

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Preserving the Past  
with the Help of  
Our Future

CONNECT



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Jama Best, Executive Director



The Arkansas Humanities Council continues to aspire to be creative and innovative in doing more to serve Arkansans of all ages.

In this issue, you will learn about some exciting grant-funded projects, along with virtual programs for educators and the general public, in the *We the People* lecture series, which explores democracy, the U.S. and Arkansas Constitutions, history, law, and more.

We also have exciting news. In continuing efforts to provide activities and programs for all ages, the Arkansas Humanities Council is launching Hugh's Kids Club. Children ages four through ten who participate will receive a poster of Hugh along with humanities-based stickers they earn by learning and doing fun activities at home. Children will also receive free activities, books, and other surprises. Sign your

kid(s) up today and start the fun!

The Arkansas Humanities Council hopes you will continue to stay in touch by visiting our website and signing up to receive email announcements. We have many new programs, activities, and grant opportunities you won't want to miss. Stay connected and enjoy the latest issue of *Connect* magazine.

# humanities

## hyoo-man'i-tees

noun. learning or literature concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, archaeology, language and philosophy



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*On the cover: Anna Belin cleans tombstones to preserve the past.*

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# Cemeteries Reveal the History of Early Black Communities

by Mrs. Ruth Octavia Baugh Hill and Tamela Tenpenny-Lewis

*The Cemeteries Reveal the History of Early Black Communities is a project undertaken by the Preservation of African American Cemeteries (PAAC).*



PAAC Interviewers Charles Bowers and Tamela Tenpenny-Lewis with attendees at the Millie Brooks Library of the Central Arkansas Library System — A participating sponsor of Project 365 - Cemeteries Reveal the History of Early Black Communities

Founded in 2003, the mission of PAAC is to form a network of persons and/or groups committed to locating, researching, educating, documenting, reclaiming, and preserving African American cemeteries. Since its founding, PAAC has engaged communities statewide and nationally through workshops, conferences, community forums, and partnering with the Arkansas Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society of Arkansas, among others.

PAAC members, scholars, and volunteers have conducted hundreds of cemetery preservation and documentation workshops, seminars, and programs. Along with cemetery documentation and preservation efforts, PAAC provides a wide array of conservation and preservation programs, such as: oral history techniques; digitization of photographs, records, and documents; researching cemetery, courthouse, church, and funeral home records as well as obituaries; conducting cemetery surveys; and even establishing the PAAC Junior Preservation Society, where college-bound youth participate in hands-on activities

related to documentation and preservation of Black history, cemeteries, and culture.

*The Cemeteries Reveal the History of Early Black Communities: Project 365* is PAAC's most recent endeavor. This project's purpose is to research, document, and publish the history and origin of six Black communities along State Highway 365 in Pulaski County, Arkansas.

The project's targeted communities include Hensley, Woodson, Wrightsville, Higgins, College Station, and Sweet Home. Tasks for the project include using cemetery transcriptions, slave narratives, oral histories, obituaries, and other historical documents to trace how Black migrants arrived in these communities, who or what brought them, and their reasons for settling in these areas. Documenting the important roles these Black pioneers made to their communities allows future generations to learn about their community's history and connect them to the past.

Respectively, each community's project participants

will collect and verify written records, Sextons' records, cemetery deeds, records of plot sales, headstone inscriptions, family history, and migration routes. Research also includes reviewing church, social, fraternal, and civic group histories and locations. While it will be difficult to locate many of these unprocessed records, our researchers will leave no stone unturned, as we are seeking clerks, ministers, and church trustee board members to assist. Project participants are working with community members who are eager to digitally preserve their written records and find a permanent archival home for these materials.

Cemetery records, markers, and physical burial places house a wealth of statistical data and cultural information. For Black communities — long excluded from traditional informational networks, processes, and record-keeping moments in life—the untapped resource of burial grounds offers an unprecedented glimpse into a heavily shrouded past. Read properly, a seemingly simple tombstone can provide not just the birth and death date of an interred individual but can open a window into the past through which you can view anything and everything from fraternal or religious organizations to general philosophies of life, familial lineages, and even military service. *Project 365* Director, Mrs. Ruth Octavia Baugh Hill, states, “This project seeks to restore lost historical narratives through careful curation and dissemination of traditional and non-traditional primary sources. By documenting the important roles these... descendants of slaves and free people of color made to their communities it will allow future generations to learn about these pioneers. It will also encourage people to protect forgotten or abandoned African American cemeteries and connect their communities to the past.”

*Project 365* is well underway. It was truly a pleasure interviewing Mrs. Hill, a member of the project's communities. Born December 24, 1929, in Little Rock, Arkansas, Mrs. Hill was the eldest child of the late Charley Spencer Baugh and Annie Celvine Neyland Baugh. She attended elementary and junior high school in College Station and later attended Dunbar High School in Little Rock. Mrs. Hill went on to receive a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at Philander Smith College and a master's degree in Education at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. She also earned a paralegal certificate from the University of Southern Colorado. In 1952, she married William Hill with the union lasting over 58 years and sharing six children along with grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was a teacher for twenty-eight years. You can read her comments from our interview at right.

*continued on page 4*



*I moved into this area in 1952, seventy years ago. The changes that have occurred during this time are many. Some of them are hard to believe. Almost every household had at least one milk cow, a pig, a few chickens, and a little vegetable garden. We shared.*

*During summer months, teenagers who were not working on the family farm worked on someone else's family farm to buy next year's school supplies. We had to buy our own books. No county issued books. We walked to school. No school buses. When we got to school, we read those books, worked on those problems, and wrote in those tablets. The chalkboard was for practice.*

*Hopefully, this study [Project 365] will enable us to better understand our ancestors and ourselves.*

— Ruth Octavia Baugh Hill



# Charting the Unbeaten Path: Mapping Unheard Migrant Voices Project

by Dr. Kathleen Condray

Work on the *Mapping Unheard Migrant Voices in Arkansas* project supported by the Arkansas Humanities Council is well underway this spring. This year-long initiative consists of a number of projects exploring French, German, and Italian immigrant history and French-Quapaw interactions in Arkansas. The projects undertaken in this grant period will ultimately be housed on a website hosted by the University of Arkansas. This work builds upon a previously awarded grant highlighting areas in Arkansas important to immigration history that can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3D70z35>

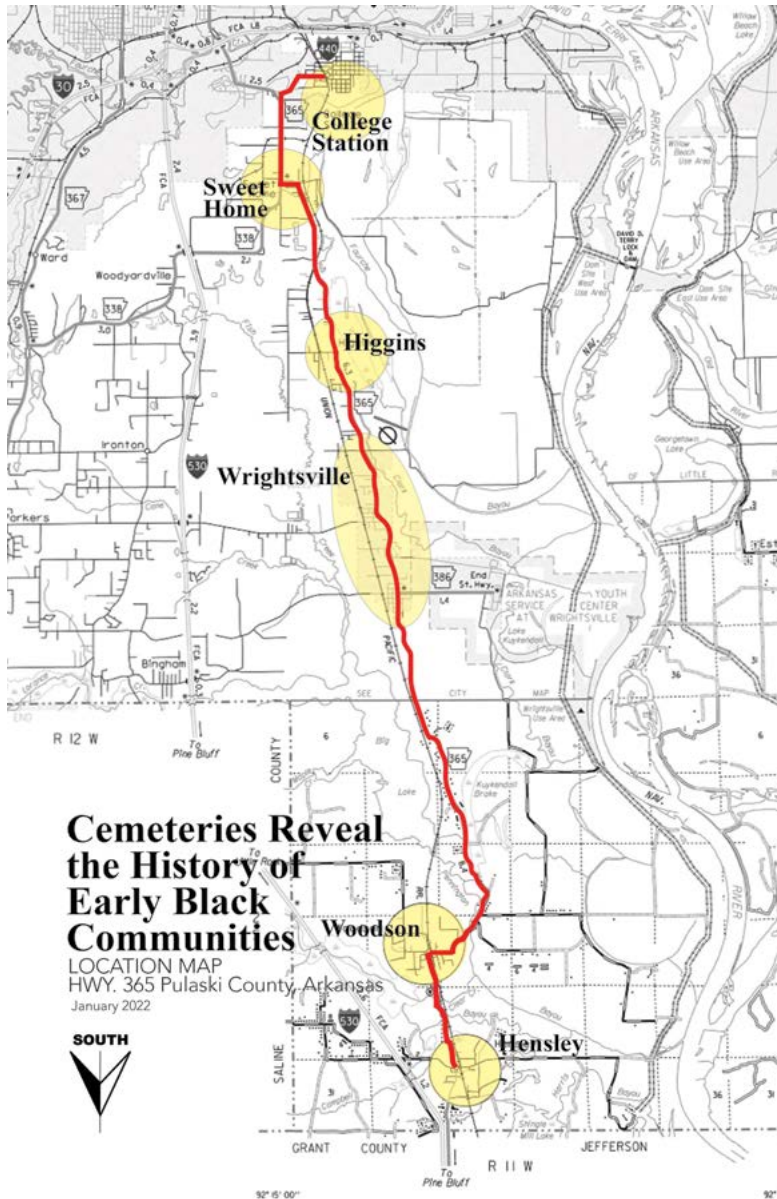
Dr. Kathleen Condray is mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in the creation of short videos on historical persons in Arkansas history: explorer and novelist Friedrich Gerstäcker, banker and philanthropist Charles Penzel, famed Arkansas Post cook Marie Jeanne (Mary John), Quapaw leader Saracen, and Arkansas's first female poet laureate Rosa Zagnoni Marinoni. Students working on the current videos are Issac Caswell, Thomas Consolino, Sol Halle, Amos Nordmeyer, and Katlyn Rozovics. In the fall, another group of students will have the opportunity to take part in the process of researching and presenting the lives of immigrants and Quapaw leaders. An example of one of the videos can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/3uNgl7>

In March, team members focused on the creation of a walking tour exploring early Arkansas immigrant history. This trip included photographing St. Peter's Catholic Cemetery where French settlers of the late colonial era and Italian immigrants are buried. Additionally, the team traveled to Arkansas Post and nearby Scull Cemetery, considered the oldest cemetery in Arkansas, to document the grave of Pierre Laclede Ligest, who was born in France and died at Arkansas Post and was a co-founder of St. Louis. Dr. Linda Jones is developing this aspect of the overall project and will be utilizing the Dorothy Jones Core collection at Special Collections at the University of Arkansas, a portion of which was digitized under a previous AHC grant.

Another Digital Humanities project that is part of this effort is the 360/3D video project at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Altus. As part of this virtual tour, art historian

Dr. Lynn Jacobs will discuss the stained glass and frescoes of the church that feature German text. Dr. David Frederick will oversee the technical aspects of the project. Dr. Frederick has won numerous grants and awards, including two NEH grants, for his Digital Humanities and historical gaming work. Thanks to additional funding from the University of Arkansas, the video will feature a musical performance by professional organist Jason Saugey, whose mother is a German immigrant to Arkansas. Saugey will perform one of Mozart's Kirchensonaten, which highlights an aspect of German cultural history settlers were proud to share with their new neighbors in Arkansas. Later in the year, the team will visit elders and historians of the Quapaw Nation to discuss how elements of tribal history in relation to French colonial history can be further explored. Dr. Ryan Calabretta-Sajder will also lead a video team documenting Italian heritage foodways as represented by the Tontitown Grape Festival and the annual Polenta Schmar.

In addition to generous funding from the Arkansas Humanities Council, this work is supported by the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, the Diane D. Blair Center of Southern Politics & Society, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the Arkansas Humanities Center, with further funding from the Departments of Art History, English, History, Dr. Linda Jones, and the German Section, World Languages.



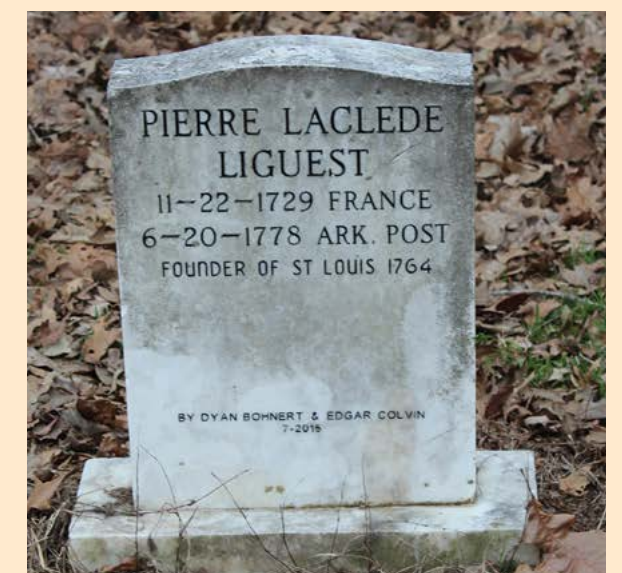
At left: Map of the cemeteries included in Project 365.

Above: Allison and Anna Belin clean a tombstone as part of Project 365.

Below: The gravemarker for Mary Wilson, born a slave in 1863.

While the primary beneficiary of this recovered past through Project 365 is indeed the Black descendants of deceased Arkansans, I am confident that the dedicated researchers of PAAC that volunteer their time for projects as important as this, under the guidance of its Project Director, will restore the histories of these individuals to public knowledge, and will unearth long-lost, long-buried, community and family roots. I am honored to serve on this worthwhile adventure for as long as it takes and extend a sincere show of gratitude to the Executive Director, Staff, and Board Members of the Arkansas Humanities Council and the National Endowment of the Humanities for recognizing that without the support of your grant

funding, unwritten pieces of African American history would go unrecorded. Thank you for your continued support of these valuable projects.







## Constitutional Connections

*We the People Programs Link Teachers and Public with Constitutional Scholars*

by Ann Clements, Education Outreach Coordinator

*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*

This 52-word paragraph, penned in that hot summer of 1787 in Philadelphia, clearly serves as an outline of the highest law of the United States. We know it simply as “the Preamble.” This idea of an introduction to the principles of our Constitution and democracy inspired the Arkansas Humanities Council’s *We the People* series.

Funded by a \$50,000 *More Perfect Union* grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Council planned a three-pronged approach to offer teachers and the general public opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of constitutional principles and democratic ideas that embrace our long journey to a more just and inclusive society. Comprised of a nine-part seminar series for 5-12th grade Arkansas teachers, a three-part public lecture series, and a subaward grant program for K-12 teachers, these free programs have given educators resources to assist in the teaching of Arkansas history, civics education, American democracy, and the U.S. and Arkansas Constitutions. They have also given the general public an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of our state and national constitutional governance and democracy.

Programs started in November 2021 and will conclude April 2023. To date, over 65 teachers applied to attend one or more of the professional development teacher seminars, 107 Arkansans attended one or more of the public lecture series programs, and four grants were awarded for classroom projects. For a full listing of the programs and topics, see the accompanying sidebar.

### **WE THE PEOPLE EDUCATOR SEMINAR SERIES**

The virtual teacher seminar series offers an in-depth look at the U.S. Constitution and Arkansas’s Constitutions. Teachers from 14 counties across the state have participated. Each recorded session is available for viewing on the Arkansas Humanities Council YouTube channel available for viewing on the

Arkansas Humanities Council’s YouTube Channel. Just search “Arkansas Humanities Council” on YouTube Seminars led by scholars in Arkansas History, U.S. Constitutional Law, Arkansas Constitutional Law, and retired Arkansas Supreme Court Justices provided considered and comprehensive information for teachers on various sections of the national and state documents. Along with earning professional development credit, teachers received complimentary copies of *American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith*, *American Legacy: The United States Constitution*, and the 1874 Arkansas Constitution with Amendments. In addition, various publications from leading constitutional and governmental scholars were given as door prizes, along with teacher and student sets of *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution*, published by the Center for Civic Education.

### **WE THE PEOPLE SUBAWARD GRANT PROGRAM**

In January 2022, the Council awarded four *We the People* grants for classroom projects. The grant award projects are:

#### **Deer Mt. Judea School District**

Celia Wortham  
\$1,000  
Grades K-3  
Studies Weekly for Virtual Learners

#### **Little Rock School District**

Dr. Anthony Newkirk/George West  
\$850  
Little Rock Central High School  
Tools for Teaching and Learning Difficult History: DBQ  
Grades 9-12  
Lesson Plans on Case Studies of Racial Violence & Racial Justice in Arkansas History

#### **Little Rock School District**

Jessica Taverna/George West  
\$650  
Little Rock Central High School  
Using Art Works as Gateway Lessons for Studying  
Grades 10-12 Art Classes  
Difficult History: Confronting Acts of Atrocity,  
Commemorating Acts of Justice

*continued on page 8*



**Little Rock School District**

Tamara McCormack/George West  
\$500

Little Rock Central High School  
Technology Tools for Teaching and Learning Difficult  
Grades 9-12 EAST Lab  
History: Lesson Plan for Digital Memorials Using  
Empathetic Mapping

Any lesson plans produced as a result of these grant projects will be available on the Council's "For Teachers" page on the website at

<https://arkansashumanitiescouncil.org/teachers/>

**WE THE PEOPLE LECTURE SERIES**

Free virtual events in November, January, and March provided wide-ranging information on the effects of U.S. and Arkansas constitutional law on Arkansas's history, landscape, and politics. Labeled as Constitutional Conversations, attendees heard from Skip Rutherford and Dean Terri Beiner, viewed a

roundtable discussion moderated by Roby Brock between Chief Justice John Dan Kemp, retired Justice Annabelle Clinton Imber Tuck, and 6th Judicial District Circuit Judge Earnest Brown, and learned about the history of Arkansas's five founding documents from Dr. David Ware, Kay Collett Goss, and Dr. Rodney Harris. Recordings of each lecture are available for viewing on the AHC's YouTube channel.

While logistically challenging to pull off during a pandemic, the 12 presentations over six months served as a reminder that we all have a responsibility to continue to follow the example set by our nation's founders as they came together to "form a more perfect Union" almost 250 years ago. This series provided much-needed tools and resources to teachers and the general public to spread humanities education across our state — a mission the Arkansas Humanities Council will continue in the months and years to come.

<p><b>November 11</b> Teacher Series 1: <i>The U.S. Constitution: The Politics of the Convention</i> Dr. Douglas Reed Moody Political Science Professor Ouachita Baptist University</p>	<p><b>Jan 25</b> Public Lecture: Panel Discussion moderated by Roby Brock Featuring Arkansas Supreme Court Chief Justice John Dan Kemp, Former Justice Annabelle Clinton Imber Tuck and Circuit Judge Earnest Brown</p>	<p><b>March 31</b> Teacher Series 6: <i>Arkansas Constitutions of 1836, 1861, and 1864</i> Dr. David Ware Arkansas State Historian and Director Arkansas State Archives</p>
<p><b>November 16</b> Opening Public Lecture: <i>A Constitutional Conversation</i> Skip Rutherford Interviews Dean Theresa Beier</p>	<p><b>Jan 27</b> Teacher Series 4: <i>The Bill of Rights: Amendments 1-10</i> Dr. Cherisse Jones Branch Dean of the Graduate School James and Wanda Lee Vaughn Endowed Professor of History Arkansas State University</p>	<p><b>April 7</b> Teacher Series 7: <i>Arkansas Constitution of 1868 and 1874</i> Kay Collett Goss author of <i>The Arkansas State Constitution: A Reference Guide</i></p>
<p><b>December 2</b> Teacher Series 2: <i>Constitutional Foundations: Ratification; Preamble; Articles 1, 2 &amp; 3</i> Dr. Hal Bass Professor Emeritus of Political Science Ouachita Baptist University</p>	<p><b>Feb 17</b> Teacher Series 5: <i>Governmental Authority, Processes and Procedures: Amendments 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27</i> Supreme Court Justices Courtney Hudson and Barbara Webb</p>	<p><b>April 26</b> Teacher Series 8: <i>Selected Amendments to the 1874 Arkansas Constitution</i> Dr. Rodney Harris Assistant Professor of History Williams Baptist University</p>
<p><b>Jan 13</b> Teacher Series 3: <i>From Montesquieu to Marijuana Legalization</i> Dr. Paul Babbitt Chair of History Political Science and Geography Southern Arkansas University</p>	<p><b>March 8</b> Concluding Public Lecture: <i>Arkansas's Constitutions</i> Dr. David Ware, moderator Kay Goss and Dr. Rodney Harris</p>	<p><b>All Programs Held Virtually</b></p>

# We the People Teacher Seminar Series Resource List

Provided by the Arkansas Humanities Council

This list contains resources mentioned or highlighted in the Arkansas Humanities Council 2021-2022 *We the People* Teacher Seminar series.

**WEBSITES WITH TEACHING MATERIALS AND RESOURCES**

- The Center for Civic Education  
<https://www.civiced.org/teaching-resources>
- National Constitution Center  
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/the-constitution>
- National Archives  
<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs>
- Docs Teach  
<https://www.docsteach.org/topics/constitution>
- EdSITEment  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/more-perfect-union-0>
- Clinton Presidential Library  
<https://www.clintonlibrary.gov/education/we-rule-civics-all-us>
- Arkansas State Archives  
<https://digitalheritage.arkansas.gov/constitutions/>
- Arkansas Supreme Court  
<https://www.arcourts.gov/courts/supreme-court>
- Judicial Education Resources  
<https://www.arcourts.gov/administration/public-education>
- Arkansas Judiciary – main page for all courts in AR  
<https://www.arcourts.gov>
- A Look at the Arkansas Supreme Court with Associate Justice Courtney Rae Hudson  
[https://youtu.be/\\_X7uiu2gz8](https://youtu.be/_X7uiu2gz8)
- Arkansas Constitution of 1874 with Amendments (2020)  
<https://codes.findlaw.com/ar/arkansas-constitution-of-1874/>
- Arkansas Humanities Council YouTube Channel  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuBvOV-vrIFF7KK5Ki1vEpSg>

**ADDITIONAL READINGS**

- The Words that Made Us: America's Constitutional Conversation 1760-1840  
Akhil Reed Amar
- America's Constitution: A Biography  
Akhil Reed Amar
- A User's Guide to Democracy: How America Works  
Nick Capodice and Hannah McCarthy
- We the People: The Citizen and Democracy Teacher's Guide Upper Elementary
- We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution Teacher's Guide Levels 2 and 3  
The Center for Civic Education
- American Democracy, A Great Leap of Faith  
National Museum of American History
- Women Making History: The 19th Amendment  
National Parks Service
- The Woman's Hour, Our Fight for the Right to Vote  
Young Reader's Edition  
Elaine Weiss
- Around America to Win the Vote, Two Suffragists, a Kitten and 10,000 Miles  
Mara Rockliff and Hadley Hooper
- Arkansas Politics and Government, 2nd Edition  
Diane Blair, Jay Barth
- Little Leaders, Bold Women in Black History  
Vashti Harrison
- Ida: A Sword Among Lions  
Paula J. Giddings
- Warriors Don't Cry  
Melba Pattillo Beals
- Arkansas Women: Their Lives and Times  
Dr. Cherisse Jones-Branch, Gary T. Edwards



# New Digital Exhibit Brings to Life 1980s and 1990s Arkansas History

by Acadia Roher and Anna Stitt



*The Women's Project: A Digital History* journeys through the 1980s and 1990s to bring to life the story of a multiracial organization in Arkansas that led and challenged social movements with its intersectional approach. The multimedia online exhibit is designed for use in high school and college classrooms as a jumping-off place for scholarly research, and as a catalyst for conversations across the state. You can visit the exhibit at [www.womensprojectstory.org](http://www.womensprojectstory.org).

The exhibit begins in the late 1970s during the backlash to decades-long struggles for liberation. After being elected president, Ronald Reagan fulfilled a campaign promise and cut social services, which deepened the economic vulnerability of many women and impacted their ability to leave abusive situations. All levels of government ramped up policing of Black and Brown neighborhoods and incarceration of their residents. HIV/AIDS swept the country, hitting Arkansas by the mid-1980s. The overlapping Christian Right and white power movements were establishing strongholds in the state. It was a bleak time for many.

Despite the challenges, women were building grassroots momentum to end gender-based violence. Incarcerated people were organizing to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS inside prisons. Black feminists were generating new thinking about relationships between struggles.

Rooted in the issues and movements of its time, the Women's Project helped advance local and national

thinking and action. Each chapter of the exhibit details an aspect of the organization's work through audio, video, text, and archival images that can inform our present and future.

- Chapter 1 traces the Women's Project's origins in the battered women's movement and its use of organizing and political education to challenge everything from child sexual abuse to lesbian battering.
- Chapter 2 tells the story of the Watchcare Network, a statewide initiative of mostly rural Arkansans who tracked and responded to hate violence.
- Chapter 3 explores two arenas in which the Women's Project added nuance to narratives around race, gender, and sexual violence in the face of pushback from other organizers, the media, and the wider public.
- Chapter 4 narrates some of the Women's Project's work in response to the AIDS crisis, rising incarceration, and the gutting of welfare through the 1980s and 1990s.
- Chapter 5 focuses on the Women's Project's use of literature, art, and music to expand organizing possibilities.
- Chapter 6 takes us inside the Women's Project's effort to shape an internal culture that dismantled hierarchies and practiced care.

The exhibit emerged from the work of the Arkansas People's History Project (APHP), with support and advice from many brilliant historians, oral historians, and organizers. APHP aims to facilitate collaborative documentation processes with the people who lived through histories of resistance and make these critical stories accessible to wide audiences. Given this focus, a key part of the exhibit design process was the involvement of an advisory group of former Women's Project members who weighed in on everything from the colors of the exhibit (to reflect the way the work and times felt) to the structure and flow of content.

The documentation process combined archival research, story circles, and oral histories. With the support of an Arkansas Humanities Council mini-grant,



Anna Stitt records an oral history with former Women's Project member Celia Wildroot at her home in 2019.



Women's Project Board and staff, 1995. Source: Women's Project Collection M95-03, University of Central Arkansas Archives.

we kicked off the documentation phase with a road trip around Arkansas in the summer of 2019 to record oral histories with former Women's Project members living in rural areas. When the pandemic hit, we moved the remaining documentation and exhibit design activities to the virtual world.

Our hope has always been to invite reflection on the past in ways that spark conversations about the future. With that in mind, we put together a discussion guide that is featured at the top of the exhibit's Resources page. It includes questions that can be used in classrooms, in community discussion groups, or for solo reflection.

We would love to know where and how the exhibit is being used, and we welcome ideas, questions, or feedback. Please feel free to reach out to us at [ar.peopleshistory@gmail.com](mailto:ar.peopleshistory@gmail.com).



## Introducing Hugh's Kids Club



Hi kids! Want to do interesting projects, play fun games, and earn cool stickers? Join Hugh's Kids Club! Have your parents fill out Hugh's sign-up sheet and receive a Hugh's Kids Club packet, full of fun project ideas, fun facts, and stickers for kids to earn as they learn. Packets also include a poster of Hugh for kids to add their stickers to and show how much they've done. Kids can even share their projects with Hugh for a chance to get featured in *Connect* magazine and the Arkansas Humanities Council website and our social media pages.

Hugh will feature a project in each issue of *Connect* magazine. Ready for the first project? Here it is! Get ready to learn about the humanities and earn your stickers!

### HUGH'S LESSON:

Every state has its own history, unique facts, and state symbols.

### Here are some fun facts about Arkansas

- Arkansas is the 25th state.
- It's the only state that produces diamonds.
- The state flower is the apple blossom.
- The state beverage is milk.
- The state butterfly is the Diana fritillary.
- The state insect is the honeybee.

### PROJECT

What is your favorite Arkansas symbol?

Children can submit drawings, crafts, poems, or stories about their favorite Arkansas symbol to [jbest@arkansashumanitiescouncil.org](mailto:jbest@arkansashumanitiescouncil.org)

For more fun facts and information, see the National Geographic Kids page on Arkansas.



Scan here to go to the National Geographic Kids website!



Join Today!







## The Dirty South: A Crystal Bridges Exhibit and Event

by Leah Miles, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

*The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture, and the Sonic Impulse*, organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Valerie Cassel Oliver, VMFA's Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, examines the aesthetic and musical traditions of southern Black culture in the past century, influences now common throughout the American South and contemporary American art and culture.

In an immersive experience that engages multiple senses, *The Dirty South* spotlights the southern landscape through its musical heritage, spiritual complexity, and regional swagger. The exhibition features works of sculpture, paintings, works on paper, assemblage, textiles, and music as well as ephemera from music culture, including instruments, music videos, costumes, lyrics, and personal effects. Ultimately, *The Dirty South* creates an engaging opportunity to experience a deeper understanding of the African American South and its undeniable imprint on the history of American art.

This exhibition explores the relationship between music and visual art in Black southern expression from 1920 to 2020, highlighting a narrative of persistence and power. The sonic impulse is present in all musical genres, from spirituals, gospel music, jazz, rhythm and blues, soul, funk, and the rise of southern hip-hop—a genre that gave new meaning to the term “Dirty South.” Artists like Sister Gertrude Morgan, Bo Diddley, James Brown, Sun Ra, and CeeLo Green are featured through sound and personal effects.

The evolution of these musical forms also emerges in material culture featured in the exhibition including a

SLAB, grillz, and stage costumes. An intergenerational group of visual artists including Beverly Buchanan, Alma Thomas, Bethany Collins, Minnie Evans, Kara Walker, Bill Traylor, Rita Mae Pettway, Sanford Biggers, Kerry James Marshall, Elizabeth Catlett, and many more, are placed in dialogue with one another, weaving academically trained artists with “intuitive intellectuals,” or folk artists. The intersections enable viewers to see the varied approaches to material as well as a broad range of visual art expressions shaped across time and geography.

In addition to the exhibition, Crystal Bridges is hosting The Dirty South Celebration Weekend from Friday, July 15th to Sunday, July 17th. One can immerse in the sounds and stories of The Dirty South with three days of performance, conversation, and celebration bringing together hip-hop artists, poets, scholars, curators, and more to explore the themes of The Dirty South like never before. From conversations on the history and influences behind a century of Black culture to live concerts featuring acclaimed artists, the public is invited to dive deep into the aesthetics, legacy, power, and complexity of the African American South.

*The Dirty South* is sponsored at Crystal Bridges in part by a grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, Harrison and Rhonda French Family, Catherine and Stephan Roche, Esther Silver-Parker, and Deborah Wright.



## Arkansas Humanities Council Seeks Next Generation Advisory Committee Members

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Next Generation Advisory Committee will be to provide insight, reflection, advocacy, diversity, direction, and consultation to the Arkansas Humanities Council board and staff.

Expectations: The Arkansas Humanities Council seeks individuals ages 18 - 35 to serve one two-year term on the Next Generation Advisory Committee.

1. Next Generation Advisory Committee members will be a part of a forward-thinking, innovative, and exciting team of individuals who will work closely with the Arkansas Humanities Council board and staff and participate in strategic planning and development of programs, initiatives, events, forums, and grant opportunities.

2. Next Generation Advisory Committee members will be asked to attend virtual or in-person quarterly meetings with AHC staff and periodic presentations and meetings with AHC board members.
3. Next Generation Advisory Committee members will have opportunities to attend local and national humanities conferences. Travel expenses for members attending quarterly meetings, board meetings, and/or conferences will be paid by the Arkansas Humanities Council.

If interested, please contact Tamisha Cheatham, Coordinator for Community Engagement, Arkansas Humanities Council at [tcheatham@arkansashumanitiescouncil.org](mailto:tcheatham@arkansashumanitiescouncil.org) or 501.353.0349.

## Arkansas Humanities Council Seeks Board Nominations

The Arkansas Humanities Council supports public understanding and appreciation of the humanities in Arkansas.

Founded in 1975, the Arkansas Humanities Council, a private 501 (c) 3, is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Through grant making, public programs, and education, the Council works with humanities scholars, nonprofit organizations, museums, and schools to promote the humanities statewide.

With six full-time staff, the Council is governed by a 24-member board of directors with representatives from across the state. Council board members are expected to attend three board meetings per year, participate in competitive grant reviews, serve on committee(s), assist in fundraising, and promote public awareness of the Arkansas Humanities Council and its mission.

Annually, the Council seeks nominations for vacant board positions to serve a 3-year term with re-nomination possible for a second 3-year term. Of the 24-member board, six are governor appointees.

We seek individuals from all walks of life who share a strong interest in the humanities. We strive to form a board that is diverse in terms of geographical areas, occupations, educational backgrounds, ethnic and racial identities, and generations. All service is voluntary but board members will be compensated for travel and lodging associated with all AHC meetings and activities.

The Arkansas Humanities Council is currently seeking board nominations. Those interested are welcome to nominate themselves. If nominations are submitted for someone else, the nominee must be informed and agree to be nominated. Nominations must be completed using the online nomination form: <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/AHC-Board-Nomination-Form>





## Welcome New Board Members



**Tim Nutt** is a Professor and Director of the Historical Research Center at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He was also a tenured Associate Professor in Special Collections at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville as the Manuscripts and Rare Books Librarian and served as the head of the department. He was recognized with a Distinguished Faculty Award by the UA Honors College for his mentorship of students in archival work.

Tim previously worked in the Technical Services and

Reference departments at the Central Arkansas Library System in Little Rock before becoming the founding Deputy Curator of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies at the Central Arkansas Library System. He co-created and served as the founding Managing Editor and Staff Historian of the award-winning Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture while at the Butler Center.

A native of Bigelow, Arkansas, Tim graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the University of Central Arkansas and a Masters of Library and Information Studies from the University of Oklahoma. He is a past president of the Arkansas Historical Association and a Certified Archivist.



**Lisa Speer** is a native Arkansan, who was born in Fayetteville and reared in Hot Spring County. She graduated from Ouachita Baptist University in 1988 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. While at Ouachita, Speer's undergraduate advisor introduced her to the works of Nobel Prize-winning author, William Faulkner, and also helped her secure

a graduate assistantship to pursue her Master of Arts degree in History at the University of Mississippi. By 1998, Speer had completed both an M.A. and Ph.D. in History with an emphasis on the American South at the University of Mississippi. While at the University of Mississippi, Speer took a job in the university's Archives and Special Collections Department, where she had the opportunity to work with original Faulkner manuscripts, as well as the papers of Mississippi writers Willie Morris, Barry Hannah, and Larry Brown.

Once she completed her doctorate, Speer moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to pursue her Master of Library and Information Studies degree, the terminal degree required for faculty employment at most American Library Association-accredited university libraries. During her time at the University of Alabama, Speer worked as Archival Technician, curating the multi-media collections at the William Stanley Hoole Archives and Special Collections on the UA campus.

After completing her MLIS degree in December 2000, Speer accepted the position of Special Collections Librarian at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, a

serene, bootheel town on the Mississippi River. Southeast Missouri State University's Archives is home to one of the world's four largest collections of material on William Faulkner, which was a major factor in attracting Speer to the job. For almost thirteen years, Speer had the pleasure of curating the Louis Daniel Brodsky Collection of William Faulkner materials, overseeing the library's Rare Book Room, administering the University Archives and Regional History collections, and working with the University's Historic Preservation academic program.

In April 2013, Speer was selected by the Arkansas History Commission to serve as the 6th Arkansas State Historian. During her almost five-year tenure, the agency launched an initiative to create lessons plans for Arkansas teachers (with the support of the Arkansas Humanities Council), began its first cycle with the National Digital Newspaper Project, obtained a gubernatorial mandate for Arkansas state agency records preservation, and assisted numerous counties with endangered records.

Since February 2018, Speer has worked at Ouachita Baptist University's Library, where she serves as Archivist. She also coordinates the Public History program in the Department of History, and teaches a variety of classes, including Archives, Local and Community History, and Museum Management, among others. Speer serves on the advisory board of the Clark County Historical Museum, the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas Historical Association, the board of the Arkansas Women's History Initiative, and is an active member of the Society of Southwest Archivists. She is a session elder at First Presbyterian Church, Arkadelphia. Speer resides in Arkadelphia with her two Pomeranians, Daisy and Sophia, and her cat, Sam.

## Your Support is Vital to Our Great State

by *Monika Hemenway, Director of Development and Communications*

The Arkansas Humanities Council has a long history of providing funding to nonprofit organizations. Since 1979, the Arkansas Humanities Council has awarded 2,426 grants furthering education and raising awareness of Arkansas's rich history, culture, and diversity to hundreds of thousands of people statewide and nationally.

The Arkansas Council on Economic Education, in partnership with Arkansas State Parks and the Bessie B. Moore Center for Economic Education at the University of Arkansas, received a major grant to provide teacher professional development focusing on the economic impact of Arkansas State Parks. A total of 151 Arkansas educators reached more than 9,500 students who learned about and participated in activities focusing on Arkansas State Parks, economics, history, and culture, along with fun activities that engaged students in the classroom.

The Calico Rock Community Foundation received a CARES Act grant to assist with challenges brought about by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Without the CARES Act Grants, the Calico Rock Museum and Visitor Center would have permanently closed. Period. The grants provided the money to rehire staff and reopen the museum.

Jonesboro High School received a REACH grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council to further develop its African American history curriculum. Teachers developed new and innovative lesson plans, and students wrote essays, visited the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, read the book, *The March*, and listened to a lecture about the Civil Rights Era by Dr. Cherisse Jones-Branch, the Arkansas State University Graduate School Dean and Vaughn Endowed Professor of History. Through these opportunities, 42 students created an iMovie presentation that they shared with other history classes, reaching more than 1,200 students.

Through our mission, the Arkansas Humanities Council empowers Arkansans to connect with the humanities by encouraging the discovery and understanding of our diverse and mutual experiences.

Will you consider joining the Arkansas Humanities Council in empowering Arkansans to make a difference through your donations today? If so, your tax-deductible donations can be made by visiting our website at [arkansashumanitiescouncil.org](http://arkansashumanitiescouncil.org). Thank you!





## What's Past is Prologue

by Kim Coryat, Retired Archivist and AHC Board Member



Kim Coryat

When I was 11 years old, we moved to Dobbs Ferry, New York, following my father's new job from one coast to the other. My parents apparently never considered the effect of moving mid-school year on their four kids and consequently we were invariably thrust into new classrooms full of strangers every couple of years. Not

only that, the places we moved to didn't have a lot of turnover so we were usually the only new kids anyone had ever met. So, it was over Christmas of 1967 we left sunny California by car and traveled east into (what seemed to me) an increasingly gloomy and cold future.

I was a shy child and grew more withdrawn with every move. I also hated school. ALL school, every school I ever attended. Because I was afraid to speak up for myself, I was a natural victim of whatever bullying went on in the schoolyard and bathrooms and hallways and on the path homeward every day. School for me was nothing but torture. The first 18 months we lived in Dobbs Ferry I did my best to avoid being beaten up or humiliated but it invariably happened anyway. After being ambushed in the girl's bathroom I took to using the toilet at the gas station across the street from the school. Every day after school I ran a circuitous route to get to the viaduct which led to our street and literally hid in the bushes or under people's porches to avoid the stalking girl gang led by Debbie Moretti. I faked illness and symptoms daily to try to stay home. I was always afraid to tell an adult because I was sure Debbie would order my execution. Then one day everything changed.

Like many introverted kids I was a voracious reader and lived for the Scholastic Book Fair. My parents didn't stint on my book purchases and that morning in the spring of 8th grade I had a ten-dollar bill to spend at the fair during lunch time. We weren't allowed to have anything at our desks except school supplies and books so my money was in my lunch box in the coat

closet. Every now and then Debbie and her friends would barricade themselves in the coat closet just before class started and rifle everyone's' belongings for lunch money and Twinkies (Debbie loved Twinkies). You guessed it - that morning my ten-dollar bill vanished. The blatant bold-faced theft, over a year of being bullied and the impotence a child experiences when being victimized, and finally, the injustice of not being able to buy the books I wanted galvanized me into action. I told my teacher.

Long story short (I know, too late), to my horror I was made to personally confront Debbie and her pals by the assistant principal and say yes, these are the ones who locked themselves in the coat closet. There wasn't a real emphasis on personal rights of juveniles in the late 60s - the authorities searched the girls' purses and pockets and found a significant amount of money including my carefully folded ten-dollar bill. And to my surprise, instead of taking revenge, Debbie and her tribe decided I was no longer easy prey. Oh, I was still on their "list" but as long as I stayed out of their way, they no longer actively hunted me. So, my life became instantly less stressful and I made it out of eighth grade alive.

After an eventful summer during which I learned to smoke cigarettes I learned a new word the first day of high school: HUMANITIES. Dobbs Ferry Senior High School was one of several sponsoring a new approach to teaching the humanities as a block. The project combined history, music, art, and language studies of one period — in our case it was Ancient Greece and Rome — and focused all classes in those subjects on that era. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday virtually the entire day was devoted to studying aspects of that era of human history. There were field trips to see the Greek urns at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. We studied the history and literature in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, drew maps, learned songs, and wrote plays. Suddenly school was not a complete horror show that had to be endured, it became a wonder to explore. Yes, there was still Tuesday and Thursday to get through, we still had science and Spanish and math and civics and the other boring stuff but most of the week was taken up with HUMANITIES. I began to take an interest in school and started to do better. I only had that year as a freshman in DFSHS and then we moved again but the seed of learning enjoyment had finally been planted.



I wish I could say I blossomed into a straight A student and graduated with honors but alas, DFSHS was the first of three high schools and I dropped out as a senior. I did, however, start taking history classes during my first career in the Air Force and matriculated after retirement with a double major in history and psychology. I graduated summa cum laude and went on to two years of grad school at the University of Vermont in Women's Labor History. Studying as an historian gave me the opportunity to become an archivist in a Presidential Library where I spent a wonderful second career working with the papers of an eight-year presidential administration.

Humanities opened the door to learning for me and I was very excited when given the opportunity to serve on the board of the Arkansas Humanities Council. I was glad to work with the Council to promote projects involving early literacy, a cause close to my heart. I wanted to help share the wonder that studying humanities can bring.

It's very true that "what's past is prologue," as in, what we learn from our history helps us prepare for and face the future. This quote from Shakespeare is engraved at the base of a statue in front of the National Archives and Records Administration building in Washington DC.



## The Accent Project

When Ben Corbett, Assistant Professor of Theatre-Voice and Acting at the University of Arkansas, was asked if he wanted to write a book as part of the research component of this professorial responsibility, he had an immediate answer:

“No. Absolutely not.”

As an actor and vocal coach, Ben was more comfortable in the world of the spoken word, in breathing, vibrations, resonance, and the work inherent in speaking clearly and believably. So, he wanted to have a research project that would deal with live communication. He also realized that, as a transplant to Arkansas from Oklahoma, he knew very little about Arkansas culture. In particular, he could not recognize an Arkansas accent.

So, he decided to make a movie.

The *Arkansas Accent Project* is a short documentary that will draw upon interviews of native Arkansans collected from five major Arkansan geographical regions: the Ozarks, the Arkansas River Valley, the Ouachitas, the Coastal Plain, and the Delta. The film will illuminate the various accents of this state and the people who claim Arkansas as their home. In doing so, it will help expand the understanding of who our people are and how their speech makes the Arkansas accent unique among Southern accents.

To make this movie, Ben began interviewing various volunteers from around the state. In giving them a short passage to read from a short story about a goose going to the vet called “Comma Gets a Cure,” and having them talk about their daily lives, he noted the volunteers’ use of vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and word usage. Then, in partnership with the International Dialects of English Archive, [www.dialectsarchives.com](http://www.dialectsarchives.com), he shared his findings with the global voice and acting community.

He found some interesting commonalities in the speech of his volunteers:

The /g/ consonant in “-ing” ending words is uniformly dropped. For example, “runnin” or “goin,” and the consonant /r/ is strong and lengthened, often overpowering the vowel that comes before it.

Perhaps the most unique to Arkansas accents is the /u/ vowel. Words like “goose” often receive extra emphasis (guhOOse), with a short “uh” sounds, known as a schwa, preceding (guhOOse).



Ben Corbett

So, an example of an Arkansas accent may be:

“That Arkinsah guhOOse is rrunnin’ rreal fast. It’s gettin’ away!”

He also found that the name of this state has more than one way of being said. Some Arkansans from urban counties may say “Arkansaaaaah” with the last vowel rhyming with “mama” or “calm,” keeping their lips relatively flat. Others from more rural parts of the state may say “Arkansawwww” with the last vowel rhyming with “fall,” rounding their lips.

Rural Arkansan speakers may also drop “t”s and “d”s from the ends of words, or change the diphthong /er/ (face) to /ar/ (price). So, the sentence above may sound like:

“Tha’ Arkinsawww guhOOse is rrunnin’ rreal fas’. It’s getting’ awaahyy!”

Ben also found that these accents may differ based on race. A Black Arkansan may shorten the diphthong /er/ (face) or change the short /a/ sound, like in the word “TRAP,” to the “e” sound in the word “DRESS.” A Vietnamese Arkansan from central Arkansas may have a mix of a few white Arkansan accent characteristics and the Vietnamese accent qualities he heard growing up. A Latinx Arkansan may have a full Latin accent save for one or two recognizable Arkansas changes. As he continued his study, Ben asked himself, “If all these people were born and raised in Arkansas, can all these accents be considered Arkansan? If they are all ‘from here,’ could the Arkansas accent have more than one sound, one flavor? If not, why?”

Ben Corbett and Ringo Jones, a producer on this film and an Assistant Professor in the Communications Department of U of A, are currently in pre-production for this film thanks to grants from AHC and the University of Arkansas. Production will begin in the summer of 2022, with editing occurring in the following fall. They plan to submit the film to both regional and national film festivals.

“My hope is that this documentary broadens the understanding of the Arkansas accent, proving that many people and cultures have the right to identify as Arkansans. *The Arkansas Accent Project: a Documentary* could play an important role in the promotion of diversity and cultural identity in this state.”

## Conversation Series on War in Ukraine

by Tamisha Cheatham, Coordinator for Community Engagement



On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. Since then, there’s been daily coverage of the invasion, troop movements, the unfolding humanitarian crisis, the major players: Russia’s President Vladimir Putin, Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky, and various Western leaders as they attempt to effectively counter this threat to the current political and economic order that has been in place since the end of World War II.

What are we to make of this? How did we get to this point? Why is Ukraine so contested? What does it mean that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) deployed its response force for the first time in its over seventy-year existence?

Though there is no shortage of information about the war in Ukraine via various news outlets and social media, the volume of information, often lacking in nuance, can make it challenging to understand what’s happening.

Over several weeks this spring, the Arkansas Humanities Council will bring in scholars to discuss the war in Ukraine and its implications. The program kicked off on April 19, 2022 with a conversation featuring the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville’s

Professor Christopher Kelley. Kelley is an Associate Professor of Law who has served as a nonresident professor at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv Law Institute for almost a decade. Professor Kelley began teaching in Ukraine in 2005 as a Fulbright Scholar at the Kharkiv National Agrarian University and the Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs.

This examination of the war in Ukraine will continue through the end of May 2022. For more information, please visit the Arkansas Humanities Council website at [www.arkansashumanitiescouncil.org](http://www.arkansashumanitiescouncil.org).

**May 12, 6-7:30 PM, Professor Christopher Kelley**

**May 17, 6-7:30 PM, Andrew Lohsen**

Andrew Lohsen is a fellow in the Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Prior to joining CSIS in August 2021, Lohsen served as a monitoring officer and political analyst with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, where he supported efforts to resolve Europe’s only active armed conflict.



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# Access to the Humanities: Universal Design

*Melanie Thornton*

*Coordinator of Access and Equity Outreach*

*University of Arkansas — Partners for Inclusive Communities*



The term “Universal Design” was first used by Ron Mace, founder and program director of The Center for Universal Design. Universal design is defined as “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.”

The crafters of these principles recognized the power that design has to include or exclude Disabled people. They also promoted the idea that accessible design can be aesthetically pleasing. When access is considered during the planning phase of the design, inclusive design can, in fact, be beautiful.

While the concept of universal design originated with the built environment, it is now applied in education and digital environments. Adopting a philosophy of universal design challenges us to think in new ways. When we anticipate the variety of settings and conditions in which people perform a task or use an object, we can design the process, course, or object with those diverse possibilities in mind.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- **Equitable Use** — The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
- **Flexibility in Use** — The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- **Simple and Intuitive Use** — The use of design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
- **Perceptible Information** — The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.
- **Tolerance for Error** — The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
- **Low Physical Effort** — The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with minimum fatigue.
- **Size and Space for Approach and Use** — Appropriate size and space are provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility.

*Source: North Carolina State University, Center for Universal Design*