



Educational Programming that Expands the Possible

Exciting K-12 programs are offered across the country. Learn more at statehumanities.org.

How do you get a student excited about learning?

In part, give them lots of options and listen to their ideas. Students should be challenged in and beyond the classroom, but not all students have access to lessons that excite them and not all classrooms have the means or time to cater to every student's interests. Some of the most important lessons a student can learn come from engaging with the unfamiliar: new places, new people, and new ideas can have a dramatic impact on a student's life. Programs that offer those new interactions give students a chance to vigorously and enthusiastically pursue subjects that interest them, and they offer a chance to meet others who share their passion and curiosity. That's why the state humanities councils have spent decades building and supporting programs designed to expand the minds of K-12 students in and beyond the classroom.

Each summer in our nation's capital, **Humanities DC** operates *Soul of the City*, a youth leadership program that harnesses the cultural resources of Washington, D.C., along with lessons in the humanities, to teach students practical skills and prepare them for life beyond high school. Students meet with professionals around the city, where they gain firsthand exposure to new careers and mentors. They gain a better understanding of local history and the wider world, and they finish by transforming their experience into a new media project.

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Nearly 500 miles away, students in New Hampshire run *HYPE* (Hosting Young Philosophy Enthusiasts). The student-initiated program brings together high schoolers from across the state for in-depth discussions on topics like the responsibilities of citizenship and the interplay between ethics and laws—all subjects meant to spur



Case in Point

For the last 17 years, the **Alaska Humanities Forum** has used the *Sister School Exchange* program to connect Alaskan students and teachers from rural schools with those from urban schools. The pairs spend weeks working on cross-cultural understanding and communication, which culminates when each group spends a week visiting the other.



critical thinking and foster civil discourse. Thanks to support from **New Hampshire Humanities**, HYPE welcomed a record-breaking 1,400 students (and more than 100 teachers) to participate at the University of New Hampshire this past summer.

In Georgia and other states across the nation, middle and high school students spend a year planning, researching, and then presenting their work for *National History Day*, a competition that reaches more than a half million students around the world. **Georgia Humanities** has invested in *National History Day* for years because it motivates students to build strong research and analytical skills, and it rewards them for innovative, thought-provoking, and high-quality work. Students begin that work in the classroom and then are given the chance to excel on a much larger regional, state, and national stage.



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The state humanities councils are also eager to meet students where they are, and some of their best ways for doing so are traveling exhibitions, lessons, and one-time events that give teachers new tools for engaging their students and give students exposure to a world beyond their everyday circumstances. **The Puerto Rico Endowment for the Humanities** sends *Traveling Trunks* to public and private schools, community organizations, and cultural centers around the island filled with objects representing Indigenous arts, archaeology, and music. The trunks are paired with talks, training workshops, and study guides that give context for students and help flesh out the history and culture of Puerto Rico. **Delaware Humanities** has also taken a novel approach to helping younger students learn about their state with the creation of a children’s book, *Delaware WhoDunit*. The book, authored by local writers and artists, promotes reading and encourages interest in Delaware’s history.