

**UF Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere Awards Public Humanities Grants,
Promotes Campus-Community Partnerships**

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GAINESVILLE, Fla. — The UF Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere (CHPS) announces the first recipients of its new Programs in the Public Humanities grants to promote cultural engagement in and around Gainesville. The humanities engage in creative expression, analysis of ideas, and questions of value to improve the human condition. Through disciplines like history, philosophy, literatures and languages, the humanities investigate the ties that connect cultures, encourage conversations about social and historical relationships, and propose solutions to enhance cultural understanding and education. The *public humanities*, then, bring these conversations to the forefront of our everyday lives by promoting academic and community partnerships in planning events and programs to strengthen our shared communities.

The Public Humanities grant opportunity, supported by the CHPS Rothman Endowment, encourages and enhances collaboration between the University of Florida and individuals, groups, and organizations in the community by offering grants up to \$3,000 to support public programs rooted in one or more of the humanities disciplines. This year, the CHPS awarded four Public Humanities grants to fund the following local projects which will take place between May 1, 2014 and May 1, 2015.

**“The Heart of a Culture: the Santos of Xavier Colón” Exhibition
UF University Galleries (Amy Vigilante) and City of Gainesville, Parks, Recreation and
Cultural Affairs Department (Russell Etling)**

The University Galleries has partnered with the City of Gainesville, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department to create a major new exhibition on the Santos carvings of artist Xavier Colón. Santos are hand-carved religious artifacts that play an important role in the cultural identity of Puerto Rico. This CHPS public humanities grant will support the development of a full-color catalogue that will provide historical, religious and cultural context to the exhibition and be freely distributed to exhibition visitors. (Exhibition dates: Sept. 27, 2014 – Jan. 3, 2015 in the Thomas Center’s Main Gallery).

**Gainesville Modern Architectural Film Series
Gainesville Modern (David Forest) and the UF School of Architecture (Martin Gold)**

In partnership with the UF School of Architecture, Gainesville Modern will produce a film series that both celebrates Gainesville’s cultural legacy of Modernist architecture and reflects how more

modernist, sustainable urban design will benefit Gainesville in the future. With sponsorship from a CHPS public humanities grant, the series will include three film screenings (*Citizen Architect*, *Coast Modern*, *People Who Live In Glass Houses*) followed by moderated discussions. A panel of experts in the field will facilitate discussion via public forums. (Event dates TBA.)

**Race, Class, and Gender in the Panama Canal Zone: An Original Play and Discussion
Deborah B. Dickey (Playwright and Director), the Panama Canal Museum Collection at UF
Smathers Libraries (Rebecca Fitzsimmons)**

The University of Florida Smathers Libraries, Alachua County School District, and playwright/director Deborah Dickey have collaborated to write and produce an original play that explores the lives of women in the Panama Canal Zone during its construction. Utilizing the resources in the UF Latin American Collection and the Panama Canal Museum Collection, the play will focus on the racial, gender and cultural segregation in Panama from 1900-1914. This CHPS public humanities grant will support a public staged reading at the Acrosstown Repertory Theatre, a post-show public discussion, an educational outreach event, and scenes performed for English classes in the Alachua County School District. (Performance dates TBA.)

**Exploring Local Diversity and African Traditions: A Community Storytelling Series
Samuel Proctor Oral History Program (Paul Ortiz) and Yopp! Inc. (Bethany Hunter)**

In partnership with the UF Department of History, Yopp! Inc. and the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program will host a ten-month storytelling series at the Union Academy/Rosa B. Williams Recreation Center. The series will celebrate diversity within Gainesville and promote our rich cultural heritage through sharing many African traditions and stories. With a CHPS public humanities grant, the series will foster dialogue in our local and global community by hosting professional storytelling sessions after school and on weekends for four hours a month. Community members will be actively invited to share their own stories alongside planned events. (Event dates TBA.)

By drawing on expertise from UF and community partners as co-applicants, these public humanities projects create new and exciting opportunities for collaboration between the university and multiple community organizations. Furthermore, these projects encourage community building, cultural understanding, and personal reflection on the values and experiences that connect us together as neighbors, colleagues, and community members to create a civil and morally responsible society. Through projects like these, the Center for Humanities and the Public Sphere seeks to promote broad civic engagement with the communities in which we live and teach.

For more information or for event details, please see www.humanities.ufl.edu or find the UF Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere on Facebook or Twitter.