



WE THE PEOPLE

THE MISSION

- Through the *We the People* program, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) seeks to reinvigorate the teaching, study and understanding of American history and principles.
- Democracy demands wisdom. By exploring significant events and themes in our nation's history, the NEH strives to help Americans appreciate their heritage and understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

THE GOAL

- *We the People* aims to enhance American citizens' understanding of their history and culture.
- The program achieves this goal by:
 - Supporting exhibitions, films, heritage tourism, library programs and other curriculum for the public
 - Providing content-rich professional development programs for teachers
 - Encouraging scholarly research on important topics in American history and culture
 - Supporting high-quality programs in under-funded educational institutions
 - Preserving collections representing America's cultural heritage

THE PROGRAMS

- The annual *We the People Bookshelf* — a collection of books recommended for young readers and made available to schools and libraries for use in local programs — supports the reading of classic literature based on themes central to American history and culture.
- **Landmarks of American History and Culture** supports enrichment workshops for K-12 teachers and community college faculty at important historic sites. At these workshops, teachers meet with renowned scholars, who provide them with new knowledge that they take back to their classrooms to share with generations of students.
- **Picturing America** is an innovative, free resource that provides educators with an engaging way to teach American history and other subjects through the use of significant images from our country's art.
- *We the People* preserves our nation's **historic documents**, such as newspapers and presidential papers, and supports scholarly research on these resources while also expanding their availability to the general public.
- A variety of exhibitions, public programs, and partnerships with the **State Humanities Councils** help citizens across the country learn more about the history of America.
- More information on *We the People* is available online at www.wethepeople.gov.

THE IMPACT

- Since its inception in 2002, the *We the People* program has awarded support to nearly 1,700 projects undertaken by scholars, teachers, filmmakers, museums, libraries, and other individuals and institutions to enhance the teaching and understanding of American history.
- *We the People* has provided opportunities for thousands of teachers to deepen their knowledge of American history through summer seminars and institutes.

◆ 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW ◆ Washington, DC 20506 ◆ (800) NEH-1121 ◆
◆ www.neh.gov ◆ PicturingAmerica.neh.gov ◆



FUNDING

- To date, NEH's *We the People* program has received over \$66 million in new funding from Congress.
- Since the program's inception, an additional \$9 million in NEH matching funds have been made available for *We the People* projects, bringing the program's funding total to over \$75 million.
- Grants awarded through the *We the People* program have leveraged approximately \$18 million in third-party funds for projects that promote democratic education.

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- To date, 139 **Landmarks of American History and Culture** workshops have been offered at 57 locations nationwide, serving more than 10,000 school teachers and community college educators.
- The **Summer Institutes and Seminars** program has conducted 71 *We the People* seminars and institutes for teacher and faculty development. University faculty members have also taken advantage of 24 faculty humanities enrichment workshops.
- Since 2003, NEH has delivered free sets of the annual *We the People Bookshelf* of classic books to more than 9,000 school and public libraries nationwide.
- **Picturing America** invites young people across the country to explore the course of American history through some of the nation's greatest art treasures. A program launched in February 2008, Picturing America has been awarded to over 76,000 schools, public libraries, and Head Start centers in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. Territories.
- **Chronicling America**, a national, digital resource of historically significant U.S. newspapers. Launched by NEH and the Library of Congress in March 2007 as part of the National Digital Newspaper Program, the Chronicling America Web site currently contains over 860,000 pages published between 1880 and 1910 from nine states and the District of Columbia.
- New lesson plans were offered on American political history for **EDSITEment**, a humanities Web site for educators.
- Other *We the People* projects have included a forum for scholars on the history and culture of the Early Republic; lectures on "**Heroes of History**"; and cash awards to 22 high school juniors for their entries in the "**Idea of America**" essay contest.

* * * * *

*Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the **National Endowment for the Humanities** supports learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities. NEH grants enrich classroom learning, create and preserve knowledge, and bring ideas to life through public television, radio, new technologies, exhibitions, and programs in libraries, museums, and other community places.*

◆ 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW ◆ Washington, DC 20506 ◆ (800) NEH-1121 ◆
◆ www.neh.gov ◆ PicturingAmerica.neh.gov ◆



EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH WE THE PEOPLE

The overwhelming majority of funding for the *We the People* program is awarded through NEH's five grant-making divisions. Noteworthy examples of *We the People* projects funded by the divisions are listed below:

OFFICE OF CHALLENGE GRANTS - Provides long-term support to expand educational resources and facilities, enact programs that foster research and public programming in the humanities, and preserve collections.

- ***To Form a More Perfect Union: African American History at Colonial Williamsburg*** – The largest living history museum in the United States and one of its premier showcases for colonial history will expand its already imaginative programming on colonial African American history.
- ***Mission San Luis Endowment*** –Archaeological research at Mission San Luis, a historic site near Tallahassee, Florida, will enhance visitors' understanding of Spanish and Native American interaction from the early era of the European colonization of North America.
- ***Freedom of Religion, For Religion, or From Religion? Religion in American Public Life*** –The University of Notre Dame is establishing a new program for Inquiry into Religion in American Public Life, dedicated to ongoing studies and programs on the role of religion in American democracy for faculty, scholars, graduate students, and journalists.

DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS - Supports school teachers and college faculty wishing to strengthen the teaching and learning of history, literature, foreign languages and cultures, and other areas of the humanities.

- ***Fort Peck Community College; Indian Education for All Humanities; Initiatives for Faculty***— A grant to support a series of professional development activities for Montana school teachers on the history and culture of the Nakona and Dakota people.
- ***Ellis Island: Public Health and Immigration, 1900-1924*** - Two one-week workshops for 80 teachers investigating the impact of immigration to America in the early twentieth century, focusing especially on public health and the American workforce.
- ***Political and Constitutional Theory for Citizens*** – A three-week residential institute on political and constitutional thought for twenty-five teachers taking place at The Center for Civic Education in summer 2008.

THE DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS – Addresses the problems posed by the physical deterioration of America's humanities collections.

- ***Georgia O'Keeffe Museum*** – A photographic consultant will help the museum's devise a strategy to preserve 1,752 photographs dating from 1910 to the mid-1980s that were created by O'Keeffe or that document aspects of her work.

- ***Kentucky Digital Newspaper Program*** – As part of the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP), staff of the University of Kentucky Research Foundation in Lexington are digitizing 100,000 pages from high quality microfilm of historic Kentucky newspapers representing the period from 1900 to 1910.
- ***Navajo Language Investigations*** – As part of the NEH's "Documenting Endangered Languages" program, a scholar in Flagstaff, Arizona, is working with teachers and members of the Navajo Language Academy (NLA) to complete a reference grammar that focuses on Navajo sentence structure.

DIVISION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS - Supports a wide variety of programs that expand the understanding of the humanities through engaging and substantive projects like documentary films, exhibitions, and other public programming that encourage lifelong learning.

- ***The War*** – Nearly 40 million viewers tuned in to *The War* during its broadcast in fall 2007. NEH invested more than \$1 million in this 10-hour documentary series about the American experience of World War II from 1941 to 1945.
- ***Permanent Interpretive Exhibition at the Home and Studio of Thomas Cole, Founder of the Hudson River School of Art*** – We the People support will help enhance the visitor experience at the Thomas Cole National Historical Site in New York's Catskill Mountains, focusing on the artist's creative process and his role in the history of American art.
- ***Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World - A Traveling Exhibition for Libraries Supplement*** – A traveling panel exhibition focused on the life and works of Franklin—his many interests, accomplishments, and on the complex man behind the myths—will be extended to 40 libraries across the U.S.

DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS – Supports the creation and dissemination of new knowledge on human history, language, and culture.

- ***The Papers of Abraham Lincoln*** – This long-term documentary editing project is identifying, imaging, and publishing in electronic form and in printed volumes, all documents written by or to Abraham Lincoln during his lifetime (1809-1865).
- ***A Narrative History of the Ratification of the Federal Constitution, 1787-1790*** – Renowned American historian Pauline Meier is writing a book for both general and scholarly audiences on the ratification of the federal Constitution.
- ***The Ingalls-Wilder Family Songbook*** – A scholar is locating, collecting, organizing, and editing 125 songs referred to in the "Little House" books by Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867-1957). The published songbook will include some of the finest and most important songs in American music.

◆ 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW ◆ Washington, DC 20506 ◆ (800) NEH-1121 ◆
◆ www.neh.gov ◆ PicturingAmerica.neh.gov ◆

