Executive Director
Christopher Sommerich

You may have seen this sticker on water bottles, notebooks, laptops, and windows around Nebraska. The image and idea have caught on with Humanities Nebraska’s program partners, participants, staff, and board. This simple invitation to connect as human beings and share ideas and perspectives, resonates with people who love the humanities.

Our new 5-year strategic plan recognizes that HN plays a unique role in our state as a credible, trustworthy convener of people, ideas, and perspectives. One key goal emphasizes implementing programs and funding experiences that bring people together and use the humanities to engage in community discourse. A dedicated task force of board, staff, and outside experts continues to develop strategies in this area. Your generous involvement makes our mission possible, and we are grateful for your investment in Nebraska’s people and communities. Humanities Nebraska is proud to work with many partners across the state, succeeding thanks to a combination of public and private funding.

For 47 years, Humanities Nebraska has served the entire state, striving to provide access to the humanities in our most urban and rural areas, and everything in between. In 2019, we provided 655 different programs to help us find our way forward to a better future. Humanities Nebraska is committed to stewarding our public and private resources and to remaining financially stable during the government shutdown in early 2019 that we weathered the storms in 2019. Grants and programming continued uninterrupted, thanks to the support of private donors, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the State of Nebraska, and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), including private donors, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the State of Nebraska, and grants throughout Nebraska.

Thanks to diverse funding sources we limited financial resources while providing hundreds of programs for the Humanities Nebraska, and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), including private donors, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the State of Nebraska, and grants throughout Nebraska. Thanks to diverse funding sources including private donors, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the State of Nebraska, and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), we weathered the storms in 2019. Grants and programming continued uninterrupted during the government shutdown in early 2019 that delayed grant distributions from the NEH to all of the state councils. For 47 years, Humanities Nebraska has served the entire state, striving to provide access to the humanities in our most urban and rural areas, and everything in between. In 2019, we provided 655 different programs in 155 Nebraska communities, enriching the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

We know that you, like many Nebraskans, value the vital importance of the humanities in personal and public life through thoughtful engagement in history, literature, culture, and curiosity about what connects us as humans. We share your belief that these connections help us find our way forward to a better future.

Let’s talk more in 2020!

2019: a lot to talk about
MEASURING OUR REACH

For the 46th consecutive year, Humanities Nebraska had a successful year of programs, events, and speakers. Capitol Forum on America’s Future once again drew participating high schools from all five regions of Nebraska - West, Central, East, Lincoln and Omaha. More than 1,200 students used the Choices curriculum from Brown University (provided by HN) in the classroom, and 110 arrived at the Nebraska State Capitol on March 29 to deliberate with their peers from other communities. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry was in town for the question-and-answer session, while Rep. Adrian Smith and Rep. Don Bacon participated via teleconference.

August 1 & 2, HN presented a new style of Chautauqua in Kearney. “The Fifties in Focus” started Friday evening with a fashion show featuring HN Speakers Bureau member Sue McLain and her large collection of 1950s clothing, followed by a keynote address by Dr. William Hitchcock. The next day, Kearney Public Library hosted a series of workshops on everything from the Korean War to rock-and-roll. The event ended with Chautauqua scholars portraying Rosa Parks and Thurgood Marshall, plus a Q&A.

The 24th annual Governor’s Lecture in Chautauqua in Kearney. “The Fifties in Focus” started Friday evening with a fashion show featuring HN Speakers Bureau member Sue McLain and her large collection of 1950s clothing, followed by a keynote address by Dr. William Hitchcock. The next day, Kearney Public Library hosted a series of workshops on everything from the Korean War to rock-and-roll. The event ended with Chautauqua scholars portraying Rosa Parks and Thurgood Marshall, plus a Q&A.

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Our Heartfelt Thanks

The statewide work of Humanities Nebraska is made possible by the generous support of the following individuals and organizations. This list reflects cumulative financial gifts received in fiscal year 2019 (November 1, 2018 - October 31, 2019). We appreciate all donations of sizes, but due to space limitations recognition begins at the Friend level ($50). Thank you!

If we have not reported your gift correctly, please accept our apology and contact us at 402.476.2137 or info@humanitiesnebraska.org.

**ORGANIZATIONS**

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Nebraska Cultural Endowment  
Union Bank and Trust  
University of Nebraska  
Valmont Industries, Inc.  

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Brenda Christensen & Michael Morris  

$1,000 - $2,499  
Dr. George & Colleen Adam  
Brenda Christensen & Michael Morris  

$500 - $999  
Brenda Christensen & Michael Morris  

We thank these generous individuals who contributed $1,000 or more during our fiscal year (11/1/18 – 10/31/19). If you are interested in joining the Patron’s Circle and helping to nurture a vibrant civic and cultural life in Nebraska, please call HN at 402-474-2131. Thank you!

Tributes

IN MEMORY OF DON PEDERSON

Ageing Partners City of Lincoln Staff
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Trisa & Keith Byrom

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Alan & Anne Simon

Rick & Connie Spiller

Gail & Ir Velzer

Matt Mason, Nebraska State Post 2019-2025

IN MEMORY OF

Following the deaths of former board members Don Pederson and Ann Spence, HN received multiple monetary gifts in their honor, including the following. If Thank you!

Funding Partners

National Endowment for the Humanities

Humanities Nebraska receives funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), a federal agency created in 1965. NEH serves and strengthens our nation by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history and culture to all Americans.

State of Nebraska

Because humanities programs foster an engaged and informed citizenry, the Nebraska Legislature provides annual appropriations to support HN’s statewide efforts.

Nebraska Cultural Endowment

The Nebraska Cultural Endowment (NCE) is the private partner in a public-private relationship with the State of Nebraska created to sustain and expand the arts and humanities in Nebraska. The first arrangement of its kind, the NCE remains the only public-private cultural endowment in the nation to sustain both the arts and humanities, preserving Nebraska’s long-standing tradition of arts and culture. Contributions to the NCE are matched by the State of Nebraska and invested in perpetuity. The earnings from these private and public investments support the statewide educational projects and programs of Humanities Nebraska and the Nebraska Arts Council. In the 21-year history of the NCE, it has distributed over $11.8 million back into communities and accounts for around 17% of the Humanities Nebraska budget.

Please consider joining NCE in its mission to cultivate a legacy of stability, advocacy, and leadership for the arts and humanities in Nebraska. To learn more about contributing to the NCE, or to become a Legacy Donor by designating the NCE in your estate plans, please contact Kyle Cartwright, Executive Director, at 402-430-1328 or via email to kyle@nebraskaculture.org, or HN’s Heather Thomas at heather@humanitiesnebraska.org.