

**General Operating Grant
Final Report
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for the
Legislative Reference Library**



Minnesota
Humanities
Center

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**MINNESOTA HUMANITIES CENTER
REPORT TO THE MN STATE LEGISLATURE
JULY 1, 2022- JUNE 30, 2023**

MHC Programs and Activities

Education

MHC's Education Team has taken FY23 to work on leveraging the humanities as a tool to foster more equitable learning environments. Focusing on the wisdom, value, and histories of Minnesota's cultural and widely diverse communities the education team has been doing work in five primary categories: culture change, thought leadership, diversifying staff, expanding curriculum, and elevating youth voices.

So far in FY23 MHC has concluded work in several school districts including Inver Grove Heights' Elementary School Staff Story Circles cohort, Hawley Public Schools' Absent Narratives educator workshop, Cloquet Public Schools' Ojibwe place-based workshop for educators, and Greenway Public Schools' American Indian resources presentation.

The Education Team also expanded on some existing partnerships. Specifically, MHC has been working closely with ISD 917 on several initiatives including the launching of the Equity Leaders Network to collaborate on and develop equity practices in the Dakota County Area. Together, ISD 917 and MHC hosted a workshop with Dr. Keith Mayes on Teachability Factors in General and Special Education. And MHC, ISD 917, and Metro State University partnered on a BIPOC educators institute where participants received 4 graduate credits as they participated in a series of culturally affirming professional development experiences.

New partnerships and projects have emerged such as how MHC is using Story Circle to help Rochester Public Schools BIPOC employees remember the value they bring to their roles and their power to bring about change. MHC hosted a Story Circle: Family Storytelling Night at Edgerton Elementary School where MHC trained Roseville staff in Story Circle approaches to facilitate the session in multiple languages (Karen, Hmong, Spanish, and English). A partnership with the Minneapolis Public Schools is working to increase ethnic studies and social studies instruction as well as deepen instruction around LGBTQ+, Latine, and East African communities. And a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities allowed for MHC staff and educators from Minnesota to go to Birmingham, Alabama for the national conference "There IS a Balm in Gilead: Healing for the Events of 1963" to participate in an in-depth, interactive field study of the Modern Civil Rights Movement.

Immersive Experiences

FY23 marks the tenth anniversary of Learning from Place: Bdote, a signature program of MHC. Since 2013, MHC has led 100 Bdote trips, serving approximately 2,500 participants. Learning from Place: Bdote's anniversary has pushed MHC to explore ways to expand this groundbreaking program. Immersive experiences provide the opportunity for non-community members to learn about a community as well as holding space for community members to learn about their own story and identity. In FY23 MHC has expanded these experiences into other communities hosting new offerings such as Hmong St. Paul, Little Africa, and LGBTQ+ Downtown Minneapolis History.

In June of 2023, MHC created a groundbreaking initiative, "Juneteenth: Black Freedom Struggle". This project served as a continuation of MHC's previous award-winning program, "How Can We Breathe" and "Kumbayah the Juneteenth Story" by encapsulating a series of activities built to foster historical awareness, promoting community cohesion, and advancing social change. MHC also continued "Kumbayah the Juneteenth

Story" during FY23, and the play was shown in five cities, reaching 4,000 people. This transformative theater production, written by Rose McGee and produced by Sweet Potato Comfort Pie, has a profound impact connecting the past to the present, shedding light on Juneteenth's historical significance, fostering community understanding, and uniting diverse audiences.

The immersive experiences team has worked during FY23 to further their Headscarf Story Circle initiative. Beginning in March of 2023, MHC hosted a series of programs and retreats aimed at recognizing the strength and resiliency of women. Focusing on various themes, such as Women's Equity Day, which recognizes the ratification of the 19th Amendment on Aug 18, 1920, giving women the right to vote, each event seeks to bring women from diverse cultures and experiences together through the shared connection of the headscarf and its complexity.

Public Programming

In FY23, MHC continues their veterans' voices efforts in addition to putting emphasis on deepening, and broadening collaborations with other traditionally marginalized & underrepresented communities. MHC is collaborating with organizations working in Justice Reform efforts and who are committed to increasing access & inclusion for all people within the democracy. Partnering with individuals, creatives, scholars, and organizations MHC is seeking to broaden humanities access, learning, and impact by offering innovative and thought-provoking programming across Minnesota. One such example is the programming created in collaboration with Public Art Saint Paul for the WAKPA Triennial Art Festival that took place in the summer of 2023.

Civic Renewal

As the official state council affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Minnesota Humanities Center takes seriously its obligation to advance NEH's democracy-building work: that is, to provide the public with humanities tools and experiences that equip them to conceive of our shared past, present, and future in ways that respect diverse thinking while still emphasizing collaboration across differences. To emphasize the central role of everyday citizens in this conception of self-government—a role of equal importance to the roles of government and market institutions—we use the term "Civic Renewal" to describe our work in this vein.

During the period under review, much of our work was undertaken with partners in higher education, in the form of our Third Way Civics (3WC) initiative. This effort to infuse civic purpose and skills-building into undergraduate's everyday classroom learning expanded during the 2022-2023 academic year to include pilot courses in eleven classes spanning seven institutions in Minnesota, Florida, and Indiana. We also hosted our first 3WC Faculty Development and Institutional Sustainability workshop in July 2022, during which 3WC instructors were rigorously trained as well as supported in creating their syllabi, while administrators analyzed and brainstormed potential strategies for firmly implanting and expanding 3WC at their institutions.

The other major initiative accounting for a large share of our Civic Renewal work was our long-running We Are Water Minnesota traveling exhibit, a partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency receiving additional support from multiple state agencies, the Minnesota History Center, and the University of Minnesota. We Are Water MN works with local communities to promote scientific, historical, and cultural understanding of water in ways that increase mutual understanding across differences and equip communities to imagine and achieve better water futures together. During the period under review, We Are Water MN was hosted by community partners in Alexandria, Fergus Falls, Hastings, Eagan, Becker, Pine River, and Minneapolis.

The balance of our Civic Renewal work was devoted to supporting hosts of another long-running traveling exhibit, Why Treaties Matter, which conveys the history and importance of tribal self-governance in Minnesota; supporting our partners at the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council in organizing and hosting a Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization Conference; and developing and offering 3WC workshops for graduate students (at the University of Minnesota) and K12 teachers (in Minnesota and Indiana).

Event Center

MHC operates a full-service Event Center from its building that offers flexible meetings spaces, which accommodate groups of five to 150, has onsite catering, and 15 overnight guest rooms. MHC hosts many educational and community events that complement our programmatic work, reinforcing MHC as a place where people convene, strengthen connections, and participate in meaningful dialogues. MHC's presence strengthens Saint Paul, the state's capitol city, as one the only retreat centers in the city and provides a space for groups working to improve Minnesota's quality of life, and to design and shape the future.

The Event Center also provides spaces for MHC's own programs and acts as an additional source of rental income from other nonprofit organizations, foundations, state agencies, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions. MCH has a tiered pricing structure, so to offer partnership discounts for humanities-based partners, government, and nonprofit clients and remains accessible to these groups, while still staying competitive in its standard pricing. MHC continues to see a strong tie to its mission-related clients, clearly indicating the need for a place to convene and connect.

Grants Program

Over the year, MHC has distributed nearly \$5 million dollars in grants statewide. In the last two years, MHC distributed nearly 200 grants totaling more than \$6.7 million in more than 30 counties across Minnesota. Beginning in FY23, MHC will be providing grants in five subject matters: cultural heritage, children's museums, capacity building, civics, and emergency response. MHC strives to reach out to small and large organizations and individuals to fulfill the intention of the legacy amendment.

Minnesota Humanities Center Enabling Legislation

Subdivision 1. Establishment.

The Minnesota Humanities Center, a nonprofit organization, was established to advance the study of the humanities and enhance the work of schools, colleges, and cultural organizations throughout the state.

Subd. 2. Reports.

The Minnesota Humanities Center shall report to the legislature by September 1 of each year on the use of state funds appropriated to the commission. The report shall include an itemized account of the programs and projects supported and the source of money for each. The report shall show actual expenditures for the fiscal year ending the preceding June 30 and proposed expenditures for the fiscal year beginning the preceding July 1.

Subd. 3. Humanities center.

- a) The Minnesota Humanities Center may establish a humanities center to ensure balance in public education and in the cultural life of the state, and to improve humanities education through the establishment of two institutes: the Minnesota Institute for Lifelong Learning and the Minnesota Institute for the Advancement of Teaching.
- b) The humanities center may transport people and resources to small towns, rural communities, and urban settings to provide grants, technical assistance, and high-quality educational and cultural programs to schools and community organizations throughout Minnesota.

- c) The Minnesota Institute for the Advancement of Teaching may conduct seminars and other activities for the recognition of the teaching profession and the advancement of teaching in Minnesota.

	State FY22	State FY23	State FY24	
	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	Total For Biennium (FY 21-23) Expenses for Funding Period
Revenue				
Grant Income State	\$ 750,000.00	\$ -	\$ 470,000.00	\$ 750,000.00
Expenses				
Salaries	\$ 285,866.37	\$ 281,700.00	\$ 353,064.00	\$ 567,566.37
Payroll Related Taxes Federal				\$ -
Mn Unemployment Taxes				\$ -
401K Benefits Employee				\$ -
Employee Benefits Insurance	\$ 56,026.63	\$ 56,300.00	\$ 70,562.67	\$ 112,326.63
Contract Service	\$ 33,107.00	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 46,373.33	\$ 70,107.00
Recognition Activities				\$ -
Miscellaneous				\$ -
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 375,000.00	\$ 375,000.00	\$ 470,000.00	\$ 750,000.00