



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

# Humanities District of Columbia

*Between 2006 and 2010, institutions and individuals in the District of Columbia received \$19.6 million from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Humanities Council of Washington, D.C., for projects that explore the human endeavor and preserve our cultural heritage. Below are some examples.*

- George Washington University received a total of nearly \$710,000 through three grants to support the preparation and publication of the **Eleanor Roosevelt Papers**, a project to produce a comprehensive five-volume edition of her written and spoken works. Electronic imprints as well as hard copies are planned for all volumes and a website for the papers receives over 3 million hits each year.
- Archaeological and historical research of the Great Dismal Swamp on the border of Virginia and North Carolina—sometime home to a community of runaway slaves and the site of a failed real estate investment of George Washington’s—is made possible with the assistance of a \$200,000 research grant to **American University**.
- The **Folger Shakespeare Library**, home to the world’s largest Shakespeare collection, received a \$315,000 grant for a three-year project to create an online catalog of 18,000 volumes of the works of William Shakespeare. The project will also help de-acidify and create custom storage for thousands of these fragile items.
- A start-up grant of just under \$50,000 was awarded to the **Map of Jazz Musicians** project, based at American University. The project is developing an interactive and freely accessible online tool that explores collaborations and connections between American jazz musicians.
- The **Peabody Collection** at the Georgetown Neighborhood Library, a special collection of documents, records, and photos of Georgetown’s history, was nearly destroyed in a 2007 fire. A \$30,000 emergency conservation grant was made available to the DC Public Library system for the recovery and restoration of the materials as well as to create a disaster preparedness plan for all DC Public Library buildings.
- The **DC Community Heritage Project**, a collaboration between the Humanities Council of Washington, DC and the DC Historic Preservation Office, began in 2005 as an effort to explore the social and cultural history of DC neighborhoods from the perspective of long-time residents and now consists of not only neighborhood studies, but also includes an annual symposium, grant initiatives, and a library of multimedia resources.
- The First Federal Congress Project at the George Washington University has received two grants totaling just over \$330,000 for the work on volumes eighteen through twenty-two of the **Documentary History of the First Federal Congress, 1789-1791**. The first seventeen volumes are being prepared for online publication.
- The National Building Museum received a grant of \$380,000 to support the planning and production of **Designing Tomorrow: America’s World’s Fairs of the 1930s**, an exhibition showing how six Depression-era world’s fairs across the United States popularized modern design and forecast a world of streamlined trains, television, and talking robots. The exhibition features nearly two hundred artifacts, archival footage, interactive stations, and a printed family guide.



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# Humanities Nationwide

*NEH supports programs and projects that contribute directly and dramatically to the cultural life and historical perspective of tens of millions of Americans. Here are a few examples.*

## **PRESERVING THE FIRST DRAFT OF HISTORY**

Nothing captures the character of a community or the spirit of an era better than its newspapers. *Chronicling America*, a partnership between NEH and the Library of Congress, is digitizing millions of pages taken from newspapers dating back to the early Republic, making it possible to search the pages online for any word or phrase—at no charge.

## **AMERICAN VOICES**

The papers of prominent Americans are a vital part of our cultural heritage, and NEH funds many projects to assemble and preserve them, including complete sets of collected papers for ten presidents from Washington to Lincoln to Eisenhower as well as public figures such as Thomas Edison, Martin Luther King, Jr., George Marshall, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Mark Twain.

## **SUCCEEDING BY THE BOOK**

Over the past forty-five years, scholars supported by Endowment grants have produced 7,000 books—including numerous classics such as Dumas Malone's *Jefferson and His Time*, James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom*, and Louis Menand's *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America*—that have garnered scores of awards, including 18 Pulitzer Prizes.

## **PAST AND PRESENT IN PIXELS**

NEH investments in the “digital humanities” make it possible for a student to walk the corridors of the Temple of Karnak in ancient Egypt in virtual 3D, or to visit the 1964–65 World's Fair held in New York. Spectral imaging is being used to create an online critical edition of explorer David Livingstone's previously unreadable field diary.

## **GENERATING PRIVATE SUPPORT**

More than \$1.66 billion in humanities support has been generated by the Challenge Grants program, which requires recipients to raise \$3 or \$4 in outside funds for every federal dollar they receive.

## **HISTORY ON SCREEN AND IN TOWN**

NEH-supported films, grounded in scholarly research, bring history alive. For example, twenty million Americans watched Ken Burns's seven-part *The War* (2007), and teachers made extensive use of *The Buddha*. NEH also funds hundreds of exhibitions—not only blockbusters such as “King Tut” that make the wonders and heritage of other cultures accessible to the American public, but also smaller projects such as *Lincoln, the Constitution, and the Civil War* that reached classrooms across the country.

## **KEEPING TEACHERS UP TO DATE**

Seminars, institutes, and workshops give teachers the opportunity to refresh and deepen their knowledge about the humanities through intense study. In the past three years, more than 2,500 college teachers and 7,000 schoolteachers have participated in NEH-supported programs, to the benefit of more than one million students.

## **REACHING ACROSS THE NATION**

Last year state humanities councils, NEH's affiliates in the fifty states, the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories put on 17,700 reading and discussion programs, 5,700 literacy programs, 5,800 speakers bureau presentations, 5,800 conferences, 2,300 Chautauqua events, 7,120 media programs, and 7,600 technology, preservation, and local history events. The 56 councils also sponsored 4,600 exhibitions.