

2021 IN REVIEW

Uplifting Alabama in a pandemic

The **Alabama Humanities Alliance** believes the humanities have the power to bring Alabamians together and help us see each other as fully human. That idea — and our work — grew in importance in 2021, when AHA programs provided crucial connections in communities separated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alabama Public Humanities Grants

42

awarded

27 Major Grants

9 Mini Grants

6 Media Grants

\$206K funded

Alabama Humanities Recovery Grants (Pandemic Relief)

83

awarded

\$800K funded

TOTAL 2021 GRANT FUNDING

125

awarded

\$1M+ funded



GRANTS

AHA is the primary source of grants for public humanities projects statewide. We offer monthly **Mini Grants** (up to \$2,500), quarterly **Major Grants** (up to \$10,000), and annual **Media Grants** (up to \$15,000). In 2021, we provided an additional round of pandemic recovery funding to

cultural nonprofits and community cornerstones across the state. All AHA grants are funded with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. See pages 40-44 for descriptions of projects funded in 2021.

Grants Roundup

In 2021, the Alabama Humanities Alliance supported a diverse range of programs, events, and projects that engaged and enriched lives across the state. Discover how each grantee addressed community needs with creativity, and if your organization is inspired to join them, apply for a 2022 grant at alabamahumanities.org/grants.

MINI GRANTS

Cell Phone Cinema **The Flourish Alabama •** **Birmingham**

Cell Phone Cinema works with students in Birmingham City Schools to make one-minute films on the theme “Capturing the Culture: Navigating the New Normal.” Students learn how the study of culture — their own in particular — allows them to see the world through a critical lens, advocate for change, and uplift members of their communities, all while making creative films to showcase at the second annual Flourish Fest.

The Gifts of Our Ancestors **Clotilda Descendants Association • Mobile**

The fourth annual Spirit of Our Ancestors Festival continues to remember and celebrate the 110 Africans who arrived on the slave ship *Clotilda*. The event features a dramatic presentation of the ancestors’ lives from capture to the founding of Africatown; a keynote speaker addressing the gifts bestowed upon descendants to become cultural carriers, community builders, and

protectors of the next generation; and an after-play panel discussion.

Heritage Days **Friends of Gaineswood Inc. •** **Demopolis**

Heritage Days at Gaineswood National Historic Landmark is a two-day event for third-through sixth-grade students from Marengo, Hale, Greene, Sumter, and Perry counties. Learning stations feature the daily life of people in the area in the mid-19th century. The project incorporates Alabama fourth-grade history curriculum.

Higher Ground Society Podcast/Web Series **Higher Ground Society •** **Auburn**

Alabama has a long history of producing creatives and thinkers who uplift their state and contribute wonderful things to greater society. Hosted by Higher Ground Society founder and executive director Jerald Crook, the podcast/web series surveys guests’ work, their Alabama inspirations, and their hope for the state through the arts and humanities.

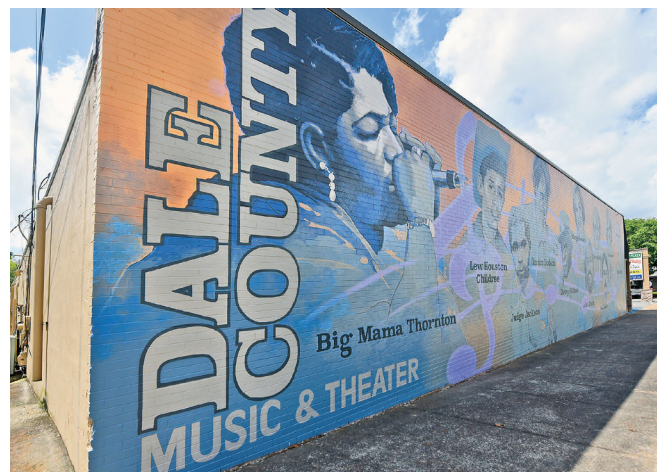


Photo by Jay Hare, Dothan Eagle.

Fields to Fame: The Path to Influence **Wiregrass Blues Society • Dothan**

Laws of Life **Better Business Bureau** **Serving Central and South** **Alabama • Birmingham**

The Laws of Life Essay Contest encourages dialogue among high-school students, teachers, humanities scholars, and business leaders to advance positive, ethical principles such as transparency, humility, honesty, and equity in the workplace. Students learn about ethics and ethical behavior and their relationship to successful business environments.

Lecture Series on Eugenics and Disability History **Mobile Medical Museum •** **Mobile**

A series of free public lectures and panel discussions reviews the impact of disability rights and mental health care on diverse communities in Alabama and around the world. The program is presented in conjunction with an exhibit, *Different/Fit: Eugenics in Alabama, 1919-1935*, a collaboration between the Mobile Medical Museum and the Alabama Contemporary Art Center.

National Building Museum's Evicted Exhibit Alabama Center for Architecture • Birmingham

The *Evicted* traveling exhibit takes visitors into the world of low-income renter eviction and urges them to face one of America's worst problems. The companion program, "Evicted in AL," focuses on housing challenges in Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile, and Montgomery.

Page and Stage: Spoken Word's Role in American Poetry ft. Tha S.O.N.G.B.I.R.D. and B. Royalty Magic City Poetry Festival • Birmingham

Grammy-nominated spoken-word artist Theresa Tha S.O.N.G.B.I.R.D. and local spoken-word duo B. Royalty engage in a dynamic discussion (including performances by each panelist) about the role of spoken word in Black communities in America, the American South, and in poetry at large. Performances from the Golden Word Movement, Miles College's undergraduate spoken-word team, precede the discussion.

Public History Project Map Alabama Association of Historians • Anniston

A free, interactive online map representing the state's geographic regions allows Alabamians to discover public history projects happening in and around their communities. The map offers insights into dynamic

and diverse projects statewide while allowing public historians, students, and the public to connect with each other.

MAJOR GRANTS

Breaking the Color Barrier University of Alabama Paul W. Bryant Museum • Tuscaloosa

The exhibit illustrates the effects of segregation and integration within state and national athletics in the 1960s and 1970s by spotlighting individual on- and off-field accomplishments and an integration timeline for Alabama football. After a year at the Paul W. Bryant Museum, the exhibit travels to sites throughout Alabama and two sites outside the state.

Cultural Crossroads 2022: Alabama's Reconstruction Constitutions Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery • Montgomery

An annual history symposium takes a look at the story behind the creation of the 1901 Alabama Constitution, a focus for many political scientists and historians. The event is the latest iteration of the Cultural Crossroads program, an important venue for sharing Alabama history and culture.

Darshan: Visions of India Tennessee Valley Art Association • Tusculumbia

An interdisciplinary

programming series features an open-air cultural festival, lectures and discussions, art and history exhibitions, workshops, and performances at Tusculumbia's Tennessee Valley Museum of Art and Sheffield's Ritz Theatre. The series connects community members with the cultures, beliefs, and unique experiences of individuals within the Indian community.

Developing Our Shared Humanity through Scholarship and Expression Auburn University's Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project • Auburn

Four courses examine the diverse histories of the American South and the legacies that persist through artistic works. Each class takes place at a different correctional facility in central and west Alabama in coordination with the Alabama Department of Corrections. Faculty and graduate students from various universities, as well as qualified facilitators, lead the courses.

Digitizing the Death Penalty in Alabama University of North Alabama College of Arts and Sciences • Florence

The project digitizes and expands the University of North Alabama's archival holdings related to Alabama's death row. Partnering with Collier Library, staff and project scholars — including death-row survivors, their families,

and their attorneys — are creating a searchable digital archive available to the public.

Exploring Racial Equity Through Literacy: A Path Forward for Empathy and Equality Literacy Council of Central Alabama • Birmingham

Wendy Greene, a world-renowned Drexel University law professor and antidiscrimination advocate, visits Alabama virtually to facilitate a discussion about racial discrimination in American history, the influence of discrimination on equity, and related current events. The discussion is one segment of a three-part program to engage people in reading, book discussions, and conversations that challenge the status quo and promote empathy and equality.

Fields to Fame: The Path to Influence Wiregrass Blues Society • Dothan

A four-part lecture series highlights the lives and career paths of musicians Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton and Shaun Murphy, two influential women who journeyed from the rural stages of their youth to world-class venues. The series reveals how cultural history, social climate, and geographical conditions affected their impact on music.

50 Years and Forward: A History of Servant Leadership in Mobile, Alabama

Mobile United, Inc. • *Mobile*

As Mobile United approaches 50 years of bringing the community together in service to one another, it highlights leaders who have answered the call to servant leadership. A new podcast gives voice to individuals and projects that shaped the city, honors and preserves the history of the organization, and creates a potential road map for future leaders.

Fitz Tales: Tales of the Jazz Age

The Scott & Zelda Fitzgerald Museum • *Montgomery*

Dramatic readings of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tales of the Jazz Age* celebrate the 100th anniversary of the book's release and the coining of the term "Jazz Age" in 1922. Each story will be followed by a discussion with a noted author or Fitzgerald scholar. The series is the follow-up to the 2021 podcast Fitz Tales: Flappers and Philosophers.

Foot Soldiers: The Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement 2

Safe House Black History Museum • *Greensboro*

Unsung 2 builds on the research and oral testimonies generated for the *Unsung 1* documentary film that focused on the personal experiences of civil rights foot soldiers in Greene, Hale, Marengo, Perry, and Tuscaloosa

counties in the years following World War II to 1970. *Unsung 2* targets Hale County, telling its civil rights story in a documentary film that incorporates the personal accounts of 10 foot soldiers and their extended families.

The Humanities in Alabama: History, Natural History, Folklife, and the Arts

Daphne Public Library • *Daphne*

A weekly lecture series explores the history, lifestyles, and humanities of Alabama, including Paleo-Indian artifacts; architecture; the Federal Road and other immigration routes; slavery and freedom; archaeology of the *Clotilda*; the Civil Rights Trail in Alabama; folklife and foodways; poetry, art, and photography of birds; and native wildlife and longleaf pines.

Mobile's Confederate Monuments and Memorial Spaces in Context

University of South Alabama Center for the Study of War and Memory • *Mobile*

Students conduct research on Mobile's Confederate monuments and memorial spaces and present their findings through public history and digital humanities, including podcasts, public lectures, and an interactive digital map. The project will help the people of Mobile engage in informed and respectful conversations about a vexing issue in many communities.

The Morgan Project Teacher Workshops

The Morgan Project • *Birmingham*

An "inclusion curriculum" developed with Alabama Humanities Fellow Dr. Martha Bouyer — and based on the speech "A Time to Speak" by Charles Morgan Jr. — educates students in grades 4-12 about systemic racism and combating injustice. Teacher workshops provide curriculum resources and train educators to use the curriculum in their classrooms.

Nobody Knows My Name Learning Series

Urban Impact Birmingham • *Birmingham*

The series educates the public about the vast contributions of African Americans to the creation and long-term growth of Birmingham's historic Civil Rights District. The initiative features storytelling by historians, teachers, and other experts about life in the district since the 1920s, focusing on the people and buildings that make the community a national treasure.

Old Federal Road Storytelling Festival in Motion

The Ridge Macon County Archaeology Project • *Warrior Stand*

The project produces an instructional video and accompanying lesson plan for fourth-grade classrooms in addition to three instructional video storyboards and lesson plans. Such resources help

teachers use local places to expound upon the broad description of the "Alabama Fever" pioneer-settlement era presented in state history textbooks.

Reparative Interpretation of the Wallace Plantation: Initial Steps

Klein Arts & Culture • *Harpersville*

Three panel discussions with primary scholar Elijah Gaddis of Auburn University examine the history of the Wallace Plantation, issues in the reparative interpretation of plantation houses, and the design of experiential exhibits based on reparative interpretation. Panelists include historians from four Alabama universities and two nonprofit public history organizations, an art historian, a psychiatrist, and a filmmaker.

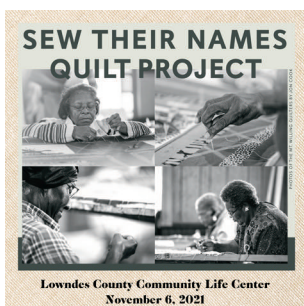
Sequoyah 200th Celebration and the Trail of Tears

Manitou Cave of Alabama • *Fort Payne*

A day of activities celebrates Manitou Cave's new status as a Trail of Tears National Historic Trail certified interpretive center and the bicentennial of Sequoyah's syllabary. Speakers include Troy Wayne Poteete, director of the Trail of Tears Association, and Charlie Rhodarmer, director of the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum. Additional events include the installation of a historical marker and lectures by scholars on Cherokee history and culture.



Reparative Interpretation of the Wallace Plantation: Initial Steps
Klein Arts & Culture • Harpersville



Sew Their Names Quilt Project
Lowndes County Community Life Center • Lowndesboro



Swimming Together "Pool" Party
University of Alabama Department of History • Tuscaloosa

Sew Their Names Quilt Project Lowndes County Community Life Center • Lowndesboro

Quilters in rural Mount Willing collaborate with artists Yvonne Wells and Wini McQueen to create quilts commemorating names of enslaved people discovered in regional church records. A video and exhibit about the quilts and their history, with commentary from humanities scholars, will travel and show at an antebellum church. Visitors may sew names for additional quilts.

The Shakespeare Project Jacksonville State University Foundation • Jacksonville

The Shakespeare Project provides creative development for young teachers and artists, education enhancement experiences, and community cultural experiences. In April 2022, the Project presents William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to school and community audiences, accompanied by educational programming.

Sharing Our Stories Guntersville Museum • Guntersville

An oral history project features various longtime residents and historians reflecting on their experiences and knowledge of Guntersville's heritage. The intimate accounts in these historical videos allow visitors to make personal

connections with the community. These tributes are highlighted within the museum's exhibit hall and in rotation on the museum's website.

Swimming Together "Pool" Party University of Alabama Department of History • Tuscaloosa

The event at the Mildred Westervelt Warner Transportation Museum foregrounds the research of author Hannah Palmer on the history of public pools and swimming in the Deep South. The community comes together on the formerly segregated (and now grass-covered) pool on the museum grounds as a dance floor, summoning memories of water and swimming at the site while opening space for dialogue about its past.

Three Brave Women Rocket City Civil Rights • Huntsville

The project amplifies Huntsville's civil rights movement, highlighting the role women played and the moments when the business community was challenged by savvy nonviolent Black protests. Specifically, it tells the story of three brave women who were arrested in a strategic protest that garnered national attention. The installation of a historical marker and the collection of primary narratives and materials for digital use commemorate the 60th anniversary.

Troy University Rosa Parks Museum Exhibit Florence-Lauderdale Public Library • Florence

The two-part exhibit and various speakers, presented both in person and virtually, provide library patrons with opportunities to learn more about the history of the Montgomery bus boycott and the life of Rosa Parks.

Ujima Family Reading Circle National Hook-Up of Black Women • Birmingham

The Ujima Family Reading Circle addresses the ills of illiteracy by promoting books that focus on the family and community. The organization engages families with books and interactive activities to improve reading habits; foster the appreciation and understanding of history, literature, civics, and culture; and promote family interactions through gardening experiences and readings.

Weekend Immersed in Language Development (WILD) Alabama World Languages Education Foundation • Northport

WILD is a statewide world-language immersion experience for high-school students of Spanish, French, German, and Chinese. Led by fluent teachers and professors, the initiative enhances opportunities to improve spoken language skills through the study of humanities topics including literature, history, and cultural studies.

YellowHammer Film Festival

**Troy University
Department of Art and Design • Troy**

The YellowHammer Film Festival is a free, virtual event for high-school and college students that includes workshops, speakers, and an exhibit of original work. The competition theme is “Humanities” and will feature films about languages, literature, the arts, history, and philosophy. Recognized historians, critics, and creators lead all workshops and serve as competition judges.

Young Alabama Writers Project (YAWP)

Desert Island Supply Co. • Birmingham

YAWP is an eight-week collaboration between the Desert Island Supply Co. and a dedicated Birmingham City high-school teacher to produce a quality collection of student writing about a specific topic. This project focuses on humanities-based disciplines because history, literature, and philosophy provide ideal content for students to engage in personal inquiry and to connect with the world around them.

MEDIA GRANTS

Father James E. Coyle: Life and Legacy Documentary

United for Life Foundation • Birmingham

The documentary project educates the public about

Father Coyle and the events in Birmingham that led to his 1921 murder at the Cathedral of Saint Paul. It sheds light on his life and character and how he stood up for faith and human equality despite the constant threats and violence that ultimately took his life.

54 Miles to Home: The Campsites of the Selma to Montgomery March **Alabama Rivers Alliance • Birmingham**

The indelible images of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march are part of our shared national memory. However, many forget that in the 54 miles from Selma to Montgomery, the marchers needed safe housing to succeed. A documentary film shares the stories of three Black farming families who bravely offered their homes.

Poetry Unites Alabama

Capri Community Film Society Inc. • Montgomery

A documentary features four winners of a statewide essay contest in which entrants conveyed the impact of poetry on their lives. The project’s mission is to use the power of poetry to unite people beyond cultural, racial, and political divisions. Jennifer Horne and Ashley M. Jones, the state’s former and current poet laureates, partner on the project. The film premieres in 2022 on Alabama Public Television.

Rural Revival: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Alabama **Birmingham International Educational Film Festival • Birmingham**

A documentary film describes the accomplishments of the Civilian Conservation Corps, its ideals, and its lasting effect on the people and land of Alabama.

Shuttlesworth **The APT Foundation • Birmingham**

A documentary about the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, a key Birmingham civil rights activist and leader. The film examines his life and legacy — a life that shone a light on the road to social justice in Birmingham and laid the groundwork for the American civil rights movement. *Shuttlesworth* premieres in 2022 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth.

Sink the Alabama **Foundation for New Media • Mobile**

A documentary film uses the story of Mobile sea captain Raphael Semmes and the British-built CSS *Alabama* to explore Britain’s role in nearly tipping the balance of the Civil War after a Confederate propaganda campaign convinced the European nation that the war was not about slavery. The project includes public screenings of the film.



54 Miles to Home: The Campsites of the Selma to Montgomery March
Alabama Rivers Alliance • Birmingham

“I can’t say enough about how helpful AHA was during this entire grant process. They’re really working to expand public educational programming in Alabama.”

—Annette F. Reynolds
Director, Manitou Cave of Alabama • Fort Payne • Alabama Public Humanities Grant

Meet our **83** Alabama Humanities Recovery Grant awardees at alabamahumanities.org/grants.