town workshops, two of the country's most established city planning and design programs, in Mississippi and Louisiana. The NEA and FEMA also funded *Before and After Disasters*, a publication detailing how cultural organizations can access federal assistance.



## **National Endowment for the Humanities**

During the past 20 years, the NEH Division of Preservation and Access has awarded almost \$600 million for projects that preserve and make accessible humanities resources important to research, education, and public programs. Since 2000, this division has awarded \$5,000 Preservation Assistance Grants used for a variety of purposes, including supplies, storage, equipment, training, and emergency plans. Small and mid-sized institutions that have never received an NEH grant are especially encouraged to apply for PAGs. This division also supports education and training grants that are regional and national in scope as well as Research and Development grants for technical methods and national standards. With NEH support, Heritage Preservation produced the Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel as well as the recent Field Guide to Emergency Response.

State humanities committees work with historic preservation organizations and fund historic site interpretation. The state committees are also excellent resources to determine needs in any given state. Emergency grants were given to state humanities committees in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and Texas to address hurricane relief.

There are many examples of NEH Challenge Grants made for renovation of historically significant buildings to enable enhanced humanities activities as well as for preservation and conservation. Examples include endowment support to the three art conservation training programs, endowment for some of the regional conservation centers, and endowment for conservators, conservation activities, and conservation labs at museums and historical organizations, research libraries, and university libraries.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced its Hurricane Relief Initiative in September 2005. In the past year, the initiative has provided nearly \$1.3 million in hurricane relief through 46 grants to libraries, museums, colleges, universities, and other cultural and historical institutions for projects to recover and preserve cultural resources in the Gulf Coast region affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. An additional \$750,000 is being offered for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Relief in the Division of Preservation and Access' grant category for Stabilization of Humanities Collections.