



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

PRESS RELEASE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
1100 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506
(202) 606-8446
WWW.NEH.GOV

For Immediate Release
June 2, 2008

Media contacts: Lindsey Mikal (202) 606-8317
Elizabeth Fisher (202) 208-7098

26,320 SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO RECEIVE NEH'S PICTURING AMERICA AWARDS

Free Education Initiative Brings Great American Art Directly to Classrooms and Libraries

WASHINGTON, DC (June 2, 2008) – Today the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced that **26,320 schools and public libraries across the nation will receive Picturing America**, a free initiative that helps teach American history and culture by bringing some of the country's great art directly to classrooms and libraries. Information on specific local recipient schools and public libraries is available on the Picturing America Web site (PicturingAmerica.neh.gov).

Awardees will receive 40 large, high-quality reproductions of great American art and a comprehensive teachers resource book to facilitate the use of the works of art in core subjects. Delivery of these materials is scheduled for August 2008. Additional education resources are also available through the Picturing America Web site.

"Thanks to an unprecedented number of educators, librarians, and citizens who applied during the first application period, I'm proud to announce that over 26,000 schools and public libraries across our nation will receive Picturing America this fall," said NEH Chairman Bruce Cole.

"Works of art are more than mere ornaments for the elite; they are primary documents of a civilization. A written record or a textbook tells you one thing—but art reveals something else. Our students and citizens deserve to see American art that shows us where we have come from, what we have endured, and where we are headed," continued Chairman Cole.

Picturing America has received broad-based national support from federal agencies, the arts community, and educators, among others. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (HHS) Office of Head Start, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and the National Park Service (NPS) partnered with the NEH and have been instrumental in expanding the reach of the program. The American Library Association (ALA) is working in cooperation with the NEH to provide Picturing America to schools and public libraries, nationwide.

"Picturing America's goal of introducing representative art works into classrooms is certainly one to encourage," said Pulitzer prize-winning American author, John Updike who recently presented NEH's 37th annual Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities. "The Endowment's selection and the commentaries seem to me quite brilliant."

Schools currently participating in a nationwide Picturing America pilot program have been tremendously receptive to the initiative. Educators have even testified before Congress on behalf of Picturing America and its educational impact on their schools.

"The Picturing America grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities has truly enriched our lives," said Katrine Watkins, Librarian at Shaler Area Intermediate School in Glenshaw, Pa. at a recent Congressional hearing in Washington. "Valuable as the Picturing America posters are to teaching our curriculum, however, perhaps their greatest worth is their limitless potential to teach us all—students, staff, and parents—about ourselves."

From Jan. 7 through April 15, 2008, **26,320 schools and public libraries in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. Territories** successfully applied to receive Picturing America in the program's first nationwide application period. **A complete list of recipient schools and public libraries** in cities and states across the country is available on the **media page of the Picturing America Web site at: http://picturingamerica.neh.gov/public_awards.php.**

The NEH will offer Picturing America to more schools and libraries through a future enrollment opportunity beginning in Aug. 2008. All eligible organizations in the U.S. and its territories that have not previously received Picturing America may apply for the program **from Aug. 4 through Oct. 31, 2008** at PicturingAmerica.neh.gov.

In addition to schools and libraries, through an interagency agreement, the NEH and the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start will work together to make Picturing America available to the **20,000 Head Start centers** around the nation. This partnership will provide for the development of materials to supplement Picturing America and ensure that the program will enhance early childhood development and family literacy.

The NEH wishes to thank the following organizations: the American Library Association, Office of Head Start, Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Park Service, The History Channel, and the National Trust for the Humanities. The NEH is grateful for the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Smith, as well the support of Honorable William D. Rollnick and the Honorable Nancy Ellison.

Picturing America is distributed by the NEH in cooperation with the ALA. For information about the ALA, please visit www.ala.org.

#

About Picturing America

Public, private, parochial, and charter and home school consortia (K-12), as well as public libraries in the US and its territories, are eligible to receive Picturing America materials. Interested schools and public libraries will be able to apply through the NEH for the second round of Picturing America awards, beginning Aug. 4 through Oct. 31, 2008 for receipt of the materials in spring 2009. Detailed instructions for submitting an application can be found in the 'Apply Now' section of the Picturing America Web site, PicturingAmerica.neh.gov.

Picturing America comes with a comprehensive package of materials that includes:

- Forty large, high-quality color reproductions of the selected masterpieces (24" x 36")
- A comprehensive teachers resource book providing a wide range of ideas and background information to support educators using the works of art in core subject areas
- Additional resources and lesson plans available through the Picturing America Web site, PicturingAmerica.neh.gov

About the National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. The study of the humanities — history, literature, philosophy, and the arts — helps us explore what it means to be human. The humanities enable us to understand the world and our place in it.

Because "democracy demands wisdom," NEH serves and strengthens our Republic through promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. Through its programs, NEH provides opportunities for all citizens to embrace the humanities and benefit from their wisdom. For more information about NEH, visit www.neh.gov.