



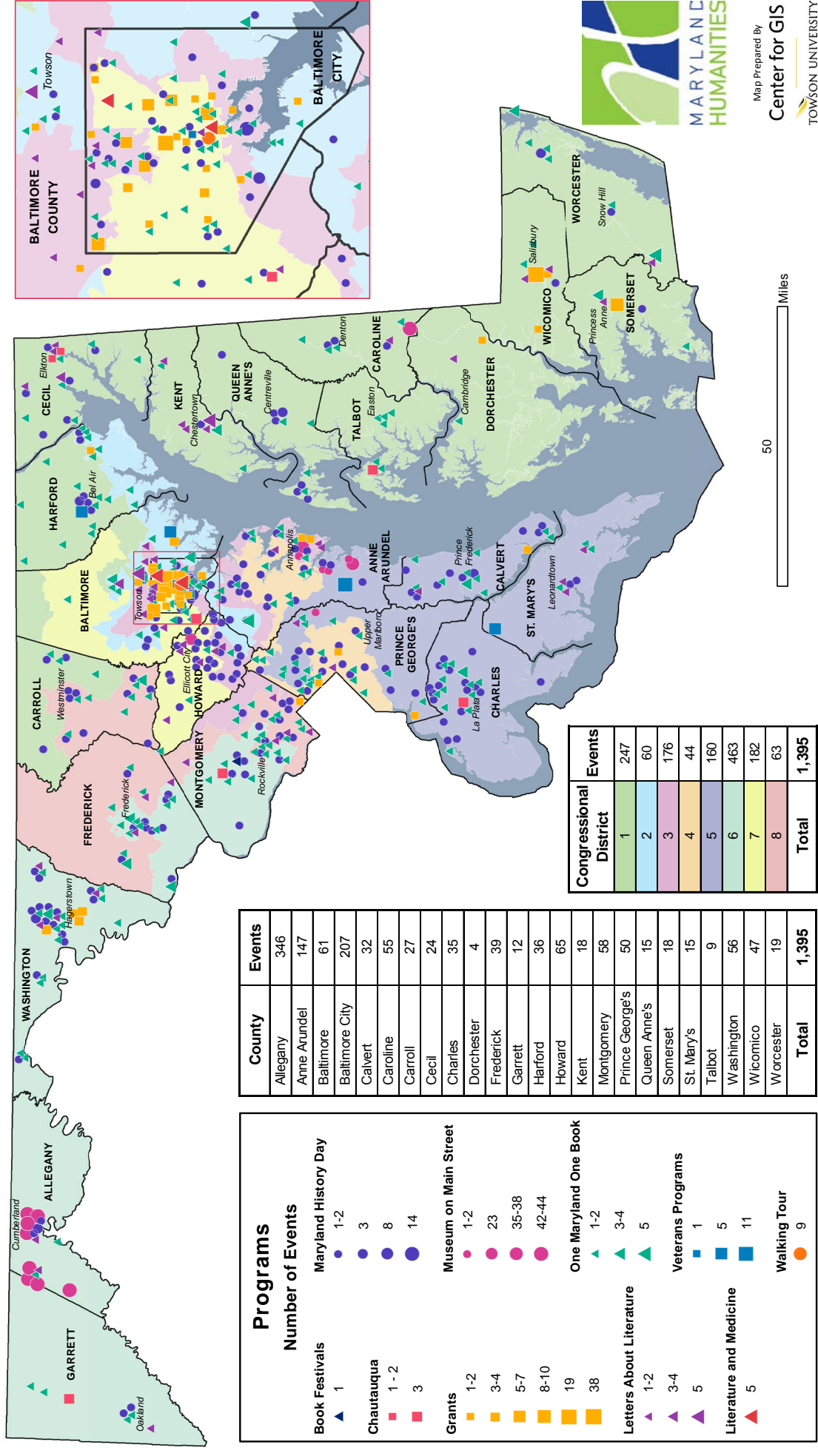
MARYLAND HUMANITIES COUNCIL

Opening eyes. Opening ears. Opening minds.



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Maryland Humanities Council | Program Activities November 2014 - October 2015



MISSION

The Maryland Humanities Council creates and supports educational experiences in the humanities that inspire all Marylanders to embrace lifelong learning, exchange ideas openly, and enrich their communities. Through collaborations with local partners in every county and Baltimore City, we offer the humanities both for their inherent pleasure and for their tremendous power to transform. Thank you for joining us on this journey—we can't do this important work without you.

WELCOME

It's been a transformative year for us at the Maryland Humanities Council. In 2015, we began pursuing our ambitious Vision 2020 plan for the future.

Thanks to the amazing support of our partners, participants, collaborators, and donors, we were able to serve more youth, adults, and elders than ever before with inspiring, high-quality, free humanities activities. We were also able to reach more than 10% of the state's residents through grant-supported projects, fairs and festivals, online engagement, and our weekly radio program.

Let us be abundantly clear: this is only possible because you believe in the tremendous impact of the humanities and our ability to bring them to communities statewide. Thank you for your commitment.

Please enjoy a few moments savoring what you made possible for the Maryland Humanities Council and hundreds of thousands of your friends, colleagues, and neighbors last year. We think you'll be touched by the joy you see on the faces here. What a future we have ahead of us. Thank you!



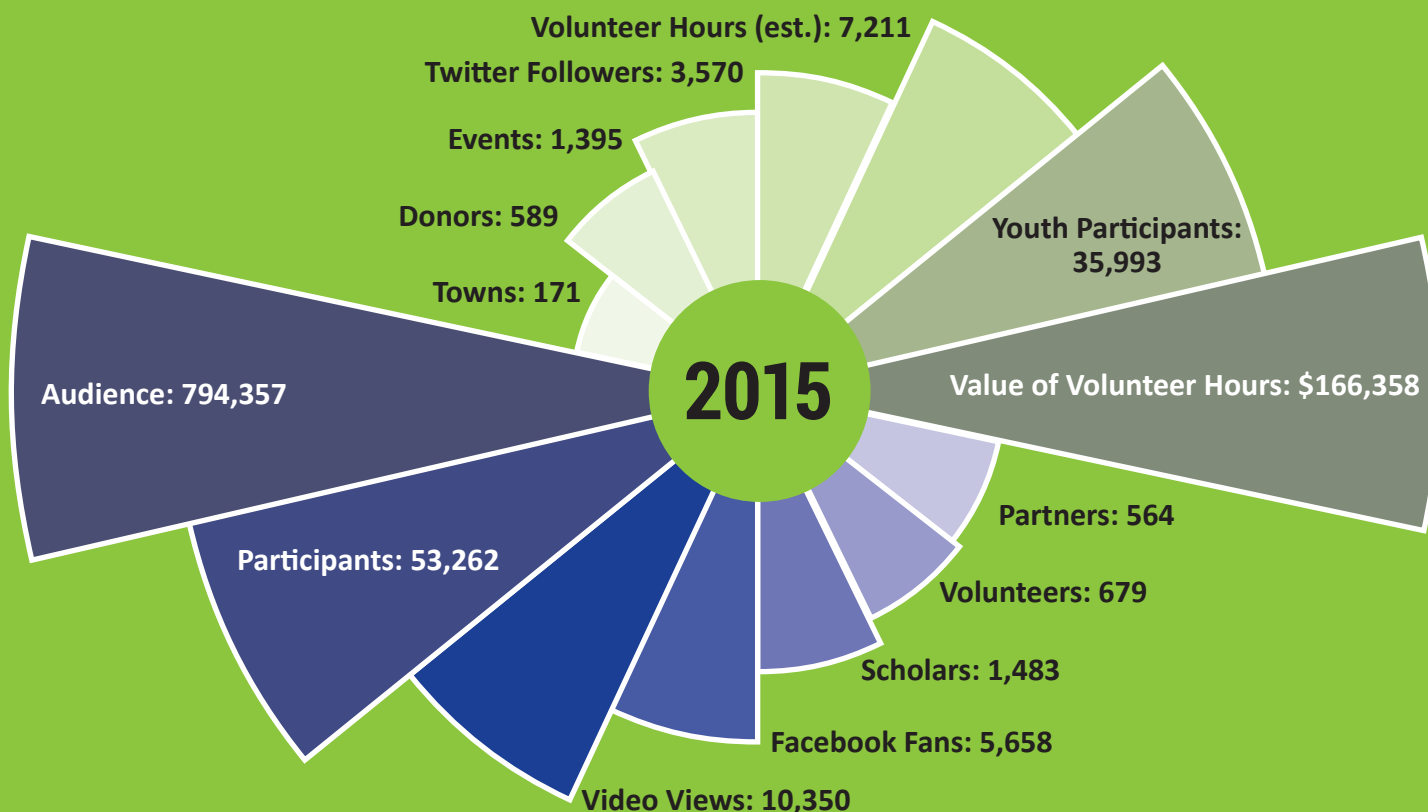
Hon. Stephen J. Sfekas
Chair, Board of Directors



Phoebe Stein
Executive Director

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

Thanks to your tremendous generosity—our supporters, partners, and friends—we are able to offer substantive, impactful humanities programs throughout Maryland. Here's a snapshot of our Fiscal Year 2015 (Nov 2014–Oct 2015).



INSPIRING YOUTH

The Maryland Humanities Council is devoted to cultivating a thirst for lifelong learning. A curious, seeking intellect nurtured from childhood is invaluable to future success. Making sure that youth also have opportunities to build critical thinking and writing skills is essential to this nourishment. By giving them a solid foundation in the humanities, they're better prepared to be civically and culturally engaged adults. That's why some of MHC's most impactful programs serve students in public, private, and home schools.

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE



Letters About Literature fosters a love of reading while honing students' creative, analytical, and writing skills. In this national contest, young people pen personal essays to authors whose work has had a profound effect on them. Each spring, Maryland's finalists and winners are honored, along with an outstanding educator. Among those honored in 2015 was Level I winner Dhruv Pai—pictured above with his proud parents—for his letter to Daniel Handler, aka Lemony Snicket.



ONE MARYLAND ONE BOOK



One Maryland One Book is a dynamic program for both youth and adults. MHC provides thousands of free copies of the chosen book to schools, libraries, and community partners annually. An estimated 10,000 students are reading, analyzing, and applying themes explored to their own lives. Several hundred Baltimore City and Prince George's County Public Schools students also met the author during a special event at a local university that includes a campus tour.

Taking part can be transformational for readers. A Baltimore County teacher shared that one of her students—a young man who works a full-time job in fast food in addition to attending high school—wrote her a thank you letter after reading and discussing *The Boys in the Boat*, stating that it had changed his life. Daniel James Brown's bestselling account of the underdog University of Washington men's crew team that shocked the world at the 1936 Berlin Olympics was the extremely popular selection last year.



MARYLAND HISTORY DAY



The program experienced its highest participation level last year among students since its launch. Among the dozens of student competitors who advanced to the national competition was Alayna Stepp, senior group website category honoree from Frederick County, pictured at left with Amanda Conn from the Maryland State Department of Education.

Students who progress to the national contest trade state pins. Grady Fort, junior individual website honoree from Calvert County, was especially successful in this cherished tradition.



Maryland History Day gives middle and high school students a solid base in critical thinking, research and analysis, writing, and public speaking. Working solo or in small groups, students create original documentaries, exhibits, performances, research papers, or websites exploring a tremendous breadth of historical topics. Students progress through competitions at the school, district, state, and national levels. A national study found History Day participants outperform peers on state assessments in social studies, as well as reading, science, and math.



Maryland History Day has a profound and lasting effect on participating students, many of whom go on to careers informed by their experiences. **Alexandria Ligon**, an honoree last year in the senior individual exhibits category, recently spoke to students competing this year in Montgomery County. She shared her reflections on how participation impacted her, some of which are excerpted here.

"My project was an exhibit board about Madame C.J. Walker. As a young black girl, I had a growing interest in learning about my hair and caring for it. So Madame Walker's story was a perfect fit. I thought that Madame Walker's legacy was under appreciated, so I felt a responsibility to educate myself and share my knowledge with others."

*Along the journey I acquired so many mentors. **For once, I felt that my voice mattered. History Day is more than a school project. It taught me that you can do anything you put your mind to.** Believe in your dreams, they are more than just what your parents tell you to feel good about yourself."*

I simply want to encourage you all to take this journey seriously, as it can change your future for the better. Take pride in your work, speak up – and you will reap the benefits."

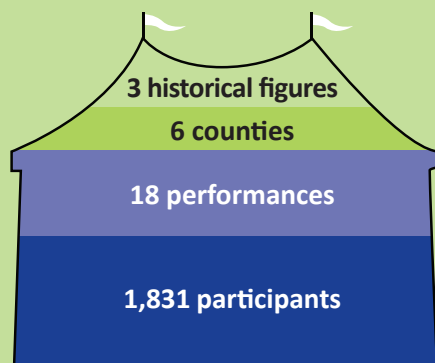




ENRICHING COMMUNITIES

Gathering with friends and strangers, classmates and coworkers. Sharing our stories with one another. Examining history to give context to our current moment. Spurring conversations across cultural, economic, and generational divides. Providing crucial grants for educational and cultural projects. These are just some of the ways in which the Maryland Humanities Council brings Marylanders together to enrich their communities.

CHAUTAUQUA



Got Stories and Memories?

Discuss and map memories of living and working in Baltimore's historic industrial communities.



Baybrook Mapping Dialogue



Sparrows Point Mapping Dialogue

Clockwise from top: Museum on Main Street, Federalsburg; Chautauqua, Catonsville; Museum on Main Street, Cumberland; Grants, Baltimore; Veterans Standing Together, Harwood



MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET

Hometown Teams

STATS



Clockwise from top left: Museum on Main Street, Annapolis; Museum on Main Street, Federalsburg



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Glennor Shirley • Columbia • Donor since 2010

Why is MHC's work important to you?

MHC is important to me because of its programs of inclusive community engagement, its use of various educational media to help open minds, and the willingness of staff to travel across Maryland to ensure this. The book donations to the Correctional Libraries resulted in many lively book discussions among prisoners.

What would you tell others to inspire them to support MHC?

MHC reaches out to all communities resulting in "something for everyone." Your financial contribution, no matter how small, will help to ensure the continuation and expansion of their educational programs, visits, book discussions, and displays.

Shirley pictured with 2011 One Maryland One Book author Sherman Alexie

PARTNERS

The Maryland Humanities Council is able to serve every corner of the state thanks to our amazing local partners. The following is just a partial list of the hundreds of cultural, educational, government, historical, and social service organizations that help bring the humanities to your community.

Statewide

Maryland Public Television
Maryland State Arts Council

Allegany County

Allegany College of Maryland
Allegany County Library
Allegany County Public Schools
Allegany Museum
Bishop Walsh School
C. William Gilchrist Museum of the Arts
Frostburg Museum
Frostburg State University
Gorden Roberts House
Main Street Books
Mountain City Traditional Arts
North Branch Correctional
Institution Library

Anne Arundel County

AIA Maryland Gallery
Annapolis Bookstore & Café
Anne Arundel County Cultural
Resources Division of the
Office of Planning and Zoning
Anne Arundel County Public Library
Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Anne Arundel County Reading Council
Banneker-Douglass Museum
Galesville Community Center
James Brice House
The Key School
Kunta Kinte Resource Center,
Sojourner Douglass College
St. Anne's School of Annapolis
Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center

Baltimore City

Bais Yaakov of Baltimore High School
Baltimore Book Festival
Baltimore City Public Schools
Baltimore Rowing & Resource Center
Baltimore Rowing Club
Bryn Mawr School
Civic Works
Enoch Pratt Free Library
Frederick Douglass Isaac Maritime Park
Friendship Academy of Engineering
and Technology
Gilman School
Good Samaritan Hospital
Institute of Notre Dame
Jernigan Institute at the National
Federation of the Blind
Jewish Museum of Maryland
Kreiger Schechter Day School
Loyola University Maryland
Lubavitch Homeschool Umbrella Group
Maryland Historical Society
Maryland Library for the Blind &
Physically Handicapped
Mercy Medical Center
Mount Clare Museum House
Mount Saint Joseph High School
Notre Dame of Maryland University
Painted Screen Society of Baltimore
St. Joseph School, Fullerton
The Seton Keough School
University of Baltimore Bob Parsons
Veterans Center
Wide Angle Youth Media
WYPR 88.1 FM

Baltimore County

Baltimore County Public Library
Baltimore County Public Schools
Boys' Latin School of Maryland
Calvert Hall College High School
City County Discerning Readers
Community College of Baltimore County
Maryland School for the Blind
Notre Dame Preparatory School
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

Calvert County

American Chestnut Land Trust
Warrior's Rest Sanctuary
Calvert County Public Schools
Calvert Library
End Hunger Warehouse
Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum

Caroline County

Caroline County Public Library
Caroline County Public Schools
Federalsburg Historical Society Museum

Carroll County

Carroll County Public Library
Carroll County Public Schools
Carroll County Youth Services Bureau
Fairhaven
Mount Airy Senior Center

Cecil County

Cecil College Elkton Station
Cecil County Public Library
Cecil County Public Schools
Immaculate Conception School
The Tome School

Charles County

Alpha Delta Kappa -
Maryland Alpha Beta Chapter
Charles County Public Library
Charles County Public Schools
Clark Senior Center
College Of Southern Maryland
Father Andrew White School
Grace Lutheran School
Indian Head Senior Center
Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy
St. Mary's Bryantown School

Dorchester County

Dorchester County Public Schools
Nanticoke Historic Preservation Alliance
Win Transport

Frederick County

Frederick Community College
Frederick County Public Libraries
Frederick County Public Schools
Frederick Homeschoolers
Maryland School for the Deaf
St. Johns Catholic Prep
Private High School

Garrett County

Garrett College
Garrett County Public Schools
Ruth Enlow Library of Garrett County

Harford County

Harford Community College

Harford County Public Library
Harford County Public Schools
The John Carroll School
Sacred Heart Homeschool

Howard County

Avaya
EZ Readers Book Club
Howard County Historical Society
Howard County Public Schools
Howard County Recreation and Parks
Howard County Tourism and Promotion
Jo Orser Bookclub
St. Andrew's Episcopal School
St. Augustine School

Kent County

Kent County Public Library
Kent County Public Schools
Radcliffe Creek School

Montgomery County

Barrie School
Bullis School
Community Mediation Maryland
Gaithersburg Book Festival
Green Acres School
Montgomery College
Montgomery County Historical Society
Montgomery County Public Libraries
Montgomery County Public Schools
Primary Readers Book Club
Retired Teachers Book Club
Rockville Senior Center Book Club
School For Tomorrow
St. John the Baptist
Washington Episcopal School

Prince George's County

Accokeek Academy
Accokeek Foundation
Afro American Historical &
Genealogical Society, Prince George's
County Maryland Chapter
ArtSi Riverdale
Chesapeake Math & IT Academy
College Park Academy
From the Heart Christian School
Montpelier Arts Center
Prince George's Arts &
Humanities Council
Prince George's County
Memorial Library System
Prince George's County Public Schools
Riverdale Presbyterian Church and
University Park
St. Ambrose School

Queen Anne's County

Chesapeake College
Queen Anne's County Library
Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Somerset County

Maryland Correctional Library
Somerset County Library
Somerset County Public Schools
University of Maryland, Eastern Shore

St. Mary's County

St. Mary's County Library
St. Mary's County Public Schools
St. Mary's Ryken High School

Talbot County

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum
Londonderry Book Club
Talbot County Public Schools
Talbot County Free Library

Washington County

Barbara Ingram School for the Arts
Knob Hall Winery
Maryland Correctional Institute
Maryland Correctional Training Facility
Roxbury Correctional Institute
Washington County Detention Center
Washington County Free Library
Washington County Public Schools

Wicomico County

Bossermand Center for Conflict
Eastern Correctional Institution
Migrant Clinicians Network
Poplar Hill
Salisbury University
Wicomico County Public Schools
Wicomico Public Library
Wor-Wic Community College

Worcester County

Worcester County Library
Worcester County Public Schools

District of Columbia

Federation of State Humanities Councils
Library of Congress
National Book Festival
National Humanities Alliance
PEN/Faulkner Foundation

*Below: Museum on Main Street,
Annapolis*



SCHWARTZ PRIZE



Museum on Main Street activities in Galesville. Clockwise from top left: Hot Sox Documentary Quilt, Hot Sox Reunion Lunch, "Gertrude's Way" Ribbon Cutting

Last year, our collaboration with the **Galesville Community Center** was honored with the **Federation of State Humanities Council's Schwartz Prize**, a national award for outstanding public humanities programming. A host site for our **Museum on Main Street** program, the Galesville Community Center and its local partners presented the **Smithsonian's Hometown Teams** traveling exhibition and a multi-faceted companion project, **"Field of Dreams: Home Grown History,"** preserving and celebrating the vital history of this small Anne Arundel County town. Among the many activities that galvanized local residents were the sewing of a community quilt, a reunion of the Hot Sox Negro League baseball team, and an oral history project conducted by South River High School students in dialogue with community elders.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Greg Sesek • Baltimore • Donor Since 2012

Why is MHC's work important to you? What impact has it had on your community?

I am a Marylander, a lifelong late thirtysomething Baltimore City resident, and have worked in the arts and community development my entire career. I know the transformative power that comes from speaking and being heard. Too many people in our communities feel invisible, and as a social worker, I see this on a daily basis. Individuals communicate with us however they can. MHC creates opportunities for us to speak and be heard through their wonderful programs and the skills they teach. I hope you will participate.

What would you tell others to inspire them to support MHC?

MHC creates opportunities to engage people across our diverse state, children and adults, leaders in our communities and new Americans. I am inspired when I see young people recognized for their elegant self-revelations at the Letters About Literature program. Bright minds have to be encouraged and developed. The humanities are the tools for creating atmospheres of mutual respect and societies capable of recognizing the dignity of each voice. You will experience this if you participate in MHC programs, plus you will have some fun. I can't think of a better place to meet new friends.

GRANTS

MHC supports innovative humanities projects with grants of up to \$10,000. During Fiscal Year 2015, we awarded 17 grants totaling \$87,600. Recipient organizations came from five Maryland counties and Baltimore City, as well as the District of Columbia. All grants were leveraged to secure additional community supporting funds, totaling \$837,005 for all recipients.

Allegany County

Frostburg State University
Humanities, History and Social Ethics in Appalachia
\$1,200

Anne Arundel County

Annapolis Community Foundation
Treaty of Paris Center
\$1,200

Historic Annapolis Foundation

Teacher Workshops on 18th Century Slavery
and African American History
\$1,200

Lost Towns Project

Four Rivers Heritage Area in 40 Artifacts:
Accessing the County's Archaeological Collections
\$3,400

Baltimore City

American Institute of Architects, Baltimore
Uncovering the History of Past Women Architects
\$2,500

Arts Every Day

A Walk through Shakespeare
\$3,400

City Neighbors Foundation

Does History Matter?: A Student Exploration
and Documentary
\$1,200

Fells Point Creative Alliance

Después de la Frontera/After the Border
\$10,000

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African-American History & Culture

Ruth Starr Rose (1896–1965): Revelations of
African American Life in Maryland and the World
\$6,750

The Walters Art Museum

Humanities Programming for "Pearls on a String:
Art in the Age of Great Islamic Empires"
\$10,000

Baltimore County

Historic Hampton
Historic Hampton: Where Maryland History
Inspires Art and Innovation
\$5,000

Stevenson University

New Roots
\$8,800

Towson University

Visions of Place: Complex Geographies
in Contemporary Israeli Art
\$6,000

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Mapping Dialogues: Deindustrialization in Baltimore
\$10,000

Dorchester County

Nanticoke Historic Preservation Alliance
2015 Nanticoke River Jamboree: "Fire!"
\$1,200

Harford County

Harford Community College Foundation
Voices of Change: Social Protest through the
Arts & Humanities
\$9,750

District of Columbia

The Ciesla Foundation
Rosenwald Documentary
\$6,000



Keith Stone
Baltimore
Volunteer since 2014

Why is MHC's work important to you?

My mom was a Montessori teacher so I've been around

the humanities most of my life. Looking back, I have no doubt that the opportunities I had to engage with the humanities in a variety of different ways (e.g., libraries, museums, etc.) played a pivotal role in shaping who I am today. I really connect with MHC's mission of lifelong learning, and I'm excited to be a part of an organization that is so dedicated to making sure that all Marylanders have the opportunity to engage with the humanities.

What is your favorite MHC experience or memory?

As a Board Member, I've been fortunate to attend a lot of the great programming supported by MHC. I'm probably the most proud of the organization's response to the protests that swept Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray. In the fall of 2015, MHC established a new special grant

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

program called the Humanities Fund for Baltimore and recently has started funding the first slate of applicants. I had the privilege of reviewing grant proposals, and I continue to be amazed by the number of groups that are using the humanities to help move this city forward. Unfortunately, we aren't able to fund every applicant, but I'm thrilled that we were able to step up and help support some of the fantastic organizations that are using the humanities to address the deep-rooted problems facing the city of Baltimore. [Please see page 15, "Looking Ahead," for more information.—Ed.]

What would you tell others to inspire them to support MHC?

Often times, we don't realize how much of our everyday experience is influenced by the humanities. Reading your favorite book. Going to an art or history museum. Admiring the architecture that surrounds you. Each of these experiences is an exploration of the humanities. MHC is inspired by these daily interactions, and we strive to enable the continued exploration of humanities content for all Marylanders, regardless of age, economic status, race, location, or any other factor. The work of MHC is not possible without your support.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Elisabeth Dahl
Baltimore
Volunteer since 2014

What is your favorite MHC memory?

In 2014, the Maryland Center for the Book selected my debut children's novel, *Genie Wishes* (Abrams 2013), to represent the state on the [National Book] Festival's *Great Reads About*

Great Places list. That alone was exciting. But spending a few hours at the Maryland table in the Festival's Pavilion of the States was a whole different sort of exciting. Andrea Lewis, director of the Center, had told me ahead of time—*It'll be a madhouse*. She wasn't exaggerating. It was a sea of people! People wanting their US maps stamped with the Maryland crab, people browsing through pamphlets, people requesting signed bookmarks, people just wanting to talk books and writing. It was an excellent few hours. The kind of hubbub usually associated with rock concerts, World Cup soccer matches, and Black Friday sales was happening because of books. How great is that?

What would you tell others to inspire them to support MHC?

MHC is run by people with the talent and inspiration to turn your support into great humanities-related programming. Their efforts really do—as the MHC tagline says—help to open Marylanders' eyes, ears, and minds.



Robert Forloney
St. Michaels
Volunteer since 2009

Why is MHC's work important to you?

For almost a decade, I have been involved with MHC in diverse ways—from serving as a partner to participating in public programs to volunteering. MHC has helped to enrich me as well as those in my community. My aspiration is to use a dialogue-centered approach to encourage respectful engagement, facilitate listening, and generate better public understanding when developing educational programming. These aims are also at the center of MHC's mission. The objective is to directly engage with others who think, feel, and believe differently as we, together, look beneath the surface of complex issues.

What would you tell others to inspire them to support MHC?

I would encourage others to support MHC in order to create a robust community that is informed as well as directly engaged in significant local issues. The work that MHC makes possible acts as a catalyst for open and civil dialogue about topics important to the community as a whole. There is no other organization that actively takes on this responsibility.

HUMANITIES CONNECTION

Did you know that MHC offers a weekly humanities essay on public radio?

Thanks to the incredible generosity of WYPR 88.1fm, we are able to bring you humanist perspectives on history, culture, and current events from local scholars, community leaders, grantees, and members of our Board of Directors. The series, **Humanities Connection**, has aired more than 130 segments since 2013, each one introduced by Executive Director Phoebe Stein.

Broadcast every Thursday afternoon at 4:44 p.m. on 88.1fm in Baltimore and Frederick and 106.9fm in Ocean City—to a weekly listenership of 14,000—the series explores the intersection of the humanities and our daily lives. Each installment is also available for subsequent free download at both mdhc.org and wypr.org.

We hope you'll tune in and share with us your reactions via Facebook and Twitter.

Interested in being featured? Contact Communications Officer and *Humanities Connection* producer Jessica Wichmann at (410) 685-4186 to discuss this opportunity.



RaeLynne Snyder, Social Studies Coordinator for Baltimore City Public Schools, records a segment on Maryland History Day

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Thanks to our generous donors, we are able to keep hundreds of annual program activities free and accessible to all. Contributors to the annual fund of \$1,000 or more are members of our Leadership Circle.

Leadership Circle: Diamond

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Maryland Council for Social Studies
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\$100 to \$249

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Matching gift



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Why is supporting the work of the Maryland Humanities Council important to you?

MHC always offers opportunities for bringing friends and strangers together in learning. As a former chairperson of the MHC Board of Directors, I had many opportunities to both shape and experience the council's work. But my most meaningful MHC memories came in helping to realize the *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Remembrance and Reconciliation* initiative. Nearly all of the council's programs drew thematically on this special initiative for several

years. As a result, many frank and necessary community dialogues on race were held throughout the state. These challenged everyone to walk in another's shoes, providing vital moments of discovery. The Music of the Movement culminating event—with the amazing performances by Sweet Honey in the Rock founder Bernice Johnson Reagon and the Bowie State University Gospel Choir and remarks from Congressman John Lewis—remains a treasured memory.

John & Barbara Hill at the 2014 Leadership Circle Reception at the Baltimore Museum of Industry

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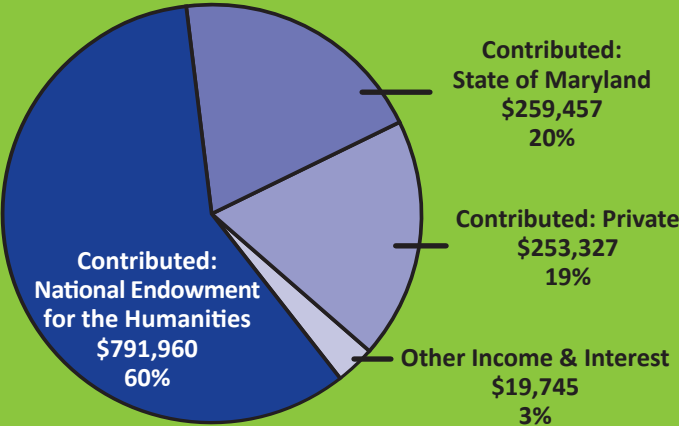
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REVENUES

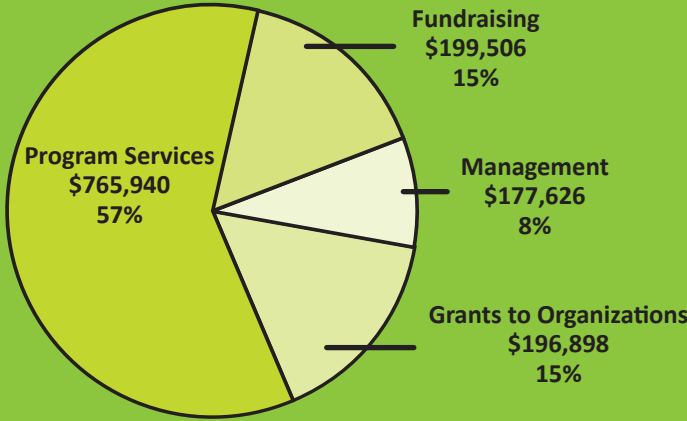
Total \$1,324,489



Change in Net Assets (\$15,481)

EXPENSES

Total \$1,339,970



Statements of Financial Position: FY14	
Assets	
Cash	\$ 592,283
Receivables	\$ 165,075
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 16,853
Property & Equipment	\$ 151,321
Security Deposits	\$ 2,500
Total	\$ 928,032
Liabilities and Fund Balances	
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$ 65,387
Refundable Advances	\$ 33,750
Capital Lease	\$ 19,712
Regrants Payable	\$ 8,459
Loans Payable	-
Subtotal	\$ 127,308
Fund Balances	
Net Assets - Unrestricted	\$ 657,640
Net Assets - Temporarily Restricted	\$ 142,984
Subtotal	\$ 800,724
Total	\$ 928,032

LOOKING AHEAD

Now that you've had a look at some of the highlights of 2015, please enjoy this overview of some exciting new developments in store for you and the rest of Maryland this year.

The Pulitzer Prizes Centennial Campfires Initiative

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Pulitzer Prizes, awarded annually and honoring outstanding American works in a variety of arts and humanities disciplines. MHC—along with 45 of our partner councils across the nation and territories—will offer programming throughout the year spotlighting different genres and their relevance and impact on our daily lives.

Our public programming will include:

- **Journalism & Its Power to Inform**—a series of panel discussions featuring Pulitzer-winning journalists. Sponsored in part and hosted by *The Baltimore Sun*, moderated by Editorial Page Editor Andrew Green. March 8 through May 10.
- **Pulitzer at Play**—a series of dramatic readings featuring *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Gin Game*, *Water by the Spoonful*, and others to be determined, along with a new adaptation of Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer-winning novel, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. Produced in collaboration with and hosted by Olney Theatre Center. September 30 through October 2.

For their generous support for the Campfires Initiative, we thank the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Pulitzer Prizes Board, and Columbia University.

Two of MHC's existing programs will complement the Campfires Initiative this year as well. This summer's **Chautauqua** series will feature living history performances of three honored artists: poet Gwendolyn Brooks, musician Duke Ellington, and author Ernest Hemingway. **One Maryland One Book's** 2016 theme is "the 21st-century Great American Novel," as embodied by the selected book, *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely.

The Humanities Fund for Baltimore

Both the peaceful protests and the violence in Baltimore that followed the death of Freddie Gray in police custody in April 2015 were in response to decades of structural racism and inequity in housing, education, and economic opportunities in predominantly African American communities. MHC believes that the equity that needs to be created both in Baltimore and across much of the nation can begin with the humanities.

The humanities—especially history, the law, ethics, and philosophy—can give us the contexts for understanding and addressing these entrenched problems. The humanities can facilitate the conversations that will ultimately contribute to solutions. These conversations are—at their foundation—about fostering democracy at a difficult and painful time of polarization, fear, and animosity locally and in our nation.

To that end, MHC has launched a special grants initiative supporting projects by community organizations that utilize the humanities to examine these issues and envision possible solutions to them. Ten grants of up to \$5,000 will ultimately be awarded. Projects already funded include:

- A documentary film made by youth and incorporating youth perspectives that investigates the public housing crisis in Baltimore and gives a historic perspective on how housing inequity and segregation began in the city. Grantee: Afrikan Youth Alchemy
- The "Seeds of Promise Book Club" after-school book club for 80 high school students and young adults who reside in West Baltimore. Participating youth and adult mentors will read *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers and *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore to explore the environment that leads to the current conditions that impact boys and men of color, such as racial inequality, the justice system, and mass incarceration. Grantee: Promise Heights and the University of Maryland, Baltimore School of Social Work

A list of all Humanities Fund for Baltimore grantees and supported projects can be found on our website. In addition, related public events will be featured on our online calendar of events and in our monthly eNewsletter. If you don't already receive it, subscribe today at mdhc.org.

We hope you are as excited as we are for what's to come in 2016 and hope to see you at many of these events and others in future. Again, your support is what makes all of this possible!



Grants, Baltimore



MARYLAND HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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MarylandHumanitiesCouncil



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This page, clockwise from top left: One Maryland One Book, Abingdon; One Maryland One Book, Baltimore; Maryland History Day, Baltimore; Letters About Literature, Baltimore

Front cover, clockwise from top left: Maryland History Day, College Park; Maryland History Day, Baltimore; Maryland History Day, Washington, DC; One Maryland One Book, Baltimore

Design & layout by Kate Ahern Loveric.

Photography by Dave Cooper, Harford County Public Library, Howard Korn Photography, Mitro Hood Photography, Nick Clifford Simko, Valeu Photography, MHC staff, and others.