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**ILLINOIS HUMANITIES, ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL AGENCY
ANNOUNCE CARES ACT GRANT INITIATIVES TOTALING \$1.3M
U.S. Senators Durbin and Duckworth Highlight Importance of
Illinois Arts and Humanities During and After the Pandemic**

CHICAGO, April 27, 2020 – Illinois Humanities and the Illinois Arts Council Agency announced today that they are each launching emergency relief grantmaking initiatives, that combined will total \$1.3M. Funding for the grants is made possible by Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocations to the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. The grants will assist humanities, arts and cultural organizations across Illinois that have been impacted by the coronavirus. Intended to provide immediate funds during the current public health crisis, the grants will help ensure that arts and humanities work continues across Illinois now and into the future.

“Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we need the arts and humanities in Illinois now more than ever,” said Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL). “CARES Act funding will help arts and cultural organizations across Illinois weather the storm of this pandemic. Thanks to Illinois Humanities and the Illinois Arts Council Agency for moving quickly and thoughtfully to make grants with that funding – and to ensure that the arts and humanities are here for Illinoisans now and well beyond the pandemic.”

“I’m glad the CARES Act included support for our arts and humanities organizations, which play an essential role in bringing communities together in cities and towns of every size across Illinois,” said Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL). “It’s critical that we sustain these organizations so that they can help our communities recover and rekindle their vibrance after the pandemic ends. I was proud to support this funding and am grateful for organizations like Illinois Humanities and Illinois Arts Council Agency for their work distributing these funds during this challenging time.”

Illinois Humanities (IH) CARES funds will provide general operating support grants, program grants, and project grants to organizations with operating budgets up to \$1.5M. For complete details about Illinois Humanities COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grants, as well as ongoing Community Grants guidelines and application forms visit ilhumanities.org/ReliefGrants.

Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA) Relief Funds will be dedicated to organizations throughout Illinois with budgets of less than \$500,000. The IACA recognizes that organizations at this level are often in underserved communities and may be most challenged in their sustainability for vital services. Grants of \$3,000 each will be available to organizations who have received funding from IACA since 2018. For details about IACA's guidelines visit <https://bit.ly/2VQDg8E>.

Both organizations will accept applications beginning Monday, April 27 at noon through May 15 at 5:00 PM. They will cohost a virtual community conversation about relief for Illinois arts and humanities organizations, including details about CARES COVID-19-relief funds, on Wednesday, April 29 at noon via <https://bit.ly/3bDOR3k>.

"The nonprofit humanities sector is an essential component of Illinois' economic and civic life," said Gabrielle Lyon, Illinois Humanities executive director. "As the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, we've spent more than 40 years getting to know first-hand why humanities matters in Illinois – and why it's so important to invest in the public programs that enable disparate neighbors to learn together."

Joshua Davis-Ruperto, Illinois Arts Council Agency executive director, said, "The rich arts and cultural landscape of Illinois widely impacts our health and wellbeing, education, and economy. In these difficult times it is vitally important that we recognize the work of our cultural organizations and artists as a strategic statewide resource. In order for us to regrow our economy, public investment in the arts is crucial."

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About Illinois Humanities

Illinois Humanities activates the humanities through free public programs, grants, and educational opportunities that foster reflection, spark conversation, build community, and strengthen civic engagement. Illinois Humanities is a nonprofit organization and the state's affiliate for the National Endowment for the Humanities. Learn more at ilhumanities.org and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @ILHumanities.

About the Illinois Arts Council Agency

The Illinois Arts Council Agency develops the state's public arts policy, fostering culturally diverse programs, and approving grants expenditures. A small professional staff with in-depth knowledge of the arts develops and administers the agency's programs, provides technical assistance, and ensures the responsible and impactful distribution of all funds. Learn more at arts.illinois.gov and on Facebook @ILArtsCouncilAgency.