



**SOUTH DAKOTA
HUMANITIES COUNCIL**

2024



ANNUAL REPORT

**Celebrating literature –
promoting civil
conversation – and telling
the stories that define our
state**



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We are delighted to present the South Dakota Humanities Council's Annual Report for 2024. This report reflects our unwavering commitment to our mission, showcasing the milestones we've achieved and the challenges we've overcome.



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About South Dakota Humanities Council

Founded in 1972 by the hard work of fellow South Dakotans responding to an act of Congress, the South Dakota Humanities Council (SDHC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is the only cultural organization in the state whose sole mission is to deliver humanities programming to the people of South Dakota.

We support and promote public programming in the humanities, provide grant funding for community programs and research and discussion projects, and carry out the mission of the South Dakota Center for the Book (established by the Library of Congress in 2002) through reading and literacy programs and the annual Festival of Books.



MISSION

Our core mission is to celebrate literature, promote civil conversation, and tell the stories that define our state.

VISION

Our vision is to lead statewide advocacy for the humanities, working with other partners to foster literary and civic engagement.



Word From Our Executive Director

CHRISTINA OEY

Executive Director

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride in the work we have accomplished together at the South Dakota Humanities Council. This year has been a testament to the power of community, resilience, and unwavering commitment to our mission: to celebrate literature, promote civil conversations, and tell stories that define our state.



In 2024, our organization made significant strides in many of our programs and services. Through the dedication of our team, the generosity of our donors, and the active engagement of our partners, we provided every third grader with a free book, held a successful Festival of Books, and spread the joy of the humanities across the state.

These accomplishments were made possible thanks to the collective effort of our staff, volunteers, and supporters like you. Together, we have strengthened our local communities and made a tangible difference in the lives of so many.

On behalf of everyone at the South Dakota Humanities Council, thank you for your continued trust and support. Your belief in our mission empowers us to keep moving forward, ensuring that we continue our mission in South Dakota.

Let's make the coming year even more impactful, together.

With deepest appreciation,


Christina Oey

Word From Our 2024 Board Chair

BOBBIE BOHLEN

2024 Board Chair



Greetings,

I have had the profound pleasure of serving as the Board Chair for the South Dakota Humanities Council from 2023-2024.

I had been a volunteer and board member for at least 10 years before that. Serving as chair gave me an incredible opportunity to really come to understand the organization and the impact it has across the state.

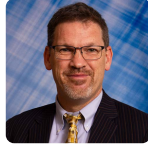
It is a mathematical certainty that you cannot determine where you are going if you do not know your starting point. Reflection is critical. The highlights for me are the people, volunteers, office staff, board members, and donors. The impact is felt across the state by programs supported and encouraged through funding provided by SDHC. In 2023 we welcomed a new Development Coordinator, and in 2024 Christina Oey became our new Executive Director.

Leadership change can be challenging; however, SDHC has a seasoned staff of individuals that were able to step in and keep the ship pointed into the wind. Ms. Oey has hit the ground running, and we are looking forward to great things.

As 2024 quickly becomes a distant memory and 2025 is upon us, I am excited and grateful to hand off the baton to Stephen Williamson, the new Board chair for SDHC. We are in good hands.

Sincerely,
Bobbie Bohlen
Bobbie Bohlen

Board of Directors



Stephen Williamson

Chair
Sioux Falls



Joshua Rudnik

Chair Elect
Rapid City



Bobbie Bohlen

Past Chair
Wilmot



Kristi Tornquist

Treasurer
Brookings



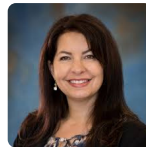
Tanya Grassel-Krietlow

Secretary
Pierre



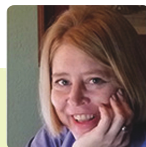
Kathy Antonen

Member
Lake Norden



Tawa Ducheneaux

Member
Pine Ridge



Darlene Farabee

Member
Vermillion



Kathryn Hayes

Member
Sioux Falls



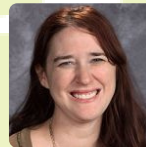
Katie Hunhoff

Member
Yankton



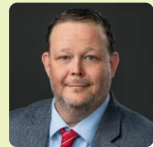
Kelly Kirk

Member
Sioux Falls



Heidi Kruse

Member
Sturgis



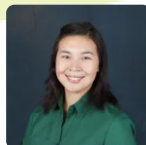
Jay Perry

Member
Sioux Falls



Carol Remp

Member
Avon



Rosie Sprague

Member
Spearfish

Meet Our Team



Christina Oey

Executive Director

Christina joined SDHC in 2024, and has passion for politics, history, books, and finding herself in “wikiholes.” Christina has a master’s degree in Advocacy and Political Leadership with a Nonprofit Organization focus from the University of Minnesota, Duluth and a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She is a proud Hufflepuff, and in her free time she enjoys reading, crosswords, historical research, and spending time with her two daughters.



Jennifer Widman

Center for the Book Director

Jennifer, Center for the Book Director since 2012, manages the Festival of Books, One Book South Dakota, and Young Readers Initiative. Having worked in public relations and taught both high school and college English, she loves language and serves as SDHC’s unofficial editor. A true bookworm with a special fondness for literary fiction, she met her favorite author (and the subject of her master’s thesis), Louise Erdrich, at a Festival four years before joining SDHC. Destiny!



Carolyn Speakman

Business Manager

Carolyn joined the SDHC team in 2011 and organizes finances and daily operations as the Business Manager. She graduated from Southeast Technical Institute with an AAS degree in Business Administration/Accounting. She is also a proud veteran, having served in the South Dakota National Guard. Stories are what interest Carolyn, and the humanities have many to share. Her favorite stories are – well, anything involving people!



Stacy Chidaushe

Program Coordinator

Stacy, having joined SDHC in 2021, graduated from South Dakota State University with a BS and an MS in Sociology and an MEd in Adult & Higher Education. Her responsibilities at the council include implementing programs like Humanities Café and Veterans initiatives, as well as developing new programs for SDHC. Always seeking to learn something new, Stacy enjoys spending her free time immersed in a documentary or a good book, preferably with a cat in her lap.

Meet Our Team



Ann Brandt

Development Coordinator

Ann has been with SDHC since 2023, working in fundraising and data management. A strategic thinker and organizer, she excels in value system creation and streamlined processes, fueling workflow efficiencies that contribute to company growth. With expertise in communications, relationship building, evaluation, online technology and databases, program onboarding, marketing, and design, Ann consistently delivers impactful results.



Deb Delaney

Program and Data Coordinator

Deb, a member of the SDHC team since 2015, processes and manages the Speakers Bureau program and discussions and is also responsible for database administration. She enjoys spending time with family, bargain hunting, and creating. Her preferred reading is in the “how to” genre, but to escape reality, she chooses gothic novels or fantasy and likes protagonists to have strong personalities with courage and determination.

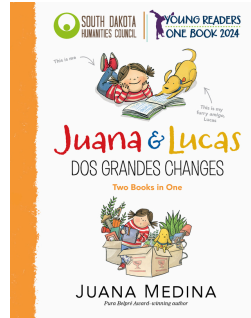


Melinda Berdanier

Grants Coordinator

Melinda, a transplant from Ohio, started working as the SDHC Grants Coordinator in 2018. She holds a BS in Elementary Education from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and an MA in Education from The Ohio State University. She and her family have enjoyed globetrotting, including trips to Bolivia, Haiti, and Dubai, and six months living in the Middle East. Having learned how to knit at the age of 10, Melinda is a passionate knitter and can be found with several projects on the needles at any one time.

Young Readers



Every year, the South Dakota Humanities Council provides a book to every third grader in the state through our Young Readers Initiative. Through partnerships with South Dakota’s educators, this program is shaping powerful learning habits to increase our youth’s reading achievement levels when they’re the most impressionable through book ownership, author interactions, and class materials.

The 2024 Young Readers book was “Juana and Lucas: Dos Grandes Changes” by Juana Medina, a bind-in of two titles in a popular series. The books are based on Medina’s experiences growing up in Bogotá, Colombia, but fictionalized for simplicity and clarity. While the South American setting might not be familiar to many South Dakota youth, Juana’s experiences of dealing with changes at school and within her family are universal.

15,000

books distributed to every third grader in SD

565

schools received books



FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

SEPTEMBER 2024

The Festival of Books celebrates literature in South Dakota and beyond by connecting the very best regional and national writers with our state's readers for conversations, presentations, panel discussions, book signings, and special events.

5,371

ATTENDEES

3,300

YOUTH ATTENDEES

66

PRESENTING AUTHORS

139

TOTAL EVENTS



SDHC Grants

\$100,143 FUNDS PROVIDED

26 ORGS SUPPORTED

26,142 ATTENDEES

Organization

Program

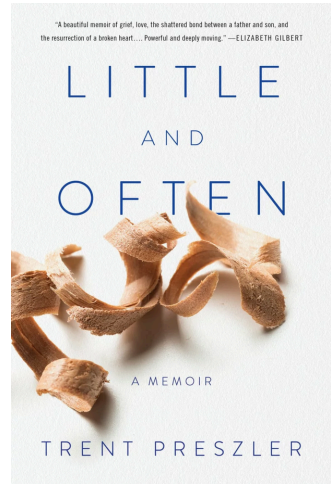
SDSU, School of English & Interdisciplinary Studies	David Grann: "The Arc of Justice" Program Support
Oregon State University - OSRAA	Accounts of Nuclear Fallout in South Dakota in the 1950s
Black Hills Works, Inc	Black Hills Works: Our Voices, Our Stories
Washington Pavilion of Arts and Science	Celebrating Women at the Washington Pavilion
South Dakota Historical Society Foundation	2024 South Dakota History Conference
SDSU, Hilton M. Briggs Library	Preserving South Dakota Humanities Through Digitization
Lead Historic Preservation Commission - City of Lead	Hidden Treasure Heritage Festival
Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation	Images of the World
SDSU, School of Communication & Journalism	Galena: The Ghost Town That Came Back To Life
BHSU, School of Arts & Humanities	Sitts: In The Chair
South Dakota Shakespeare Festival	2024 South Dakota Shakespeare Festival
Historic Homestake Opera House Society	Night of DaVinci
Levitt at the Falls	Music is Medicine - All My Relatives Panel Discussions
Nis'to Incorporated	Earthlodge Gatherings
South Dakota Voices for Peace	Portraits of Courage
SDSU, Department of Natural Resource Management	Photographic History of the Black Hills
Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota	Youth Media Camp and Discussion
USD, Sanford School of Medicine	Speaking of Health: Sustaining Public Health Humanities Engagement
USD, School of Health Sciences	Health, Healing, and the Arts - School of Health Sciences Mural
Sioux Empire Community Theatre DBA The Premiere Playhouse	Premieres Program: Playwriting Workshop & Festival of New Plays
The Transformation Project, Inc.	Amplifying Queer Voices in South Dakota
SiouxperCon	Brian Middleton - Poiko
Lost & Found	Stories of Resilience
Historic Rapid City	Valentine McGillycuddy Presentation
 South Dakota State Poetry Society 	Poetry on the Road
All Souls Church	From South Sudan to South Dakota - Achut Deng's Amazing Journey

One Book South Dakota

“Little and Often” by Trent Preszler

In 2024, South Dakotans explored relationships, identity, grief, creativity, and more as they read and discussed the One Book South Dakota, “Little and Often” by Trent Preszler.

The memoir focuses on a single year during which Preszler, a South Dakota native living on Long Island, mourns the death of his estranged father by using inherited tools to build a wooden canoe. In the process, he comes to better understand his father – a cattle rancher, rodeo champion, and Vietnam War Bronze Star Medal recipient – and himself.



ONE BOOK EVENTS

14 AUTHOR PRESENTATIONS

32 BOOK DISCUSSIONS

1,020 PARTICIPANTS

Humanities Café

The Humanities Café is a bi-weekly virtual get-together of South Dakotans with renowned experts in various fields to explore topics that impact our state. The Humanities Café discusses issues and brings about a greater understanding of the complexities that lie beneath these issues.



DATA

50 PROGRAMS

62 PRESENTERS

955 PARTICIPANTS

Speakers Bureau

SDHC's Speakers Bureau offers a wide array of topics that groups across South Dakota can bring to their communities. The council supports Speakers Bureau events annually across a range of humanities-related subjects.



66 PROGRAMS

50 SCHOLARS

416 ATTENDEES

Teachers Institute

The SDHC Teachers Institute provides professional development opportunities for educators which focus on Native American history and culture, including traditions associated with South Dakota's Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota tribes. These courses provide information on contemporary practices and traditions to deepen understanding of tribal culture and enriching/improving relationships between Native and non-Native cultures.

The SDHC Teachers Institute is a non-competitive grant which offers academic credit that can be used for teacher certification renewal with the state of South Dakota.



INFORMATION

**3 ACADEMIC CREDITS PER PARTICIPANT
CAN BE USED FOR CONTINUING ED.**

2025 SDHC Calendar

Major Grants Deadline	February 28
Humanities on the Hill	March 4-6
SDHC Spring Board Meeting	April 10-11
SDHC Summer Board Meeting	July 17-18
SD Festival of Books	September 26-28
Major Grants Deadline	October 15
Federation of State Humanities Councils Meeting	November 12-16
SDHC Fall Board Meeting	November 20-21

Rudnik Serves National Board

SDHC Board Member Joshua Rudnik is using his expertise to help humanities councils across the country by serving as a board member for the Federation for State Humanities Councils. The Federation advocates for increased investment in and engagement with the national network of humanities councils and supports projects that address today's pressing issues.

Joshua Rudnik (Oglala Lakota) is an Assistant Professor at South Dakota State University.

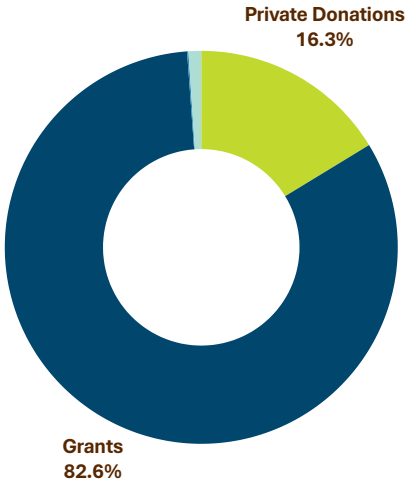


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"The Humanities celebrate the Human capacity to form connections with one another. Through the humanities, we discover who we are as individuals and where we fit into the world but, more importantly, the humanities teaches us that we have a responsibility to each other as Humans to create a moral and just world. I'm honored to work with the team at SDHC and their commitment in celebrating what it means to be a South Dakotan."

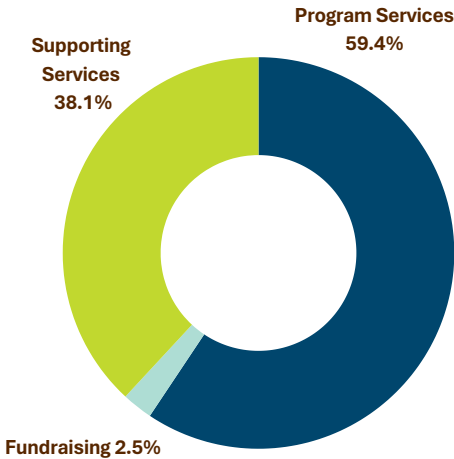
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Annual Operating Revenue & Expenses



REVENUE

Private Donations	\$20,5701
Grants	\$1,042,500
Programs & Events	\$13,167
Interest	\$1,440
<u>Total Revenue</u>	<u>\$1,262,809</u>



EXPENSES

Program Services	\$784,044
Supporting Services	\$206,216
Fundraising	\$33,485
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$1,321,427.25</u>

SDHC Donors - Thank you!

\$50,000+

Larson Family Foundation

\$20,000+

First Bank & Trust

\$15,000+

City of Brookings
South Dakota Arts Council

\$10,000+

Brass Family Foundation
Larson, Maree
Valley Queen Cheese Foundation
Visit Brookings

\$7,500+

Robert E. & Patricia S. Fishback Foundation
SDSU Office of the President & Wokini

\$5,000+

Northern Hills Federal Credit Union

\$1,000+

Antonen, Kathy
Auch, Sandra
Fishback, Tom & Mary Beth
Freeman, Jerome & Mary
Scheels
SDSU College of Agriculture,
Food & Environmental Sciences
SDSU College of Arts, Humanities
& Social Sciences
SDSU JJ Lohr College of Engineering
SDSU School of English
& Interdisciplinary Studies
Svec, Harriet
Tschetter, Craig & Della
Van Demark, Richard & Michelle
Voelzke, Cathy & Vernon

\$500+

Assmus, Roger
Gaeckle, Tom
Haigh, Emelie
Hunhoff, Katie
Joe & Jennifer Kirby Charitable Fund
Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation
Larry & Suzanne Fuller
Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation
Rezaie, Ali
Tornquist, Kristi

Up to \$499

Andenas, Mads & Chloe
Ballou, Sandra
Bauer, Laurie
Bauske, Dorothy
Berdanier, Bruce & Melinda
Berry, Mary Lou & Charles
Berseth, Benda & Steve
Bertolotto, Beth
Bickett, Ranae
Black Hills Center for Equality
Bodman, Anne, & Andrew Hollander
Bohlen, Bobbie
Bolte, Margaret
Bowman, Kimberly
Brandt, Linda & Bruce
Brookings Rotary Club
Brown, Craig
Burns, Howard
Carson, Paula
Chicoine, Marcia K. & David L.
Chidaushe, Stacy
Chmielarz, Sharon
Christensen, Colby
Clague, Carolyn, & Dennis Hopfinger
Dacotah Prairie Museum | Foundation Gift Shop
Dalesburg Heritage (Ron Johnson)
DeBates, Debra
DeBates, Prudence
DeBoom, Suzanne
Delaney, Tom & Deb
Denton, Margaret
Dewey County Library
Dobbs, Thomas
Douglas, Ann & Bill
Downing, Holly

SDHC Donors - Thank you!

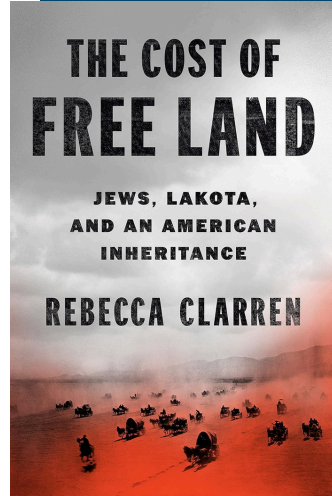
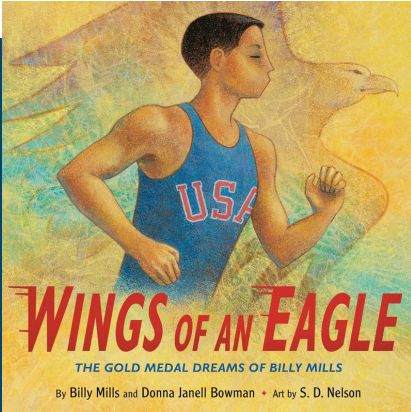
Up to \$499

Ducheneaux, Tawa
Dunn, Barry
Edgemont Area Historical Society
Eichelberg, Mary
Erickson, Lewayne
Faber, Sheryl
Farabee, Darlene
Fishback, Paul
Fishback, Van & Barb
Gardner, Vicki
Gerberding, Bette
Gombocz, Istvan
Gormley, Anne
Grassel-Krietlow, Tanya
Greenbaum, Lillian
Griesse, Evelyn
Grow, Kathy
Haan, Mary Beth
Haddad, Emily
Hall, Karen, & Jeff Nelson
Harens, Lola & Charles
Harper, Ruth
Hart, Lois
Hatch, Anne
Hayes, Kate
Helling, Katie
Hines, Susan
Hoffelt, Linda
Holland, Mary
Hovey, Marlowe
Hubner, Jay & Joyce
Hutchens, Katherine
James, Barb
Jefferson, Joyce
Jensen, Kathryn
Jensen, LouAnn
Johnson, Charles
Johnson, Debra
Johnson, Diane
Johnson, Gail & Douglas
Johnson, Janet Hovey
Jones, Allen
Kallemeyn, Larry & Jo
Kersbergen, Kim
Kirby, Dan
Kirk, Kelly
Kleinjan, Brenda
Kleinsasser, Ardelle
Kleinsasser, Audrey
Koch, Cheryl
Koupal, Nancy Tystad
Kracke, Lorraine
Kraljic, Mary
Lake County Historical Society
Lake County Museum
Larsen, Jay & Kathy
Larson, Liza
Lehr, Margaret
Liegl, Dorothy
Lindell, Lisa
Lucas, Nick
Mason, Lynn
McKeever, Juanita
McKeown, Jim
McKnight, Connie
Mechling, Ruth
Mendenhall, Marilyn
Meyers, Kent & Zindie
Mickelson, E. Jay & Beverly
Mikkelson, Karen
Miller, Kathryn
Miller, Myja
Miller, Peggy
Miner, Jane
Montoya, Mary
Moore, Beverly
Newell, Genevive
Nicholson, Tom & Jean
Novotny, Lawrence
Oey, Avy & Lucy
Olbertson, Sharon
Olson, Bert & Cindy
O'Neill, Kari
Patrick, Jean
Pearson, Estelle
Perpich, Mary
Perry, Jay
Perry, Tad & Carolyn
Pickering, Kenneth & Lavonne
Pommersheim, Frank & Anne Dunham
Profilet, James & Mary Dejong
Quam, Judith
Quinn, Marcia
Resel, Marissa
Rice, Rodney
Ring, Diane
Rosenthal, Joel
Rudnik, Joshua
Schenk, Rebecca
Schwandt, Kay
Shaver, Patricia
Shields, Vonnie
Sly, Jacqueline
Smidt, Charlotte & Orville
Sneve, Virginia R.
Speakman, Luke & Carolyn
Steinley, Nan & Gary
Swedlund, Harriet
Tennant, Brad
Thatcher, Anna Marie
Tripp County Library
Grossenburg Memorial
Veenis, Karyn
Watson, Linda
Wells, Lois
West, Sheila
Wevik, Chris
Widman, Jennifer & Rich
Williams, Veronica
Williamson, Stephen
Wilson, Norma & Jerry
Woodard, Charles & Sarah
Wuertz, Carol
Zeller, Sharon

Donors are listed from
gifts made in FY 24 (Nov. 1-Oct. 31)

Looking Ahead to 2025

2025 ONE BOOK SD SELECTIONS



Meet the authors and illustrators at the
2025 South Dakota Festival of Books

SEPTEMBER 26-28
SPEARFISH, SD

Make an Impact

Support the South Dakota Humanities Council

\$250

will sponsor 56 children in our Young Readers program

\$200

will fund a scholar program in your community

\$100

will purchase 8 books for our One Book South Dakota program

\$50

will sponsor 2 Humanities Cafe programs

DONATE



SCAN ME



www.sdhumanities.org/donate

CONNECT WITH US!



SOUTH DAKOTA HUMANITIES COUNCIL



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info@sdhumanities.org



www.sdhumanities.org



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Brookings, SD 57006



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