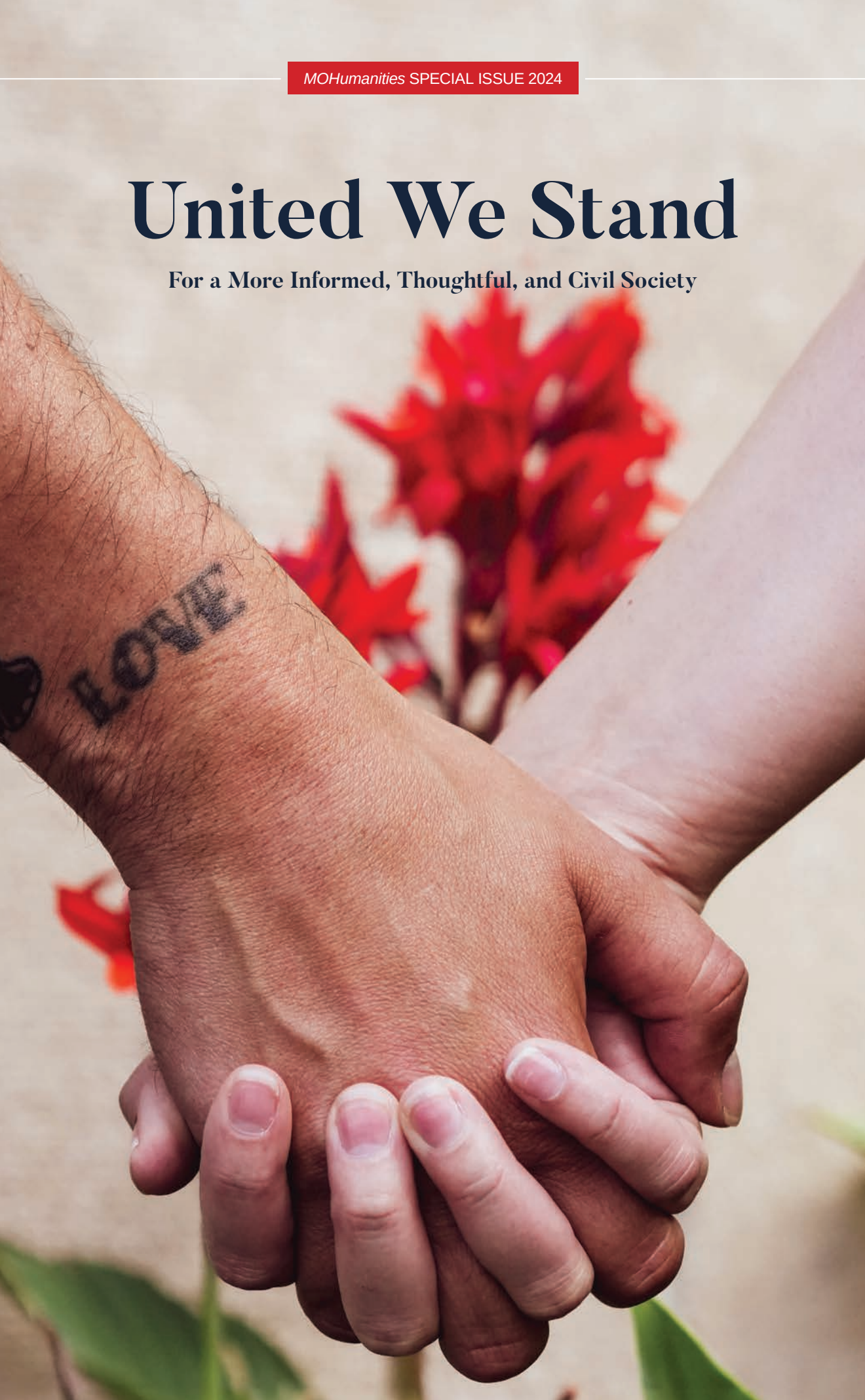
MOHumanities SPECIAL ISSUE 2024

United We Stand

For a More Informed, Thoughtful, and Civil Society



A Note From the Editor

As a response to the *United We Stand: Connecting Through Culture* initiative, launched by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Missouri Humanities strove to bring together a collection filled with information, diverse narratives, and distinct voices. This special issue aims to explore the power of culture in connecting Missourians from various backgrounds and fostering unity in the face of hate-based violence. Through these stories, we hope to present Missourians with an opportunity to learn, reflect on, and celebrate the similarities and differences that make up our state's vibrant cultures and communities while building bridges toward understanding and empathy. We hope you, our readers, will join us in embracing the histories and experiences of our neighbors, friends, strangers, ancestors, and everyone in between to work towards a more informed, thoughtful, and civil society.

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

MH MISSION STATEMENT
To enrich lives and strengthen communities by connecting Missourians with the people, places, and ideas that shape our society.

The Missouri Humanities Council (MH) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was created in 1971 under authorizing legislation from the US Congress.

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> "This is the country to which we Soldiers of Democracy return. This is the fatherland for which we fought! But it is our fatherland. It was right for us to fight...But by the God of Heaven, we...fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land."
>
> – W.E.B. DU BOIS, "RETURNING SOLDIERS"

Soldiers of Dem

NATALIE LOVGREN
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W.E.B. Du Bois penned this call to action in May 1919 just six months after the Armistice of 1918 was signed and nearly two million Americans were preparing to return home from overseas. It was published in *The Crisis*, a publication founded by Du Bois and the official publication of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Having witnessed ongoing racial violence throughout the United States, Du Bois knew most African American veterans returning home would not find recognition for their service. While equally sacrificing in the fight to make the world safe for democracy, he foresaw a "more unbending battle" for the equality of Black Americans in the U.S.

Leading up to and during the return of troops from World War I, Black Americans were leaving the rural South. Job opportunities beckoned them to larger cities, including St. Louis and Kansas City, during the Great Migration. As communities changed, resentment and hostility grew due to the perceived threats to the status quo. Some felt threatened by the idea of job competition

ocracy

Du Bois knew most African American veterans returning home would not find recognition for their service. While equally sacrificing in the fight to make the world safe for democracy, he foresaw a "more unbending battle" for the equality of Black Americans in the U.S.

ABOVE: 1919 race riots militia called in to quell violence. Photo credit: *Chicago Tribune* Historic Photo/TCA.

and at the sight of a Black man in uniform. These conditions are what drove Du Bois to call for action — a call which Black veterans embraced.

The summer of 1919 was later called the Red Summer for its bloodshed and anger. Racial tensions exploded and brought a wave of violence across the U.S. Riots broke out in areas across the country and led to the loss of homes and lives for many Black Americans. In Washington, D.C., a four-day riot began on July 19 following a baseless rumor that a Black man

had assaulted a white woman. White-comprising citizens, service members, and veterans violently stormed Black neighborhoods. On July 27, in Chicago, a Black teen drowned after being struck by stones for swimming near a beach deemed “whites-only.” This brutal act of violence led to rioting and the death of 23 Black people and 15 White people. Nearly one thousand Black families were displaced.

Racial conflicts and riots continued across the nation. What is likely the deadliest incident of the Red Summer occurred on September 30 and October 1 in Elaine, Arkansas. Chaos erupted after a White law enforcement officer died in a shootout outside a Black sharecropper gathering. Governor Charles Brough responded by ordering 500 soldiers to quell what they called an “insurrection” amongst the Black sharecroppers. Though estimates vary, approximately 200 African Americans lost their lives. Among the victims was Leroy Johnston, a veteran of the 369th Regiment of the 93rd Division, known as the Harlem Rattlers. Johnston and his three brothers were pulled from a train and murdered.

Despite the violence and widespread chaos that characterized the Red Summer, Black Americans fought for equality. Inspired by African American veterans in uniform willing to stand up to tyranny abroad, the Black community felt empowered to resist at home. African American veterans, with Du Bois’ words echoing in their minds, stood up to their oppressors.

While some Black veterans rallied in the streets, others became vocal

ABOUT THE NATIONAL WWI MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL:

The National WWI Museum and Memorial is America's leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting, and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum and Memorial fulfills its mission by:

- Maintaining the Liberty Memorial as a beacon of freedom and a symbol of the courage, patriotism, sacrifice, and honor of all who served in World War I.
- Interpreting the history of World War I to encourage public involvement and informed decision-making.
- Providing exhibitions and educational programs that engage diverse audiences.
- Collecting and preserving historical materials with the highest professional standards.

THE NATIONAL WWI MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL

In Missouri, in 1919, African American veterans formed American Legion Posts 77 and 149 in St. Louis and Kansas City. These Posts were among the first created for Black service members and are still in operation today.

advocates for Black equality or ran for office. Vernon Coffey, an Army colonel during WWI, earned his law degree and became an aide for President Richard Nixon. For many, activism and advocacy were deeply personal as numerous African American veterans received little recognition for their service. The reasons to take up arms or put pen to paper varied, but each one was rooted in a desire for change. African American veterans of WWI inspired a new wave of protest established on their military service. For many, these men symbolized hope for Black equality.

Despite their crucial work, Black service members were continuously overlooked for their heroic efforts. For instance, Henry Johnson was called "one of the five bravest American soldiers in the war" by Theodore Roosevelt. He was also awarded one of France's highest medals. But it was not until 2015 that Johnson's bravery was fully acknowledged in the U.S. with the nation's highest military award: a Medal of Honor.

In Missouri, in 1919, African American veterans formed American Legion Posts 77 and 149 in St. Louis and Kansas City. These Posts were among the first created for Black service members and are still in operation today. In Kansas City, Post 149 is known as the Wayne Miner Post, named for one of the last soldiers to die in the war, just three hours before the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. Kansas City Black History notes that Miner was a Missouri native and son of former slaves. The service members who gather at these posts today are part of a long legacy of Black military and community service.

When African American veterans began their return home, they knew it marked the end of one war and the continuation of another — this time for racial equality. Du Bois' call to action in "Returning Soldiers" summarized the feelings of many in the Black community and encouraged a wave of resistance. In the wake of destruction and death, the foundation for the civil rights movements began. African Americans fought for freedom and democracy abroad, but it was their fight at home that further cemented them as "Soldiers of Democracy."

A Stranger in My Own Land

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At the beginning of the United States' participation in World War II, between 110,000 and 120,000 persons of Japanese descent, of which approximately seventy percent were U.S. citizens (second-generation American-born Japanese with U.S. citizenship known as Nisei, and third-generation children of the Nisei known as Sansei), were forcibly relocated. Initially, they were displaced to one of fifteen assembly centers in the States of Arizona, California, or Washington, then internment in one of ten relocation centers in the States of Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. These relocation centers were also known as "internment camps" by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066. By March 1942, families were forced to sell their homes and businesses or entrust them to others.

> "I was declared a stranger in my own land, and you took me in."
>
> – WILLIAM S. YAMAMOTO, MD, PARK COLLEGE CLASS OF 1945

So how did the relocation affect the small liberal arts Park College (now Park University) in the picturesque town of Parkville, Missouri? Scores of the 2,500 interned Nisei were already attending college when displaced. A group of over seventy national educators, concerned about these Nisei students' ability to complete their education, organized to admit the students outside of the west coast restricted areas. One of the first educators to mobilize was then Park College President Dr. William Lindsay Young. Young, in the spring of 1942, was visiting California during the evacuation and commented, "spent several days on the Pacific Coast, making a first-hand study of the situation, with a view to seeing that Park College support the Government." Young, in early January 1942, was invited by Milton S. Eisenhower, director

of the War Relocation Authority and former president of Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, to cooperate with the federal government and transfer approved Nisei students to Park College.

The Nisei students, in order to be admitted as transfer students, endured a laborious process legislated by the federal War Relocation Authority. The final step in the transfer process was a statement, to be signed by a local official, that there was no objection to the residents in the local community. Herbert A. Dyer, then mayor of Parkville, refused to consent based on his conviction that young men with enemy names should not be allowed the freedom of Parkville even though the War Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Navy Department, Presbyterian Church, and Park College faculty and students had given their approval.

Eventually, Platte County Sheriff Holt Coffey signed the statement stating: “In compliance with the request of the War Relocation Authority, I make certification that I have no objection to the residence in the community of American students of Japanese ancestry transferred from Western colleges”; however, Mayor Dyer, persistence in his objections, was supported by some Parkville citizens, the American Legion, the American War Mothers. Young responded to Dyer:

> Quite frankly, I am desperately anxious to cooperate with the Government and support it in its recommendation. I am anxious that we try to take these young people in this critical hour and place them in an atmosphere that will be conducive to the development of their undoubted loyalty to our democratic heritage. After the clouds of war have blown away, we will have two thousand leaders of Japanese ancestry who will serve to heal the bruises of one hundred thousand Japanese interned for the duration. Not to be constructive and statesman like in our handling of the situation now would tend to inject poison into the bloodstream of our social and political organism that will plague us for many long years to come.

The local resistance envisioned the students as menacing young adults without considering their backgrounds. One Nisei student had a brother serving in the U.S. Army and another had recently been awarded as an American Legion essay winner on his topic of democracy and the sacrifice democracy entailed.
Over the summer of 1942, Young addressed the continued local resistance by mailing one thousand letters to the citizenry in which he concluded with the question, "Is war hysteria making us lose sight of our democratic ideals and the priceless guarantee that all Americans are free, equal, and to have the same opportunities?"

The ideological dispute was won by Young who maintained a strong philosophical position throughout the incident. Hundreds of

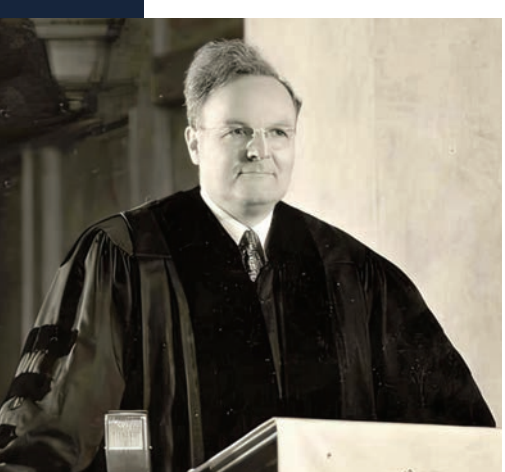
Park College alumni, many unrelated citizens, and several newspaper editors supported Young in favor of the Nisei students attending. Though Young received firm support, Mayor Dyer persisted in his opposition:

> In view of the fact that you have brought Japanese males into the City contrary to the ruling of the government and the request of the city authorities, and the wishes of the citizens, you are hereby notified that unless they are removed from within the city limits of Parkville before September 1st, 1942, legal actions will be taken in the Federal Court [to] remove them.

Young's response was direct but appeasing:

> The Government of the United States has asked Park College and other universities and colleges of the Midwest to cooperate with it to serve the interests of our fellow American citizens. The mayor's hesitancy should be construed as evidence of his sensible caution. As Mayor of Parkville, it is his sacred duty to see to it that nothing transpires in the community [he] serves that will in any way embarrass the war effort. The mayor should be commended for this vigilance. We should all appreciate the government's foresight in helping preserve here at home the priceless heritage for which our young men are fighting.

The most eloquent expression of unity was delivered by Young during his opening convocation address on September 11, 1942:



Park College opens the present year under extremely abnormal circumstances. The world is on fire. The flames of hatred engulf the entire human race. In our student body this year we have men and women who are descendants of just about every nation on this earth. Whatever differences there may be in our racial and social heritage, we stand today united in a singleness of purpose under one flag. Whether our fathers were subjects of king or emperor in the East or West, we here today owe but one divided allegiance, and that is to the constitution of the United States.

ABOVE: Dr. William L. Young, William L. Young Presidential Collection, Frances Fishburn Archives and Special Collections, Park University, Parkville, MO.

> We will not tolerate Un-Americanism on this campus. Any act of disrespect to a fellow American citizen, simply because his forbears came from an enemy country will be construed as an affront to Park's catholicity and a betrayal of the Christian faith for which we have stood down through the years. There are those who, because of their intolerance and bigotry, would deny to an American citizen his just rights. What makes this spurious loyalty so dangerous is that it is cloaked in the garb of patriotism. In reality, they are foes of what our young men are dying to preserve in that, within our very household, they repudiate the democratic process and betray the fundamental philosophy of the Constitution.
>
> Let us prove to the world that while emotions surge about us like a billowy sea, while tides of hatred tend to render rational processes almost impossible, we will strive with the help of God to demonstrate democracy at its best on this hillside.

Due to Young's persistent efforts and dual personal convictions "against racial antagonisms which weaken that social solidarity essential to a healthy nation" and "against the persecution of minorities, because such persecution is detrimental to the preservation of our democratic heritage," nine Nisei students were enrolled at Park College by the fall of 1942. An editorial in the student newspaper remarked, "Whether Parkville citizenry is convinced or not, we students greet you of Japanese ancestry as we greet all new students. Your aims, your ideals, your traditions are ours. Welcome to Park College. We know you'll like it."

Park College provided a beam of light in a dark chapter of American history. William Yamamoto personified that light beam in 1991, stating:

> **I was declared a stranger in my own land, and you took me in. I became one of the few Japanese-Americans that President William L. Young brought to Park from behind barbed wire. I could not see any member of my family until 1945. At Park, many befriended and became my campus family. All the modest success I have enjoyed, and the fulness *[sic]* of my days since, I owe them, the people who made up Park College.**

A Literary Legacy

IN JOPLIN

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It's usually around the middle of the semester when we make it to the Harlem Renaissance. I teach American Literature at Missouri Southern State University (MSSU), a small college in the southwest corner of the state, in the city of Joplin. Without fail, when I mention that Langston Hughes, the author of these poems in our textbook, was born right here in Joplin, there is at least one student who all but gasps in surprise and wonder.

Hughes had family roots in Kansas, and his parents married in Guthrie, Oklahoma, in 1899. Shortly thereafter, Langston's father secured a position for a mining company in Joplin. An older brother was born and died as an infant, and Langston was born in Joplin in 1901. His father, however, left the family, and he traveled widely across the US and Cuba before settling down in Mexico years later, leaving behind Langston and his mother, who was forced to find work the best she could. She also traveled often within the four-state region to secure employment. As Hughes's biographer Arnold Rampersad writes in *The Life of Langston Hughes*, the young boy more or less grew up without a mother or father.

There is also even a darker side to the story of Langston's inauspicious start, one hinted at recently by one of my students: Simon Adams. In an online discussion board, Adams wrote, "When I first learned that Hughes was born in Joplin, it made me proud to be a Joplinite. Then it made me feel a little ashamed." He went on to explain that both sides of his family have deep roots in the Ozarks and that his distant relatives "would've been alive at the same time as Hughes and in the same area, although studying in different schools, praying in different churches, and swimming in different pools."

As bad as state-sanctioned segregation was, for the Hughes family and any Black Americans living in the Ozarks around the turn of the century, things periodically got far worse. Hughes was born and raised amid a span of about 15 years when White mobs lynched a number of Black men in southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas. Kimberly Harper writes about the period in her book *White Man's Heaven: The Lynching and Expulsion of Blacks in the Southern Ozarks, 1894-1909.*

The historical record is unclear about when Langston and his mother left Joplin, but what is clear is that in 1903 a mob lynched a Black man, Thomas Gilyard, in the streets of Joplin. Within hours of beating and murdering Gilyard, the White mob rioted in the city. The violence quickly escalated from breaking windows, firing pistols and rifles, throwing bricks, and even overturning a house, to burning down multiple

Langston Hughes by Winold Reiss, c. 1925. Pastel on illustration board. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of W. Tjark Reiss, in memory of his father, Winold Reiss. © Estate of Winold Reiss.

homes. Although some heroic White citizens and officials attempted to prevent the lynching and to protect Black residents, it took days to quiet the mob and the threat of more violence. It was enough to cause many Black residents to flee Joplin. Harper writes, “As the mob ran rampant, Joplin’s streets filled with blacks too scared to wait on trains to take them to safety. Instead, many left on foot with what little they could carry.”

We’ll likely never know if Hughes and his mother were among the families to flee Joplin, but we do know that within a few years, the future poet was living with his grandmother Mary Langston, in Lawrence, Kansas. Whether or not they witnessed the violence firsthand is somewhat beside the point. As my student Simon Adams wrote, “Hughes grew up hurting from this kind of hate in people's hearts.” **Adams noted, however, that Hughes did not let the hatred defeat him, rather Hughes “turned that hurt into some of the most touching, haunting, beautiful poetry I've ever read. Langston Hughes is the one history remembers, and his words are studied by all in a desegregated college.”**

Despite growing up largely without a mother and father and despite repeated moves within a time and in an area that intermittently included lynching and mob violence, Hughes quickly showed promise and proved himself a sensitive and thoughtful poet. When he was in 8th grade, the 14-year-old Hughes was named class poet, an honor that was bestowed on him again in high school. His stories and verse were published in the school magazine. **Not long after high school he started placing pieces in national magazines and journals. It was a promising start for a young poet, whose early childhood was anything but auspicious.**

After graduating, Hughes traveled to Mexico to live with his father, and along the way he wrote one of his most famous poems. Although he was only 19 years old at the time, the poem attests to a tremendous maturity and an impressive understanding of history, human psychology, poetic meter, and figurative language. The poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" was first published in *The Crisis*, an important publication in its day and the oldest African American periodical in existence today. The poem is constructed around an elegant and practical metaphor of rivers compared to blood flowing in his veins — the outside world of human history and the development of civilization brought into his person, his very being:

> ***I've known rivers:***
>
> ***I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins.***
>
> ***My Soul has grown deep like the rivers.***

He takes a mystic view of deep time that contains the history of civilization and the great works performed by human hands. He claims this history as part of his heritage. He also carries it up to the time of slavery, when the Mississippi River loomed as a threat for many Black Americans fearful of being "sold downriver." He conjures Abraham Lincoln's trip down the Mississippi and brings the poem into his present, saying of the river that he has "seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset." Hughes turns toward a more hopeful aspect — mud turns to gold. As Hughes writes, his "soul has grown deep like the rivers."

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers" was among a number of poems from Hughes's first collection *The Weary Blues* that are regularly anthologized. "I, Too" harkens back to Walt Whitman in Hughes's effort to "sing America." The poem also looks forward to a time when the speaker's strength and beauty cannot be denied, and he is invited to eat at the same table as everyone else. The poem "Mother to Son" could be the expression of any mother who has seen these

struggles. In this piece, Hughes uses a mother's voice to convey a message that continues to resonate, with imagery that strikes cleanly at the imagination. She explains that her life has not been a "crystal stair," but rather her climb has been beset with tacks and splinters. She commands her son to not turn back or "set down on the steps / 'Cause you finds it kinder hard." Similarly to "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," this poem presents a metaphor that is elegant in its simplicity and directness, and that manages to speak to universal human experience while also gesturing toward honoring the particularities of Black cultures and the individual human condition. It also demonstrates Hughes's commitment to resiliency, a characteristic at the heart of the American enterprise.

Hughes's work is not without controversy, however. Some critics see his poems as too simple and not as subtle or elusive as the writing of some of his modernist peers. Some folks find fault with his socialist leanings and the communist sympathies he displayed. While he was occasionally critical of his country in his verse, he also displayed incredible hope and generosity toward his fellow Americans. While recognizing the injustice of the world, he could even be surprisingly optimistic at times. It is exactly such a good-natured outlook that resonates most strongly today.

When Nanda Nunnelly was young her mother used to read her poems by Langston Hughes. She was raised in Joplin and returned after a few years away. She recently learned that Hughes returned to Joplin as an adult to attend an event to honor Hughes's older brother. When Nunnelly realized that there still wasn't a grave marker, she and her sister raised money to purchase one. It now stands in Fairview cemetery. That was just the beginning of the Langston Hughes Cultural Society in 2019. In the few years since she started it, Nunnelly and the Cultural Society have accomplished a lot to honor the hometown son, including getting the City Council to name February 1 Langston Hughes Day.

Joplin Uplift mural in downtown Joplin.
Photo by Mark N Photography.

Langston Hughes, 1942. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, photo by Jack Delano.

In addition to her work towards the Langston Hughes Cultural Society, Nunnelly was instrumental in organizing a fundraiser that resulted in the Downtown Joplin Black History and Performing Arts Mural on 1st and Main. The mural, near where the 1903 riot started, features a number of Black artists that had connections to Joplin, including Langston Hughes. Nunnelly learned that the mural was appreciated by many. “Passersby would regularly stop and admire the mural while it was being completed, and they thanked and complimented the artist for his work,” Nunnelly said.

Just around the corner from the mural, the Mini Hackney Community Service Center building is also home to the Langston Hughes Cultural Society. They’re currently raising money to establish a Black History Library on the second floor. The library is being built on books donated by Dr. Bud Morgan, a former MSSU professor who was also instrumental in getting a street in Joplin named after Hughes.

Dr. Morgan is a good example of how Langston Hughes’s legacy has contributed to cross-cultural understanding. According to Dr. Chad Stebbins, Director of International Studies at MSSU, Morgan served as the faculty advisor to the Afro-American Society at MSSU, which started in 1970 and created the Langston Hughes Scholarship Fund. This was at a time when there were no Black professors teaching at MSSU, and Dr. Morgan taught the only African American literature classes.

Stebbins, who was a student in Morgan’s English 111, reported that throughout his career, Morgan presented papers and helped organize conferences that addressed Hughes’s work. Morgan even started an annual Langston Hughes celebration with the English department at MSSU, keeping Hughes’s legacy alive in the city of his birth, and introducing Hughes’s works to young readers.

As part of the annual birthday celebration of Langston Hughes, the Cultural society joined forces with Joplin’s Little Theater and produced a performance based on Hughes’s poetry. According to Nunnelly, even though the event took place in the middle of the pandemic, “so many people wanted to be a part of that – young, old, white, black. People of all backgrounds” participated and attended. “I love hearing kids speak his words and seeing themselves in his poetry. There is nothing too haughty in his poetry. Regular people can easily understand what he’s saying.” One of the reasons she started the society was “to get people in and around Joplin to say his name and speak his words,” Nunnelley explained. She said that when she was a child and her mother would read Langston Hughes’s poetry to her, she would feel proud about being from Joplin, from the same city as Hughes. Two people from different generations with starkly different heritages can both take pride in being from the same place that Langston Hughes was born. That says something about the power of poetry in general, and the power of Langston Hughes’s art in particular.

“You’re Going to Serve This One”

KELSY BESHEARS’ ST. JOSEPH STAND

LARRY GRAGG
UNIVERSITY HISTORIAN, MISSOURI
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In 1956, Kelsy Beshears tried to buy a meal at the Buchanan County Courthouse lunchroom. When told, “We don’t serve n…..s,” her response was, “You’re going to serve this one.”[1] Beshears’ immediate reaction to the racist proprietor reflected much about her personality and courage. When she died in 1999, admirers in St. Joseph described Beshears as a “proud agitator” who was “progressive” and “aggressive.” Never satisfied in her quest for social justice, **Beshears was known to tell her supporters to “Get off your backside and go make a difference in the world.”[2] For over half a century, she did just that, and Beshears’ remarkable accomplishments made her legendary in her northwest Missouri hometown.**

After her first husband, Dr. Jerry Cooper, died in 1928, a West Virginia native and widowed Kelsy B. Cooper moved with her two children to Washington, D.C. With a degree in sociology from Howard University, she was a teacher and public assistance caseworker in the nation’s capital during the Great Depression. It was there that she met Dr. Rufus Beshears, a respected St. Joseph dentist. After their marriage, Kelsy B. Beshears and her children moved to St. Joseph in 1946.[3]

When she arrived in her new home, Beshears encountered a community like most in Missouri. The public schools, neighborhoods, and public accommodations were segregated, and most Black residents experienced job discrimination. There was a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in St. Joseph, but it largely became inactive during World War II.

1. Cheryl Wittenauer, “St. Joseph’s Black History,” *St. Joseph News-Press*, March 28, 1993, E2.
2. Cheryl Wittenauer, “Beshears Eulogized as Believer in ‘Reasonable Men,’” *St. Joseph News-Press*, Jan. 20, 1999, B1.
3. Carrell K. Cargle, “Mrs. Kelsy B. Beshears Wins Victory in Defeat,” *Kansas City Call*, May 4, 1962, 2; Ancestry.com. *Virginia, U.S., Death Records, 1912-2014* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015.

Beshears, who had joined the NAACP in 1914, and other local Black leaders, revived the chapter, and Beshears became president, a position she held for several decades.[4] Early in her presidency, Beshears made clear the ambitious goals of the local chapter. She and her fellow members were working for "the complete elimination of discrimination and segregation" and to integrate "the Negro in the life of the community as Americans."[5]

Besides her role as an NAACP spokesperson, in 1954 Beshears also had an opinion column in the short-lived *St. Joseph Times-Review* weekly newspaper. Her June 3, 1954, column was Beshears' most notable. It followed the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. She proclaimed that the unanimous decision that declared segregated public schools unconstitutional meant that "racial segregation" in America was "doomed." Just as important for her community, Beshears praised the all-White St. Joseph school board members for their swift decision to desegregate the community's public schools, arguing that their action would be "a beacon light" for other districts.

While her columns and public statements addressed critical racial problems in the community, Beshears' direct actions were her most important contributions to attaining social justice in St. Joseph. When reflecting upon her long career, St. Joseph journalist George Sherman wrote in 1998 that Beshears had been "a pioneer of non-violent demonstration long before Martin Luther King Jr."[6] She led protests against segregated hotels, theaters, and lunch counters, and she worked with White allies like Mayor Arthur Meers and clergymen from the St. Joseph Ministerial Alliance to gain voter approval of a public accommodations ordinance in 1964. She campaigned successfully for the League of Women Voters and other civic groups to accept Black members. Beshears also became the first Black woman to serve on a jury in Buchanan County. She served on the city's Equal Rights Commission, planning and zoning committee, and the St. Joseph Council of Churches.[7]

Beshears did not limit her energy and efforts to St. Joseph. Governors appointed her to state-wide councils and committees including the Missouri Association for Social Welfare, the Missouri Law Enforcement Assistance Council, and the State Humanities Council.[8] Beginning in 1956, Beshears was president of the Missouri NAACP for six years, and she rarely missed the national meetings of the organization. Her faithful attendance provided Beshears the opportunity to meet with many leaders of the NAACP like Roy Wilkins, Benjamin Hooks, Medgar Evers, and Martin Luther King, Jr., with whom she shared the platform twice. She frequently invited him to appear in St. Joseph, but in the years

4. Jane Meacham, "From Suffrage to Convention," *St. Joseph News-Press*, Aug. 9, 1980, 1 and 4; Frederick W. Slater, "Kelsy Will be Belle of Banquet," *St. Joseph News-Press*, October 3, 1986, 4.

5. "Opposed to a Separate Negro Pool," *St. Joseph News-Press*, March 31, 1950, 1.

6. Cheryl Wittenauer, "Honoring an 'Unsung Hero,'" *St. Joseph News-Press*, Nov. 1, 1998, 4.

7. "They Spear-Headed Public Accommodations Campaign in St. Joseph," *Kansas City Call*, Jan. 10, 1964, 3; Cindy Clark, "Local NAACP Chapter Gives Awards to Three," *St. Joseph News-Press*, Dec. 23, 1987, 1; "Kelsy B. Beshears, 1898-1999," *St. Joseph News-Press*, Jan. 18, 1999, B2; Frederick W. Slater, "Zoning 'Hot Potato' for Council," *St. Joseph News-Press*, Aug. 6, 1978, 1; and "Negro Woman on Jury; First to Serve Here," *St. Joseph News-Press*, Feb. 3, 1949, 5.

8. "Council, City Judge Nominees for Tuesday's Election," *St. Joseph News-Press*, April 3, 1966, 9; "Task Force to Investigate State Juvenile Justice System," *Columbia Daily Tribune*, April 17, 1972, 4; and "Humanities Group Given Grant," *Columbia Daily Tribune*, July 30, 1972, 11.

following the successful 1955-1956 Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott, Beshears learned that King was "booked so much" he could not do so.[9]

Because of her leadership roles in the NAACP in Missouri, Beshears was invited to Washington, D.C., in the summer of 1963 to join about 300 other women at the White House to discuss with President John F. Kennedy, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, and Attorney General Robert Kennedy possible legislation to deal with the civil rights challenges facing the nation. She also sat in on several hearings of Senate and House committees considering legislation.[10] She was constantly looking for political solutions to contemporary challenges, running unsuccessfully once for the city council and frequently campaigning for candidates, like Stuart Symington when he ran for a U.S. Senate seat and Warren Hearnes when he ran for governor. Beshears also attended every Democratic presidential nominating convention between 1960 and 1980. In the latter year, serving as Missouri's oldest delegate, she supported the incumbent Jimmy Carter.[11]

While there had been others in the NAACP in St. Joseph and several White allies in the community who had joined with Beshears in her campaigns, there was a general agreement that Beshears had been the singular force in changing St. Joseph. In 1977, Margaret Bush Wilson, who chaired the national Board of Directors of the NAACP, contended that Kelsy Beshears had been "a bridge between Black and White, young and old, the Ins and the Outs, the ups and the downs, and the Republicans and the Democrats." Twelve years later, St. Joseph journalist Allen Seifert went further, writing that it was Beshears, "perhaps more than anyone else," who had "altered the attitudes of her adopted city."[12]

As she reflected on her decades of activism and her constant willingness to take a stand, Beshears was not sure if she had been a "meddler," an "activist," an "agitator," or just a "smart aleck."[13] Whatever the proper characterization, she explained that **Langston Hughes's poem "Dream of Freedom" always gave her hope and drove her to act. She particularly drew inspiration from these lines: "There is a dream in the land with its back against the wall. To save the dream for one, it must be saved for ALL."[14]**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Larry Gragg is a Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus of History at Missouri University of Science and Technology. He taught at S&T from 1977 to 2021. He was chair of the history and political science department for 17 years. He has written 10 books and over 40 articles on subjects ranging from 17th-century Puritans to the development of Las Vegas.

9. James Fitzhenry, "93-Year-Old Activist Likes Clinton," *St. Joseph News-Press*, July 23, 1992, B4; "Mrs. Beshears Had Shared Platform with Doctor King," *St. Joseph News-Press*, April 5, 1968, 6.

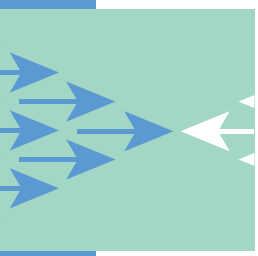
10. Dorothy Williams, "Hurdle Cleared for Chariton Project," *St. Joseph News-Press*, July 28, 1963, 9; "Racial Plea to Women," *Kansas City Times*, July 10, 1963, 20.

11. Cargle, "Mrs. Kelsy B. Beshears Wins Victory in Defeat," 2; Lynne Appel, "Missouri Delegation Discusses Issues at Final Caucus," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 14, 1980, B1; and Fred Mares, "Loss of Council Member Worries St. Joseph Blacks," *Kansas City Times*, April 22, 1981, B5.

12. "Friends Honor St. Joe 'Catalyst,'" *Omaha Star*, Nov. 3, 1977, 1; Allen Seifert, "Years Fail to Dim Beshears' Spirit," *St. Joseph Press-Gazette*, Aug. 11, 1989, 1.

13. Cheryl Wittenauer, "Honoring an 'Unsung Hero,'" *St. Joseph News-Press*, Nov. 1, 1998, 4.

14. James Fitzhenry, "93-Year-Old Activist Likes Clinton," *St. Joseph News-Press*, July 23, 1992, B4.



Many people — many nations — can find themselves holding, more or less wittingly, that "every stranger is an enemy." For the most part this conviction lies deep down like some latent infection; it betrays itself only in random, disconnected acts, and does not lie at the base of a system of reason. But when this does come about, when the unspoken dogma becomes the major premise in a syllogism, then, at the end of the chain, there is the Lager [the death camp].

— PRIMO LEVI, *SURVIVAL IN AUSCHWITZ*

Radical The

REV. CHRISTOPHER GRUNDY,
BA, MDIV, MTS, PHD

The ancient love of tribe
inscribed like some inverted style of scrimshaw
along the narrow hallways in our bones
delicate and inaccessible

has been observed to produce
abnormal growth of the marrow, leading,
under conditions of trauma or strain
to the formation of cancerous cells.

These are not so easily removed.
You should know beforehand
that after the operation site has been shaved,
washed with Betadine, and dried with sterile towels,

you will be given valium
plus several shots of Novocain
some injected into the soft tissue
and some deeper

rapy

and when the nerves fall silent
they will take a larger needle, called a trocar
about the diameter of a pencil and they will
begin to bore through the layers of skin and muscle

to the bone. They will have to twist the needle,
forcing their way through the compact, outer bone
to reach the trabecular tissue,
and when they are deep enough

they will remove the trocar's core to create a drain
and they will suction out the gelatinous mass with a syringe
harvesting the marrow, as much as a liter sometimes,
into plastic bags.

You especially,
who speak of bigotry as if it were some brittle skin
easily outgrown and left discarded on a
sunny rock, should know this:
you will be weakened for some time, and it leaves a scar.

Still, this holds the best chance for survival.
When you're ready, we'll begin.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Rev. Christopher Grundy is a performing songwriter and professor at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis.

Living in the Ethical & Dialogical Middle Ground

REV. TOM STATLER, THM

"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."

-PROVERBS 16:18

Of all the vices and sins from which to choose, C. S. Lewis suggests **pride** is the greatest. He then goes one step further:

> There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which every one in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people… ever imagine that they are guilty themselves.... And the more we have it in ourselves, the more we dislike it in others. The vice I am talking of is Pride or Self-Conceit: and the virtue opposite to it…is called Humility. -*Mere Christianity*

While appearing acceptable and innocent on the outside (as it is defined in dictionaries), pride quickly develops into a moral cancer when allowed to grow in self-centeredness. More to the point, Lewis identified an implicit hypocrisy within humankind — the tendency to see and hate pride in others and, at the same time, *not* see it in ourselves. That then leads to the division we see in all the social and civic arenas in which we exist. There is an alternative, and it is announced in the previously mentioned quote.

Defining Humility

Aristotle argued that virtue is found in a middle ground between two vices that exist on extremes: either the vice of excess (too much of a good thing) or the vice of deficiency (not enough of a good thing). Salt serves as a quick example. Both too much salt and too little salt make the dish unpalatable. The same is true of virtue.

Humility is defined as the state of *not* being proud, haughty, assertive, or rude. When it is viewed through

the lens of Aristotle's "doctrine of the mean" and coupled with the adjective "intellectual," humility is a virtue or strength of character. Andrew R. Johnson notes that, in this sense, intellectual humility is the virtuous means between the vice of arrogance (a deficiency of humility) and the vice of timidity (or excess of humility, and the character trait often confused with humility).

When one is arrogant, they think too highly of themselves and cease to listen to others because, it is felt, "I am right, they are wrong, and that is the end of the matter." This position assumes to possess truth, but such "truth" is self-determined and self-serving only for the individual or their group. Arrogance cannot withstand, nor does it want, the weight of moral and philosophical scrutiny. On the other extreme, a timid person thinks too little of their emotional and rational capabilities and as a result listens to the voices around them, particularly those that are the loudest, the most influential or powerful, or the last one to have their ear. When the vice of timidity is in play, there is a lack of moral courage being displayed, and with such weakened character, they are very susceptible to the shifting sands of popularity or groupthink.

Intellectual humility negates both arrogance and timidity. It conveys a moral courage and rational capability to not think more highly of oneself than one ought, and, at the same time, not lose their integrity and individuality and be subverted by others. Intellectual humility demonstrates the ability to hold onto what one believes, listen to a differing viewpoint, and examine and perhaps reevaluate one's current viewpoint with new information. Intellectual humility is thus an open-mindedness that allows us to agree to disagree with someone on a given issue and still have coffee or a meal with them. In other words, virtuous citizens do not make differing voices out to be their enemy.

The Difficulty of Living in the Virtuous Middle Ground

In his work *Apology*, Socrates claimed to be wiser than other men *not* because of what he knew but rather because of what he did not know. That is wisdom worthy of contemplation by virtuous citizens who seek dialogue with different perspectives and want to create unity despite those differences. In fact, many of the Socratic dialogues end in uncertainty, and uncertainty is bothersome. One way to react to uncertainty is with fear. With this reaction, we make someone else to be the problem. That is the convenient and intellectually lazy approach that generates division, judgment, hatred, and self-isolation. **Fear seeks comfort in the false hope of uniformity — a form of strength in numbers.**

The alternative is far better. We could respond with *intellectual humility* to negate the uncertainty, come together as a community with different perspectives to get needed information, create respectful dialogue, and seek unity for community well-being (*eudaimonia*). There is a marked difference between unity (the goal of open-mindedness) and uniformity (the goal of closed-mindedness). The two are not the same. For our sake, and that of our children and grandchildren, the time has come to choose intellectual humility over fear and listen to other's views rather than seeking false hope in our own. In the dialogue that results, we can find the moral and ethical middle ground in which we can all live and love.

SIGNATURE SERIES SNEAK PEEK

Missouri Voices: Citizens & Civics

Missouri Humanities' 2025 Signature Series will explore the theme of democracy as we approach America's Semiquincentennial. Missouri Voices will consider individual and collective roles in civic engagement and democratic participation as we examine the bold "American Experiment" of a government run by and for the people, a vision rooted in the Constitution of the United States.

Through dynamic and thoughtful in-person programming and digital content, we will look at sweeping social movements to cast ballots and engage in policy as we explore the complex history of American democracy and Missouri's enduring participation.

Join us as we consider the role of civility in democracy and ask ourselves: What is the role of the citizen in our "American Experiment," past, present, and future? How can we employ democracy to build a "more perfect union" while strengthening communities and ensuring the protection of rights and freedoms for every citizen?

If you would like to stay up to date on our current and upcoming signature series events and program, please visit mohumanities.org/signature-series.

VOICES AND VOTES
DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

A SMITHSONIAN TRAVELING EXHIBIT

2025-2026 Upcoming Dates

Maryville
April 23, 2025 - June 4, 2025

Sikeston
June 10, 2025 – July 22, 2025

Neosho
July 28, 2025 – September 8, 2025

Memphis
September 14, 2025 – October 26, 2025

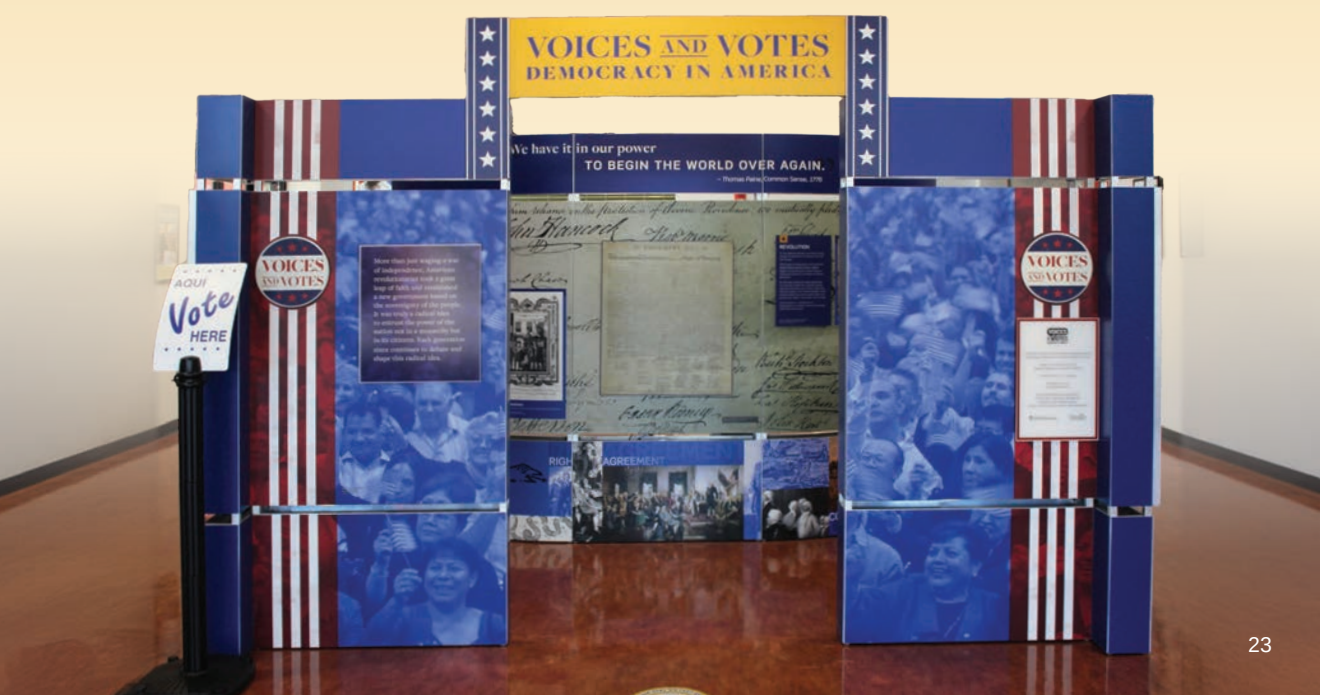
Grain Valley
November 1, 2025 – December 13, 2025

Washington
December 19, 2025 – January 30, 2026

ABOUT VOICES AND VOTES:

The Smithsonian traveling exhibit, Voices and Votes: Democracy in America explores the foundational principles of American democracy, tracing its roots from the country's beginnings and examining key questions that continue to shape our nation today: Who has the right to vote? What are the freedoms and responsibilities of citizens? Whose voices will be heard? This exhibit serves as a springboard for vital discussions about these issues, reflecting our local stories and experiences.

An exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution, Voices and Votes: Democracy in America is developed as a Museum on Main Street (MoMS) program. Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress. Each year, six sites are selected to host the exhibition throughout the year. **To find out more or to apply to be a future host site, please scan the available QR code or visit mohumanities.org/traveling-exhibits.**

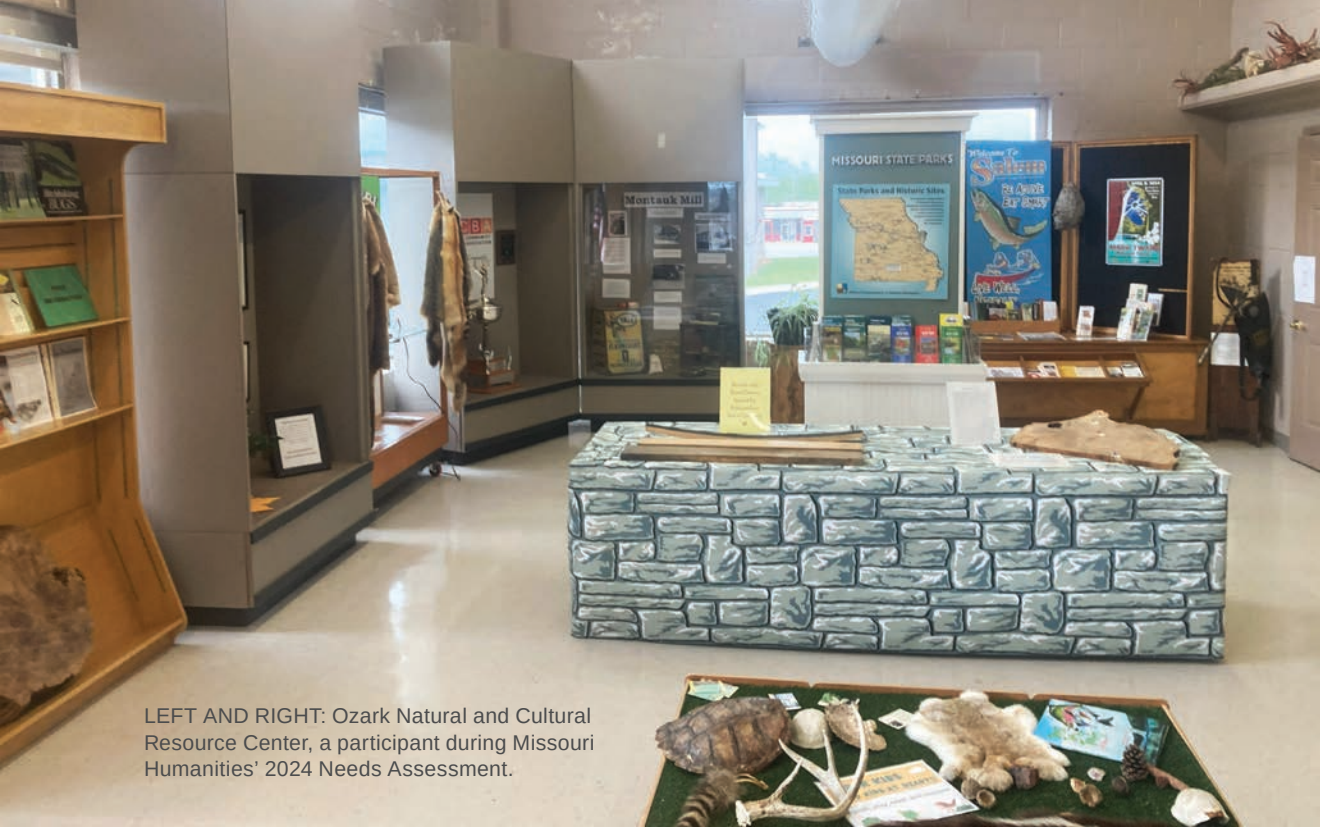


AmeriCorps IN MISSOURI

CHRIS KEMPKE
CULTURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

At Missouri Humanities (MH), we are constantly seeking ways to promote and support humanities institutions around the state. This year, MH is working to create a new resource to offer these invaluable partners. With a planning grant from the Missouri Community Service Commission, we will be researching and developing a program to support historical societies, museums, and archives in rural Missouri through the assistance of AmeriCorps members. Once developed, this program will be a key asset in helping rural historical organizations accomplish their goals and instrumental in training the next generation of humanities leaders.

In the fall of 2023, Missouri Humanities was awarded an AmeriCorps Missouri Planning Grant in alignment with the Missouri Community Service Commission's funding priority to "support historic preservation and/or increased understanding of Missouri arts and culture." This award provides MH the funds to research and plan an AmeriCorps program to place AmeriCorps members in rural museums, historical societies, and archives around the state. To understand how the program can best serve Missouri's rural historical institutions, our organization has been conducting needs assessments with these institutions across the state. Additionally, we have been studying other humanities-focused AmeriCorps programs around the nation to help understand the most effective ways of structuring and administering such a program in Missouri. Finally, we are working with partners around the state to develop a pool of potential members for the program. The data gathered from these research efforts will inform a plan for the Missouri Humanities AmeriCorps program, with that plan being used to apply for a Missouri Service Commission Operations Grant to fund the program's implementation.



LEFT AND RIGHT: Ozark Natural and Cultural Resource Center, a participant during Missouri Humanities' 2024 Needs Assessment.

What Would This Mean for Missouri's Rural Cultural Institutions?

Simply put, the implementation of the Missouri Humanities' AmeriCorps program would be a game-changer for smaller, rural institutions statewide, as well as the communities they serve. AmeriCorps Members will add capacity to the organizations they serve and allow those organizations to conduct activities they otherwise would not have the resources to accomplish. Examples of the work that could be done by these members include document digitization, collection curation, volunteer training, exhibit creation, and more. Missouri Humanities' AmeriCorps program would also be a major professional development opportunity for those looking to join the cultural and historical professional field, creating valuable work experiences and opportunities that will help launch members' careers, giving the next generation of Humanities leaders the skills and experiences to succeed.

How Can I Engage With this Program?

If you are interested in becoming a Missouri Humanities AmeriCorps member or represent a rural museum, historical society, or archive interested in participating in the program, be sure to check out our website and follow our social media account for updates on the program's development. For further information about the program, contact Chris Kempke at chris@mohumanities.org.

The implementation of the Missouri Humanities' AmeriCorps program would be a game-changer for smaller, rural institutions statewide, as well as the communities they serve.

Community Catalyst

The Role of Volunteerism in Democracy

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."

— MARJORIE MOORE

CHRIS KEMPKE
CULTURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

In the United States, there is a focus on the freedoms afforded to us by the "American Experiment" of democracy, taking place over 240 years ago, and how far those freedoms go. People of different political, racial, religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds have varying ideas of the importance of different freedoms within our society. While these are certainly critical conversations to have in order to maintain the democratic experiment, not enough focus is put on the investment citizens must make to make it successful. I am not talking about merely voting, serving on jury duty, or even serving in the military, rather, that it takes a consistent effort and investment from citizens to water the tree of democracy and help it grow.

The strength of any democratic system evolves around the concept that the people of a society can work together to govern themselves rather than relying on a single authority to do so. With this privilege of self-determination comes the

responsibility of maintaining the "community commons," that is the shared infrastructure of society, also known as volunteerism. Perhaps activist, scholar, and Professor Marjorie Moore said it best: "volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." A democratic system of governance is dependent on the active investment of time, money, labor, and thought from its participants. While these demands on citizens are sometimes viewed as a burden, I believe volunteerism remains a critical aspect of fostering cross cultural understanding, empathy, and community resilience, all of which are critical for a multicultural democracy to survive.

Volunteerism creates understanding and empathy unlike anything else. Want to know your neighbors and build a long-lasting bond? Go over and knock on their door and introduce yourself, volunteer to be on the local fire department that saves their house from burning, help ensure their food security by working at the area food pantry, or ensure their favorite community events take place by volunteering to staff them. The act of profitless service to your friends and neighbors helps to build these relationships like nothing else can. In a world where technology, suburban sprawl, and income inequality can divide and separate us, volunteerism can help restore the connectivity of communities by causing people of diverse backgrounds to not only interact with each other but to serve each other.

By deriving their power from the people, democracies make the community level of society exceptionally important in this bottom-up system. As a result, community resiliency is a critical concern for the democratic system. Communities face many challenges due to economic, political, climate, and cultural factors. **Volunteerism is vital because it empowers citizens to collectively address their problems rather than looking toward an outside force or entity for assistance.** It allows communities to take on challenges without having to rely on others to decide when and how they receive assistance. Volunteerism empowers people to know they can overcome most challenges collectively if each citizen invests even just a fraction of their time, money, and thoughts into their community.

Volunteerism is a foundational piece of democracy and helps mitigate many of the challenges we face in our communities today. It is more than just a nice thing to do now and again. I feel that it is long past time that we elevate the importance of this critical act throughout our society. Now more than ever, it is important to ensure volunteerism is infused within the framework of our culture.

The Positive Power of Social Media

CHRISTINA HIGHSMITH
MARKETING COORDINATOR,
MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Technology has advanced rapidly over the last fifty years. How many people remember using a landline phone? When did you first use a laptop computer? Today, we carry touchscreens in our pockets that can share video chats with anyone across the globe. The invention of downloadable apps has only increased our ability to share, discover, and consume media from others. With this development comes algorithms — a set of rules, signals, and data that govern a platform's operation and filter what the user sees. This is the power of social media and how it serves as an influential tool for fostering inclusion and unity.

Social media platforms serve as modern-day town squares. Individuals can congregate, hear ideas, exchange discourse, and form connections beyond their geographical boundaries. And while these spaces hold the potential to foster inclusivity, they also hold the power to exclude people. In the past, ostracized communities were not found in physical town squares; they were pushed to the city limits and generally avoided. These people created communities of their own, but their voices were often lost in the general commotion of a city. Social media, however, includes these individuals in the global dialogue. Historically underrepresented communities, such as racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, immigrants, disabled individuals, various religious groups, and many other communities, can now share their stories and experiences with the world.

Growing up in a small town in the early 2000s, I rarely met a person who didn't look like me or share similar opinions on how someone should live their life. There was little diversity in my school, and in my rural area, computers and cell phones were not in basic use. My mother would take my sister and me to the small local library to rent the few books and DVDs available, with the goal of teaching us about cultures other than our own. As a family, we watched every movie that came through that little library. Eventually, we requested library loans or drove half an hour to another city's library to check out foreign films. Most of the time, we had no idea what genre or story the film was about until we watched it. Once, we picked a film called *Chunhyang*, a Korean film adaptation of a famous 판소리 (pansori), which is a lengthy musical storytelling that mixes body movements and songs to the accompaniment of a drummer. Another time, we watched *The King of Masks*, which follows the story of a street performer who practices the art of bian lian — an instantaneous face-changing opera.

I credit my mother for ensuring that my education extended beyond my physical boundaries and challenged my lived experience. While I had learned about different cultures in school, this knowledge didn't impact my day-to-day life. By watching these foreign films, I got to learn why certain cultures had different storytelling tropes than what I was used to. This required me to read all the English subtitles while listening to hours of Japanese, French, or whatever language the film was in. I became inspired to travel outside of my small town. I wanted to meet people who lived in other countries and ask them what it was like living there.

Even then, these films were a filtered lens of the most popular voice in those cultures. With the rise of social media, individuals from all walks of life now have a platform. You no longer need the funding for a movie to tell your story, and you don't need a publisher's permission to print your ideas. Social media has greatly increased storytelling and the sharing of culture. Attention to accessibility on these sites has also opened the door for further inclusion. These personal stories and perspectives on social media challenge prevailing stereotypes and create empathy for people unfamiliar with other cultures.

This said, social media isn't purely a global experience. Social media algorithms work to show you content that aligns with your interests, so algorithms often promote local content, presuming that since you live within a locality, you might be interested. With Missouri being home to approximately six million people, these localized interactions help give a greater sense of community and shared understanding. A native Missourian could see a video about an immigrant sharing their experience moving to Missouri. This person could talk about why they moved, their struggle with adapting to a new culture, or how they found a community in their new city. These personal anecdotes can stir empathy and support from the native Missourian, who might not have otherwise understood the immigrant experience. **Making a connection grounded in empathy, rather than confusion and hostility, humanizes individuals and decreases the possibility of division within communities.**

Nevertheless, the power of social media inclusion also faces challenges. Significant issues such as algorithm bias, echo chambers, and online harassment have arisen from the ease of accessibility and anonymity. Much like a physical town square, as much as social media can be used to unite and connect individuals, it can also be used to divide and polarize. Addressing these problems requires a combination of collaboration between policymakers, technology companies, civil society organizations, and individual users. The use of social media in our daily communication, entertainment, and information sharing means it's here to stay for the foreseeable future. Therefore, inclusion in social media is essential for increasing representation, empathy, empowerment, and social cohesion in our state.

Missouri Humanities Speakers Bureau

Missouri Speakers Bureau works to promote humanities education throughout the state of Missouri. If your civic organization, museum, historical society, library, nonprofit, or similar institution or group is looking for an expert to give a presentation on a topic related to the history, culture, geography, or people of Missouri, we hope you will consider engaging with our distinguished experts.

To view more speakers, additional topics, or for speaker contact information, please visit mohumanities.org/schedule-a-speaker.

SPEAKER HIGHLIGHTS:

Michael Dickey

Native Missouri at the Time of the Louisiana Purchase

Using Spanish and American records, historian and author Michael Dickey explains the cultural tension and rapid changes that characterized Euro-American relations with the Osage, Missouria, Kansa, Ioway, Sac & Fox, Kickapoo, Shawnee, Lenape, and Illinois nations in the Missouri region from 1803 to the final extinguishment of Indian titles in 1836. The presentation demonstrates each tribe's unique qualities and characteristics and summarizes what happened to them. There is a reminder that they are still with us and not simply museum pieces.

Katherine Gilbert

Rose O'Neill

While Rose O'Neill is most famous for her Kewpie dolls, which she described as "little round fairies" who could "teach people to be merry and kind at the same time," Kewpie dolls represent only one portion of the breadth and depth of her art. Over the course of her life, O'Neill became the highest-paid illustrator in her time. She created no less than 5,500 drawings, including some of the most famous suffragist posters. She also produced countless drawings in support of the suffragist movement and marched for women's right to vote. This talk discusses her art, writing, and extraordinary life as a cutting-edge figure who moved between the island of Capri in Italy, Greenwich Village in New York, and, in her final years, the Ozarks. The talk highlights O'Neill's love of the Ozarks and the ways that the landscape shaped her art.

Larry Gragg

Demands for Desegregation in the 1950s

Drawing upon letters and memos to and from state college presidents at the University of Missouri and Lincoln University and the dean of the Missouri School of Mines, Gragg talks about the “behind the scenes” discussions of presidents prior to and following Cole County Circuit Court Judge Sam C. Blair’s declaratory judgment in 1950. This decision decided that the Missouri School of Mines and the University of Missouri must admit three African American students who wanted to pursue degrees not offered at Lincoln University, the state’s only college for Black students. Collectively, the presidents’ responses varied from caution to opposition to desegregation. Only Sherman Scruggs, the president at Lincoln University, called upon the state to open the doors of all public colleges to students regardless of race. In large part, the timid responses of these presidents reflected the reality of leading colleges while in a deeply segregated state. Ultimately, this talk will discuss the challenges of desegregating higher education prior to the 1954 Brown decision.

Galen Gritts

Being Cherokee

Missourians are connected strongly to the Cherokee tribe. Many Natives, from any tribe, have heard a non-native person tell the myth of the Cherokee grandmother climbing the family tree, and as many people think of Native people as frozen in time, their wonderment of hearing from a contemporary Cherokee is boundless. History, personal stories, hidden truths, and more are the backbone of this presentation.

Vanessa Gary

Stowe Teachers College’s President Ruth Harris

In 1940, St. Louis Public Schools named Dr. Ruth Harris the first African American female President of the Harris-Stowe State University, previously named Stowe Teachers College. During the Jim Crow era, Harris joined a small cadre of African American females who were harbingers for future academy administrators. These women, who supported and advocated for their faculty, paved the way for their peers who are currently leading or teaching at colleges and universities. Situated in Black feminist thought, race

uplift, and female mentoring model, this educational biographical narrative examines Harris' support of faculty as she guided the development of Stowe. In her book, *Stowe Teachers College and Her Predecessors*, Harris referred to the collaborative work performed by her and her staff to gain accreditation as one of her guiding principles. This representation of Harris' collaboration with her colleagues revealed her willingness to support her faculty. This discussion explores the vestiges of Black feminist theory and race uplift in the form of mentoring that exist today as African American women help junior faculty navigate tenure in higher education.

Charles Hotle

Slavery and the Underground Railroad on the Missouri-Illinois Border

The border between Missouri and Illinois before the Civil War saw a great deal of activity related to slavery and the Underground Railroad. Abolitionists founded the first chartered institution of higher learning in Missouri at Marion College as well as the Mission Institute across the river in Quincy, Illinois. Hotle's presentation explores the impact of abolitionism on both sides of the border, especially during the years 1831 to 1844 when the two colleges were most active. This presentation is a case study on how slavery and abolitionism shaped the early history of the area.

Cecilia Nadal & Sydney Norton

The Shared History of German Immigrants and African Americans

Within the social and political context of nineteenth-century Missouri, German specialist Sydney Norton examines the contributions of German immigrants who dedicated their lives to ending slavery, and who, in some cases, worked with African Americans to institute laws of social equality after slavery was abolished. This presentation investigates the contributions of key political figures, such as Friedrich Muench, Arnold Krekel, and Henry and Augustus Boernstein, who, in their actions and writings, helped mobilize members of the German community to support Abraham Lincoln and fight for the principles of democracy. Sociologist and playwright Cecilia Nadal follows with a discussion of how the story of the German abolitionists inspired her to investigate the shared history of African Americans and German Americans. She explains why this history of relationships is crucial for our society's well-being today. Nadal also discusses how this history shaped the direction of her play, *An Amazing Story: German Abolitionists of Missouri*, which toured in St. Louis, Washington, and Hermann, Missouri.

Ria Unson

Filipinos at the 1904 World's Fair: A Legacy of Race and Empire

One of the most popular attractions at the 1904 World's Fair was the Philippine Exhibit, a 47-acre site that for nine months became home to over 1,000 people on display. Ria Unson, St. Louis-based Filipino American artist and researcher, traces the legacy of the fair as a descendant of one of those people. Learn about how the image of Filipinos constructed at the fair was a method used to gain support for American imperialism and to domesticate the immigrant workers of St. Louis.

Steve Wiegenstein

Missouri's Utopian Communities

Nineteenth-century Missouri was home to several alternative communities, often termed "utopian communities" for their emphasis on social betterment and a different way of life. But although their neighbors sometimes considered these utopians odd or eccentric, they were often within the mainstream of progressive social thinking of the time. Steve Wiegenstein has been researching these communities for decades, both as a scholar and in his role as a leading historical novelist. In this presentation, he invites discussions of Missouri's well-known and lesser-known utopian communities, including religious communes, secular communities, and those in between.

Loftin Woodiel

The Father of Post-Civil War Missouri Banditry

During the American Civil War, Captain William C. Quantrill commanded a band of Confederate irregulars who wreaked death and destruction throughout the Missouri and Kansas borders. Tactical and technical perfection were trademarks of his organization. Prior to the war, Quantrill was a school teacher in the state of Ohio. A number of Quantrill's men continued to hone their skill set, maintained these deviant behaviors, and channeled them into post-war career banditry opportunities. This presentation will explore if, just as a teacher motivates his students to adopt specific standards of academic and social behavior, Quantrill's pedagogical skill set propelled his subordinates into deviant careers. This interdisciplinary research design employs historical context analysis, psychological evaluation of motivation in a running text, and the application of criminological theory.

Building Peace through Rotary Clubs

SARAH J. READ

In the first part of the 19th century, when Alexis De Tocqueville toured the United States to learn about democracy, he observed that "Nothing, in my view, more deserves attention than the intellectual and moral associations in America." He saw these associations and the bonds they created among members of a community as key to making American democracy work, and concluded that "If men are to remain civilized or become civilized, the art of association must develop and improve among them at the same speed as equality of conditions spreads."

More than 150 years later, in his 2018 book *Them*, Senator Ben Sasse identified the decline in civic association membership as a contributing factor to hyper-partisanship and a growing "epidemic of loneliness." He stated: "We are relational beings, and we're meant for community. We're meant to be rooted, not rootless. We're meant to be together, pursuing goals and dreams in common. But these are much harder to come by in an increasingly transient world. Alexis de Tocqueville defined America by our many associations, but he would barely recognize us today. Our associations and healthy local institutions are all withering."

> "We are relational beings, and we're meant for community. We're meant to be rooted, not rootless. We're meant to be together, pursuing goals and dreams in common."
>
> -SENATOR BEN SASSE

Although participation in civic associations has declined across the United States, Rotary clubs throughout Missouri still build connections that help strengthen our communities and our democracy. In District 6080, which encompasses Central Missouri, there are over 50 clubs, and over 10 of those have been certified by the Rotary Action Group for Peace as "peacebuilder clubs." Peacebuilder clubs make a specific commitment to working toward "Positive Peace" in their communities. Positive Peace is defined by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) as "the attitudes, institutions, and structures that, when strengthened, lead to a more peaceful society." Rotarians are supported in their work by a partnership between Rotary International and the IEP, which studies, gathers data, and reports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Rotary

on the factors that contribute to or detract from peace in our communities. The IEP identifies the eight pillars of positive peace as: a well-functioning government, a sound business environment, equitable distribution of resources, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbors, free flow of information, high levels of human capital, and low levels of corruption. All of these contribute to community resilience, and Rotary clubs help build that resilience through service, connection, and focus.

Rotary was founded in 1905 with the goal of fostering fellowship among diverse professionals. By 1911, early Rotarians had committed to the concept of "Service Above Self" — a motto that continues to inspire Rotarians today. Through their clubs, Rotarians work with each other and with community partners to feed the hungry; educate younger generations; improve the environment; ensure access to healthcare, clean water, and adequate sanitation; resettle refugees; provide disaster relief; and promote economic development. This brings Rotarians into contact with many different populations within their communities — and clubs and communities worldwide — as they work together to improve lives and meet the challenges that keep many from thriving in our world today. These working relationships naturally lead to empathy for others and a broader understanding of the cultures and systems that shape us.

As with the first club, Rotary clubs intentionally recruit members of different professions, experiences, and perspectives, all of whom are interested in their community. This creates a resource-rich network that enables their work. Today, Rotary clubs are also connected throughout our country and the world through Rotary International. This international network promotes understanding and compassion for the many challenges our populations face and provides a platform for ongoing sharing of information and ideas. Through Rotary International, Rotary clubs can access numerous tools and resources that are designed to help clubs connect with others and plan sustainable projects. These are key tools for implementing Rotary International's vision statement: "Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves."

Alongside these key resources, one of the most powerful tools available to Rotarians in working for positive peace is their "Four Way Test":

OF THE THINGS WE THINK, SAY, AND DO:

Is it the truth?

Will it be fair to all concerned?

Will it build goodwill and better friendships?

Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

This test, which guides every Rotarian and every club around the world, naturally promotes curiosity, civility, empathy, and a focus on the common good. It requires Rotarians to evaluate the information they rely on (Is it the truth?), to care about others (Is it beneficial to all concerned?), to act ethically (Is it fair to all concerned?), and to focus on the common good (Will it build goodwill and better friendships?). Actions taken in keeping with this guide build the trust necessary to productively navigate the differences in experience, interests, and information that in other settings too often lead to conflict that stalls progress.

Alexis de Tocqueville was right — civic associations have the power to improve our communities and strengthen our democracy. In our current partisan environment, it is easy for individuals to feel discouraged about their ability to make a difference. Rotary leverages the power of individuals through the networks created by fellowship and a focus on a common set of values. If you are intrigued by the notion of "Service Above Self" and would like to help in the work of building more peaceful, resilient communities here and around the world, you are welcome to join us.

Rotary

Reach out to a Rotarian in your community or learn more at rotary.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Sarah J. Read, a retired lawyer and mediator, chairs the Peacebuilder Committees for Rotary District 6080 and the Columbia Metro Rotary Club. She has been a Rotarian since 2004.

Unite Missouri by Getting to Know Your Neighbor's Names

DAVID BURTON,
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST,
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

The bar for what it means to be a good neighbor is set considerably low, yet some people still don't meet it due to mistaking apathy for their neighbors as respecting their privacy.

For example, in 2019, an elderly couple moved two houses down the street from me. I went down to introduce myself. The lady of the house told me they had moved 14 times, that this was their last move, and that her husband was having surgery in a few days.

We had a big snowstorm after he got home, so I shoveled their short walkway to the mailbox.

When I finished, his wife was on the porch with a cup of hot chocolate for me. And she said, “Of all the places we have lived, you are the best neighbor we’ve ever had.”

I walked home with the shovel over my shoulder and had an extra spring in my step. Then, I remembered shoveling their sidewalk was the only thing I had ever done for them! That small, simple gesture had made this the best of all the places they had lived. That is when I realized that the bar for qualifying as a good neighbor is low.

Dr. Jacqueline Olds and Dr. Richard Schwartz, psychiatrists from Harvard Medical School, wrote *The Lonely American*. Together, they observed that in the 1950s, Americans expected interaction among neighbors. We expected to be welcomed to the neighborhood, to share tools or food, to watch each other's children, to watch their home when traveling, and to be invited over for dinner. For most of our history, neighbor relationships were focused on social interaction.

Then Schwartz and Olds observed that neighborly behaviors had changed. They summarize this by saying Americans now expect a neighbor to be "someone who is quiet and leaves them alone."

Their observation is now supported by a study done with residents of Missouri. In 2022, The Greene County University of Missouri Extension Council authorized monies to conduct Missouri's first "State of Neighboring" study in 2022. This study has been repeated statewide in 2024 to chart any changes. In 2016, State Farm surveyed 6,051 U.S. adults about various traits among neighbors, which provided a basis for the questions for Missourians in the 2022 and 2024 studies.

One thing that jumps out of our 2022 "State of Neighboring" survey for Missouri is what people think makes someone a good neighbor. I asked participants what they thought made someone a good neighbor and gave them 30 behaviors or actions to select. They could choose as many as they wanted, but two selections were selected the most in the 2022 study: 74.5% of respondents said a good neighbor "respects my privacy," and 67% said a good neighbor "is quiet and does not make excessive noise." In other words, Missourians say a good neighbor is quiet and leaves them alone!

Meanwhile, this “State of Neighboring” study also found that 58% of Missourians said they would like to interact with their neighbors beyond just a wave and hello; 64% find socializing with neighbors important; and 59% say they would attend a block party and 26% were unsure. Only 14% would say no to attending outright. Missourians also indicated that several common behaviors need improvement, including learning your neighbors' names. In that same 2022 study, only 12.5% of Missourians knew the names of their immediate eight neighbors.

A half-century ago, neighbors would have been the most obvious choice for forming social connections in a town. A different study in the 1950s found 44% of neighbors in America socialized at least once a week. Neighborhood cocktail parties, poker games, picnics, and potlucks dominated a person’s social life. By 1971, that number had fallen to only 24% of Americans who socialized with neighbors at least once a week, and that number kept declining every decade.

In the 2022 study, I asked Missourians if they had gotten together with at least one neighbor in the last 12 months which came in at 39%. I had not considered asking about weekly social involvement. While the trends for neighborly engagement may look bleak, I hope that the 2024 study will show improvement in key areas, such as seeing the percentage of Missourians who know their neighbor's names increase, and the percentage of people who know no names decrease. Being able to document an increase in gatherings and other connections would also be progress. So would a change in the top neighbor traits, with privacy and quiet moving out of the top positions and actions that require more connections moving up. In other words, I want to see neighbors not just be good, but to become engaged.

I am convinced the most significant part of our isolation problem is that many Americans already believe they are good neighbors because they smile and wave at people around them. That means the first step toward getting people to become engaged neighbors is to encourage reflection on if they are actually good neighbors.

Knowing your neighbors helps prevent future problems and disagreements and builds your social capital. Being engaged with your neighbors also improves your physical and mental health, reduces neighborhood crime, and protects home investments.

Neighbors may also be your first responders in emergencies. They can help with small needs, and a neighbor might become a friend or provide the social interaction that fends off loneliness.

To aid in the process of becoming a good neighbor, I have created “20 Engaged Neighbor Principles” and designed an online pledge that I hope to have 10,000 Missourians sign over the next few years. You can read and take the "Engaged Neighbor Pledge" online at engagedneighbor.com.

A few of the Engaged Neighbor Principles are:

- Discard a lifestyle of busyness in favor of being present and available.
- Do more front yard living to be available for conversations and service.
- Include neighbors in my life who are overlooked, marginalized, disabled, widowed, or lonely.
- Focus on what is strong, not what is wrong in my neighborhood.
- Invite neighbors into my daily routine with a plus-one approach to neighboring.

The genius of these and other principles is that they bring people closer together and build trust and opportunities to work together to improve communities and the state of neighboring in the United States, starting in your own neighborhood.

This is a great time to begin if you do not know your neighbors!

My advice is to learn the names of your immediate neighbors, find opportunities to use their names, and create opportunities to socialize with and serve your neighbors.

Good Neighbor Opportunities

Neighboring 101
Listen monthly to people from across the United States involved in the neighboring movement. Join this class at extension.missouri.edu/events/neighboring-101-2024.

International Kindness Day (March 20)
Taking place on Mister Roger's birthday, this international effort promotes "acts of kindness." Join the efforts at wontyoubemyneighborday.com.

Show Me Neighborhood Art Week (June 1-15)
This project emphasizes creating and installing public art displays in yards. Join us at extension.missouri.edu/events/show-me-neighborhood-art-week.

Missouri Good Neighbor Week (September 28 - October 4)
A statewide opportunity to nominate engaged neighbors and to organize a neighboring effort. Learn more at missourigoodneighborweek.com.

Learn more by visiting engagedneighbor.com.

THE ELECTIONS THAT BRING US Together

STANLEY D. WHITEHURST, MBA
WEBSTER COUNTY CLERK

We've all heard the old saying, "there's more than one way to skin a cat." When it comes to county government, we in Missouri excel. We've found over one hundred ways to skin the cat. There are 114 counties in the State, plus the City of St. Louis (which is not in a county). Each has followed their own evolution, developed their own habits, and devised their own ways of serving the public.

In the midst of all this heterogeneity sits the County Clerk. Despite the nondescript title, most times their office is the essential hub of the Courthouse. For the past twenty-five years, I've served as the County Clerk in Webster County. In a small, rural community like ours, being a County Clerk means you wear a lot of hats. A jack of all trades — one of which is being the person who runs the elections.

As a County Clerk, I believe elections can bring people together. As a matter of fact, I know it's true. I've seen it.

Webster County is growing. And it's also going through a reluctant transition from a group of farming communities to suburbs, due to its proximity to Springfield. For the most part, the people here are conservative. As an indicator, Joe Biden received 19% of the vote here in the 2020 Presidential Election.

So, one might think Webster County would be a hotbed of seething rage and distrust about the election process. And, if you were to watch the evening news, you might think I personally would be concerned about threats or potential violence. But it isn't, and I'm not. Why?

First, let me back up and concede that faith in national elections has taken a severe hit in this community. But I would argue that faith in our local elections is still quite strong. And rather than being puzzled by this disconnect, I think there is an opportunity to learn from it.

Elections, by their nature, are community events. It takes a lot of people to pull off a happening

the magnitude of a Presidential Election. Even in a county our size, over a hundred people will be involved in some way or other before we are through. And in Missouri, it's all done with bipartisan teams of neighborhood election workers drawn in equal numbers from the two major political parties. So, it requires that people who fundamentally disagree with each other sit side by side for nearly 14 hours on the big day, being polite to each other and working on a common goal. Witnessing these teams come together is one of the most rewarding things about working in elections.

We take great care in the training of these election workers. We emphasize that their main job is customer service and treating everyone with respect. They learn the major aspects of Missouri election law — including photo I.D. requirements, equipment testing, and post-election audit procedures. And we take the time to answer a lot of questions on details big and small.

My observation has been that election workers on both sides of the aisle believe that the election process is fair and effective — once they've seen it in action, that is. They have confidence in "the way we do things here," and they spread that confidence to the people they know.

Where the breakdown in trust occurs is with confidence in elections *elsewhere*.

When elections are taken out of the context of community, people feel less ownership in the outcome. When people aren't talking to people they disagree with, they become suspicious of each other's motives. Without personal involvement, people are less forgiving of the errors and flaws that inevitably pop up in such a human endeavor. And without a good understanding of the process, it is easy to begin assuming all manner of nefariousness and corruption.

So, what are the solutions? Stronger communities, dedicated efforts to maintain relationships with people who see things differently, personal involvement, and a transparent and consistent commitment to educate the public about the process from those in a position to do so.

Obviously, some of these solutions are beyond the power of one individual. Nonetheless, I encourage you to take the first step and get involved. Contact your local County Clerk or election office. Sign up to become an election worker. See if what I am saying is true. See if — instead of being the things that divide us — elections can actually bring people together.

To learn more about elections and election results, or to sign up to be a poll worker, visit www.sos.mo.gov/elections.

FROM WAR-TORN LANDS TO GATEWAY CITY

The Resilience of Bosnian Refugees in St. Louis

JASON C. SIDES, PHD
VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

On April 6, 1992, St. Louis, Missouri, experienced windy and overcast weather. While residents of the city carried on with their daily routines amidst the dreary conditions, halfway across the world in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a conflict was emerging that would bring about immense suffering. As the day unfolded for people in both places, little did anyone realize that the events of that day would leave an indelible mark on the character of St. Louis.

While violence targeting Bosnians had been occurring for several weeks in the former Yugoslavia, it was on that day that widespread conflict erupted. This pattern of violence aimed at ethnically cleansing Bosnia and Herzegovina sought to eradicate all remnants of the Bosnian community and its cultural influences.

In the aftermath of the suffering caused by this violence, the United States government offered the opportunity for resettlement to many victims of the conflict. St. Louis emerged as a popular destination for numerous refugees who sought sanctuary in the United States.

During the decades following the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, St. Louis has transformed into a home for those seeking refuge, embodying a story of resilience.

The Bosnian experience in St. Louis has been shaped by various factors, including existing support networks, the allure of economic opportunities, and the city's longstanding tradition of embracing immigrants. Upon their arrival in St. Louis, many Bosnian refugees faced significant hurdles; they needed to navigate the complexities of the immigration process while grappling with the trauma of war, loss, and displacement.

Whether overcoming language barriers, seeking employment, securing housing, or accessing healthcare, members of the Bosnian community demonstrated remarkable determination in rebuilding their lives, thus enriching the city's communities in the process. Bosnians engaged with community networks and local organizations through the offering of language classes and cultural orientation programs, thereby introducing these residents to various aspects of their new home's culture.

One of the most significant endeavors in the resettlement of Bosnian refugees was the formation of an interconnected community in St. Louis. Faced with the daunting task of rebuilding their lives in a new country, Bosnians recognized the importance of creating a supportive

environment reminiscent of their homeland. To achieve this, they established cultural associations, religious institutions, and businesses that catered to their traditions and needs. These initiatives provided practical resources and served as focal points for social cohesion and identity preservation.

Through community-led efforts and a dedication to their culture, Bosnian immigrants transformed pockets of St. Louis and cultivated a sense of familiarity and belonging. While there were many, the Bevo Mill neighborhood was particularly impacted and turned into a region affectionately dubbed "Little Bosnia." This enclave became a symbolic “home away from home,” where Bosnians could reconnect with their roots, share experiences, and support one another through the challenges of resettlement. The emergence of "Little Bosnia" represents the physical manifestation of Bosnian resilience and speaks towards their desires for community and cultural preservation. St. Louis, once a distant land, became a place where Bosnians could forge meaningful connections, celebrate their heritage, and contribute to the city's diversity.

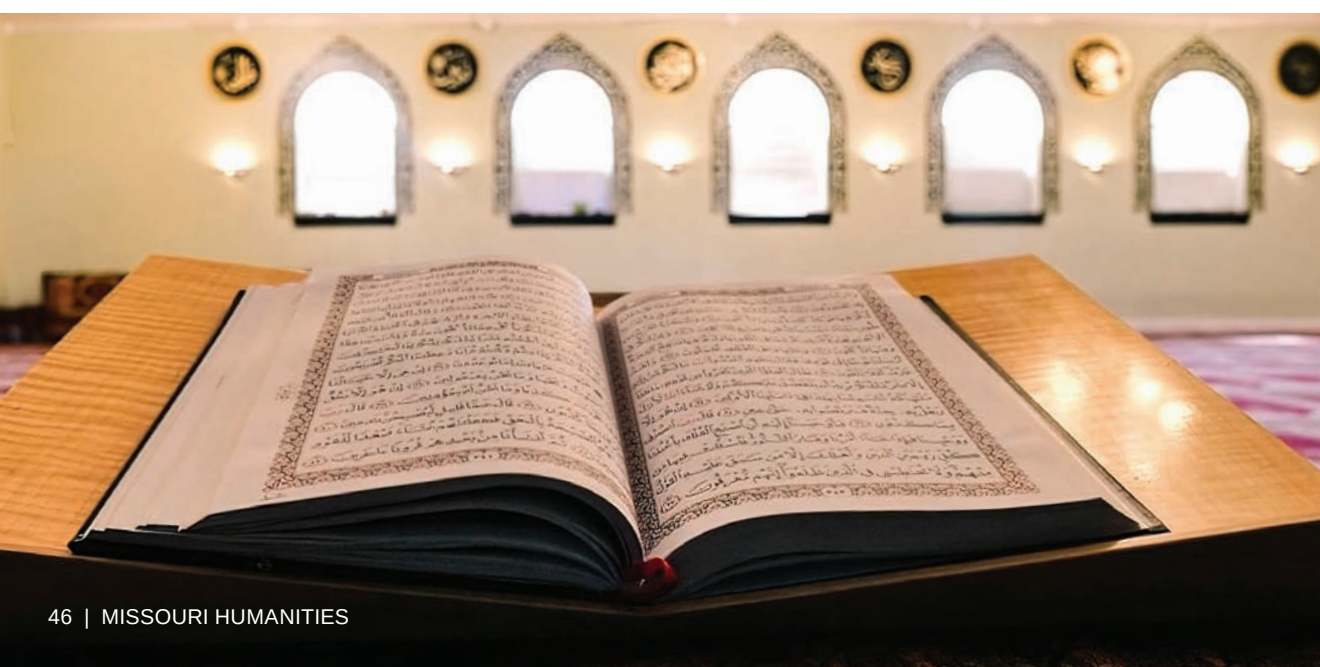
The Bosnian community's commitment to cultural preservation also extends beyond the emergence of “Little Bosnia.” Through the establishment of cultural centers, mosques, and educational programs, community members have devoted themselves to safeguarding their heritage. Central to this endeavor are weekend schools, which serve as centers for the transmission of the Bosnian language and cultural traditions. Additionally, annual

RIGHT AND PAGE 46:
The Bosnian Islamic Center of St. Louis, taken by Damir Husamovic.

events, such as the commemoration of Bosnia's Independence Day, showcase Bosnian culture, featuring traditional music, dance, and cuisine. These festivities foster a sense of unity and belonging within the Bosnian community while also serving as windows into their culture.

These celebrations function as bridges between the Bosnian community and the diverse cultures in St. Louis. By inviting residents to partake in their traditions, Bosnian culture becomes interwoven with the mosaic of German, African American, Italian, and French cultural traditions that have long characterized the city. These festivals serve as platforms for cultural exchange, where mutual understanding and respect are cultivated among participants. By participating in and supporting these events, residents of St. Louis are exposed to Bosnian culture and gain deeper insights into the experiences and contributions of their Bosnian neighbors. Members of the Bosnian community have also embarked on collaborations with local schools, universities, and cultural institutions to facilitate intercultural exchanges. These collaborations encompass an array of activities, ranging from art exhibitions and film screenings to academic conferences that explore the Bosnian experience and contributions to American society. These initiatives present opportunities to develop meaningful dialogue and strengthen trust between communities. Such an environment is noteworthy because it can provide St. Louis with a resource to draw upon during difficult times.

By embracing diversity and nurturing community bonds, St. Louis has emerged as a model for inclusive urban living. **As we reflect on the Bosnian experience, we are reminded of the positive potential brought by embracing immigration and recognizing inclusivity as an opportunity for growth and healing.** It is imperative that we acknowledge these opportunities and advocate for practices that promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity. It is a call for communities everywhere to view immigration as an opportunity to embrace others while building on our “melting pot” of cultures. As cities around the world grapple with the complexities of globalization and migration, the story of St. Louis and its Bosnian community stands as a hopeful example, demonstrating that with openness, support, and respect, communities can thrive and craft a future that celebrates human diversity and acceptance.



Nearly a Century of the Cape Girardeau County Historical Society

CARLA L. JORDAN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ALICE IRELAND,
EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESIDENT,
CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Cape Girardeau County Historical Society's History Center and Research Annex are thriving parts of the county and state and have international visitation, researchers, and other patrons. This success has been amplified by outreach programs that are vital parts of the strategic planning for the sites. The outreach efforts include a relationship with the Historic Preservation Program and Center for Regional History at Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO), a monthly cultural preservation music program, projects with regional public and private schools, a strong partnership with the local American Legion organization, an active partnership with the local Uptown Jackson Revitalization Organization (UJRO), and the regional Jackson Chamber of Commerce. Another partnership initiated by our team was the establishment of the Cape Girardeau County History Consortium. It is a gathering of the regional research librarians, once each quarter, to discuss how our sites can better serve research patrons. Finally, we benefit from classes held at our two sites in arts and

regional culture. These classes have included the art of Scherenschnitte (paper cutting), Putz house design and creation, Ukrainian Pysanky egg creation, music demonstration performances, a beekeeping demonstration, and a Missouri Humanities sponsored presentation on “Black Women Before, During, and After the Civil War” by Carole Shelton. Each year, the Historical Society partners with the UJRO to sponsor an art event. The events have included former Marvel Comics editor-in-chief, Roy Thomas; fine arts presentations by Gary, Lucy, and Billy O’Donnell; as well as interactive art events centered around raku pottery, glass blowing, and printmaking. All these partnerships help us move forward with our Historical Society mission.

Opportunities & Relationships in Higher Education

The SEMO Historic Preservation Program and the Center for Regional History have had a long relationship with the Historical Society’s sites. Three years ago, the relationship was formalized through the implementation of a mentoring site for internships, academic “hands-on” projects, group academic activities, and other research projects for graduate and undergraduate students. Executive Director Carla Jordan also teaches sessions on site administration, public history, and public research. This relationship with SEMO has supported the processing of collections, completion of exhibits, and website development. The partnership has assisted students in moving forward with advanced graduate studies, admission into internship projects, and employment procurement. We celebrate our relationship with the students and faculty and believe that it has furthered our mission of supporting the history of today and tomorrow.

The Preservation of Regional Music Culture

The Historical Society also hosts a monthly music event to preserve the regional culture of traditional southeast Missouri porch music gatherings. The event has been a successful part of the educational strategic planning of our site for seven years. Each month, acoustic musicians gather in a circle and take turns selecting a musical piece that the rest of the circle accompanies. The audience also participates in song selection and singing. This event has spread to additional gatherings of musicians who gather and play traditional American music. We have hosted originally composed music presentations including two cantatas and a concert by renowned Americana musician, Joe Newberry. The preservation of regional music culture is a strong part of our daily mission.

Regional School Children, Organizations, and Clubs

The Historical Society works hard to integrate regional public and private schools into our mission. Some projects have included an annual storytelling program with a local public school’s third grade classrooms, a reading of a Cherokee Native American story about the word “gratitude,” and an interactive activity that introduced children to the History Center’s collections.

Additionally, we recently established a relationship with the 7-8 graders at a regional private school — Prodigy Leadership Academy. We cultivated a panel of experts to present and discuss artifacts regarding WWII. The Academy created a video documentary of the presentation and the questions posed to the panel. This same group concluded with an interpretation of Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl*. The students researched the era and selected artifacts to use in their public presentation from the History Center site.

We also work with the local American Legion Post 158 on the Historical Society's "Red Clifton Military" collection. This extensive collection has a strong Cape Girardeau County derivation. Ambassadors from Post 158, particularly Jim Roche, have aided us in identifying and processing this mammoth-sized collection. In November 2024, we will be featuring the collection with a permanent exhibition case that presents rotating, military-themed displays at the American Legion's gathering room. Our Annual Autumn Banquet will also highlight the Red Clifton Collection with a military panel of experts, a patriotic theme, and music. These activities, along with our presence in the annual Jackson Veteran's Day Parade, and educational military themed traveling exhibit tubs, were made possible through a major grant from Missouri Humanities. Our partnership with Post 158 has made processing, interpreting, and celebrating this collection possible.

United We Stand with Cape Girardeau County and Missouri

It is an honor for our Cape Girardeau County Historical Society to continue to serve and thrive after nearly a century. Through thousands of visiting patrons, a volunteer team of more than fifty people, and an active Board of Directors, we continue to grow and move forward in our mission of curating regional history. **Our unification with regional and state organizations, regional school children, Southeast Missouri State University, and the regional cultural sites is an important part of our mission and a key to our success. These relationships and highly successful programs and events are a testament to the collaboration and commitment humanities professionals dedicate to provide opportunities for growth and education to their communities.**

ABOUT THE CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

The Cape Girardeau County Historical Society was established in 1926. The mission of the nearly century-old Historical Society is expressed through the documentation, preservation, and interpretation of the Cape Girardeau County regional history of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In 2015, the Historical Society finally experienced a "sense of place" by creating an exhibition-focused environment at 102 S. High Street in Jackson, Missouri. This new museum landscape was made possible by a donation and continuing endowment from the Mildred and Shelby Brown Memorial Trust and other private donations. The success of the regional history site paved the way to establish a Research Library Annex in 2021. This move enabled public access to the extensive manuscript, regional library, photography, and other document collections that were a long-time and growing part of the Historical Society. This development was made possible from funds provided by Missouri Humanities, COVID relief funds, and private donations. For more information on the Cape Girardeau County Historical Society, please visit capegirardeaucountyhistoricalsociety.com

LINCOLN SCHOOL PROJECT BRINGS

"Unity to the Community!"

CROCKETT W. OAKS III
FOUNDER OF LINCOLN SCHOOL PROJECT; ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR OF BUSINESS SERVICES, MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY – WEST PLAINS

Lincoln School proudly sits on top of a hill located in the historically Black section of West Plains, Missouri, known as "the Hill," which is literally and figuratively "on the other side of the tracks." Built in 1926 following a tax levy passed by the citizens of West Plains, Lincoln School served as the institution that educated Black students from 1st through 8th grades. Education was viewed as an opportunity to "better yourself," and "my family were big supporters of education," said Crockett W. Oaks Jr., the last alumni of Lincoln School remaining in Howell County. Following the Supreme Court's ruling in Brown vs. the Board of Education in 1954, the West Plains School Board voted to integrate the school district. It was at this point that Lincoln School ceased to operate, and Black children had to attend Foster Elementary located less than a mile from Lincoln School.

Over the years, Lincoln School's physical state fell into disrepair. Several different organizations occupied the facility, which was owned by the City of West Plains; it served as the home of the local Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) chapter, the 4-H Summer Program, and finally the local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous. Despite its continual use, Lincoln School was in desperate need of repairs, and some would even suggest that it needed to be demolished.

In July 2023, the future of Lincoln School assumed a different trajectory. Crockett and Tonya Oaks III negotiated with the city of West Plains to purchase the facility and accompanying land. In August 2023, the Oaks family, with their contractors in place, embarked on an aggressive timeline to completely transform Lincoln School. They understood that for the restoration to be meaningful for the community, they would need to have an engaging plan of action. Various media outlets, including social media, were used to convey the story of Lincoln School and the proposed effort to restore the facility. Crockett Oaks III, the founder of the Lincoln School Project and the son of Oaks Jr., said **"Lincoln School's legacy should be preserved, it represents something for the entire community, it is up to me to communicate its story in a way that applies to and compels all of us [*sic*]."** Stories

Crockett Oaks Jr. painted in his desk at Lincoln School.

of the school's past and, most importantly, of its alumni quickly started to flood social media. The Oaks partnered with the Community Foundation of the Ozarks to act as their fiduciary agent as they raised funds to facilitate the restoration, which was originally estimated to cost more than $300,000.

Tonya Oaks agreed that "the community needed to be involved, given how we are planning to use the space; as a cultural center, it will be used for extensive community engagement." The Oaks consulted with Tammy Schultz, a local artisan, to design a logo that would easily tell the story of Lincoln School. "A lot of symbolism was used in the logo's design," said Oaks III. The hashtag #WeAreLincolnSchool was selected to launch the Lincoln School Project fundraising effort. As the campaign moved forward the hashtag became more prominent, and the community's support was tremendous! At one point during the campaign, Lincoln School Project's Facebook page increased its followers by 500 in just one day. The amount of likes and shares on this social media platform represents the community's enthusiasm for this project.

Oaks III stated, "this effort was initially about restoring a nearly hundred-year-old building, but through stories of its history and the community's philanthropy, it has turned into a movement! We (all of us collectively) really are Lincoln School, when we start to analyze all of the people that have touched Lincoln School in some way or another."

Today, Lincoln School enjoys a vibrant new beginning as a cultural center. Since its dedication in January 2024, Lincoln School has hosted several cultural events that have welcomed the community. "A chapter in the book of racial reconciliation has unfolded before our very eyes, [and] it is one that can be replicated in other communities. It just needs someone to spark the flame," says Oaks III.

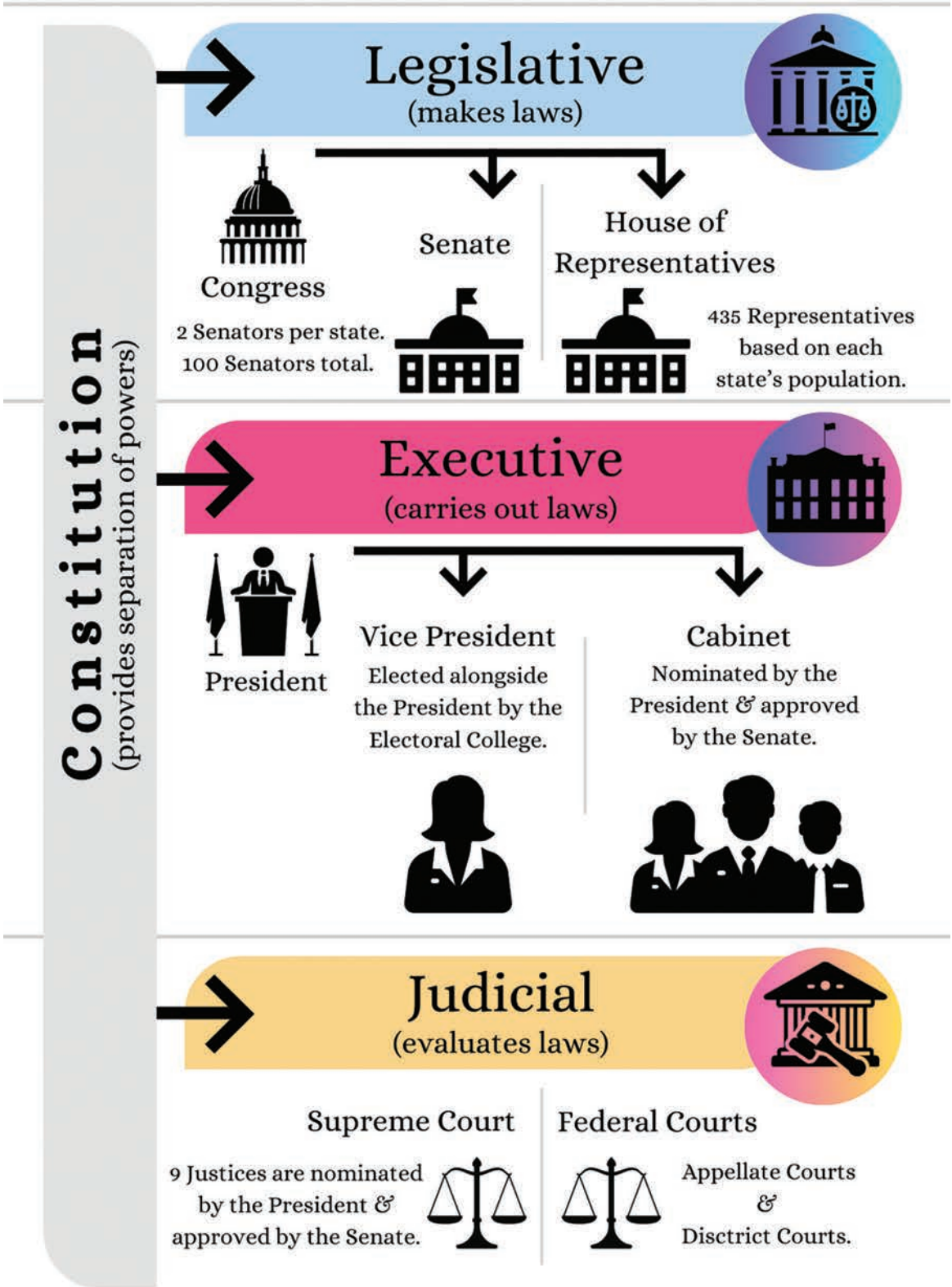
"This effort was initially about restoring a nearly hundred-year-old building, but through stories of its history and the community's philanthropy, it has turned into a movement! We (all of us collectively) really are Lincoln School, when we start to analyze all of the people that have touched Lincoln School in some way or another."

-TONYA OAKS III

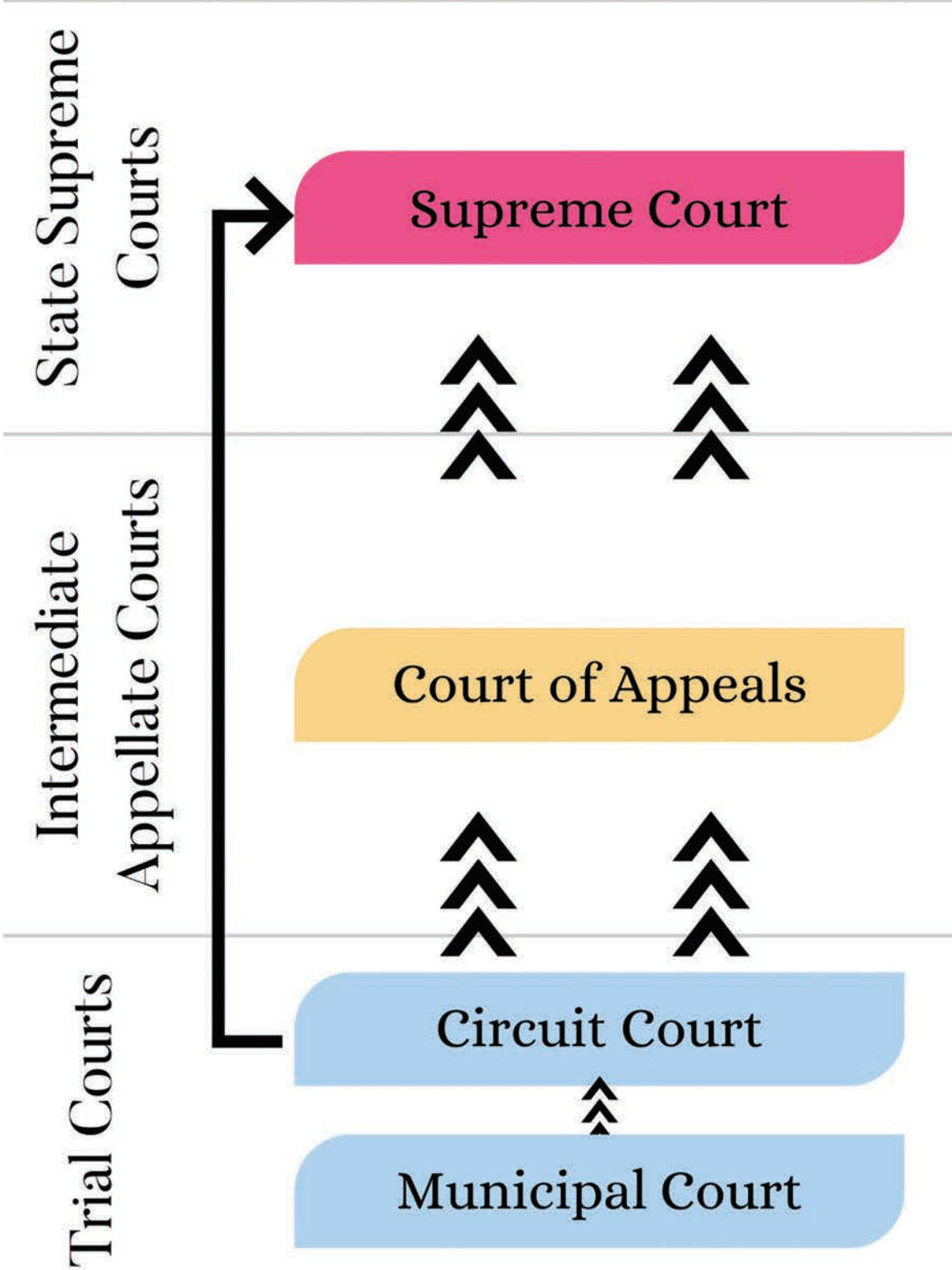
Resources TO Empower Missouri Voices

At Missouri Humanities, we believe an informed and engaged citizenry is essential for a thriving democracy. On the following pages, you'll find a wide array of information, resources, activities, and more for educators, students, and lifelong learners. From diagrams of the branches of government, Missouri Court system, and electoral college, to resources for legal topics, leaders in civic conversations, and projects to inform and educate citizens, this list is a non-exhaustive example of the resources available to Missourians. While we recognize this is merely a starting point, we hope this information and resource list becomes an inspirational tool, providing an opportunity to better understand and become more engaged with our government, its history, and its functions. We invite you to explore these civic resources to foster a more informed and thoughtful society within Missouri and beyond.

3 Branches of Government

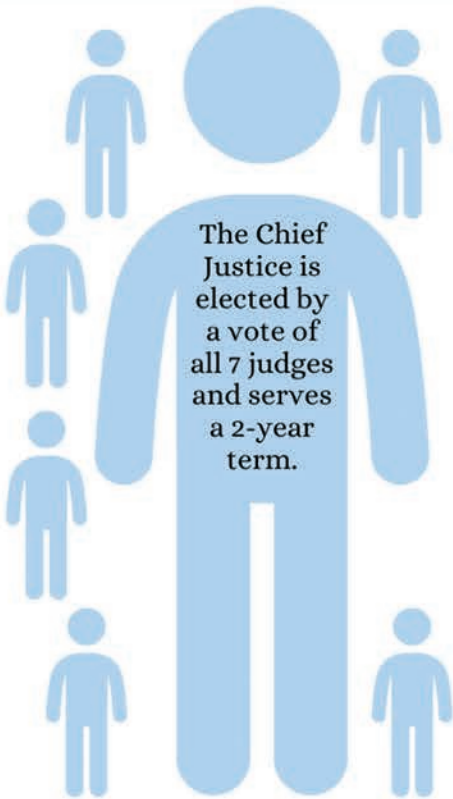


The Missouri Judicial Courts System



The Missouri Supreme Court

There are **7** judges who sit on the Missouri Supreme Court. These judges are chosen through a process called **assisted appointment**. In this process, a nominating commission compiles a list of candidates, from which the governor selects a nominee.



*"When a **vacancy** occurs, a list of potential candidates is compiled by the Missouri Appellate Judicial Commission and narrowed to three choices. From those three candidates, the governor appoints a new judge. After the newly appointed judge serves for at least one year, they must stand for retention in the next general election. If retained, they serve twelve-year terms."*

—Ballotpedia

Qualifications:

- a U.S. citizen for at least 15 years
- a qualified state voter for at least 9 years
- licensed to practice law in the state
- over the age of 30

AND

- under the age of 70

The Missouri Court of Appeals

The judges who sit on the Missouri Court of Appeals are divided into 3 geographic areas: the **Eastern District**, **Western District**, and **Southern District**. These judges are chosen through **assisted appointment**. In this process, a nominating commission compiles a list of candidates, from which the governor selects a nominee.

*"When a **vacancy** occurs, a list of potential candidates is compiled by the Missouri Appellate Judicial Commission and narrowed to three choices. From those three candidates, the governor appoints a new judge. After the newly appointed judge serves for at least one year, they must stand for retention in the next general election. If retained, they serve twelve-year terms."*

—Ballotpedia

Qualifications:

- a U.S. citizen for at least 15 years
- a district resident
- a qualified state voter for at least 9 years
- licensed to practice law in the state
- over the age of 30

AND

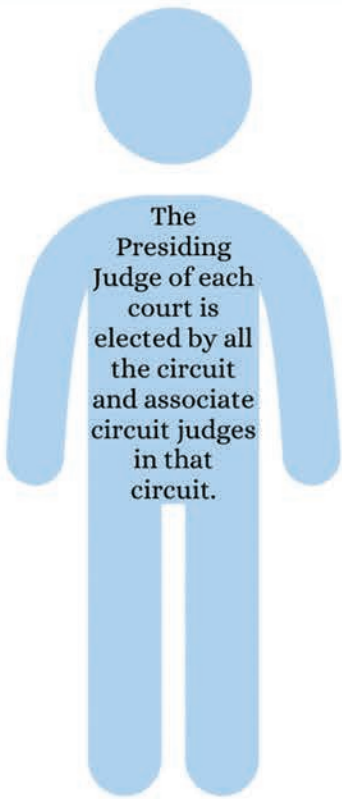
- under the age of 70

The Missouri Circuit Courts

Most of the Missouri Circuit Court judges are elected through partisan elections, serve 6-year terms, and must run for re-election at the end of their term. Some counties choose judges through **assisted appointment**. In this process, a nominating commission compiles a list of candidates, from which the governor selects a nominee.

*"In the event of **midterm vacancies**, circuit courts that normally use partisan elections replace their judges through gubernatorial appointment. The judge will serve until the next general election. If a vacancy occurs in a circuit court that uses the assisted appointment method, the governor appoints a nominee from a list provided by a nominating commission. After the newly appointed judge serves for at least one year, they must stand for retention in the next general election."*

—Ballotpedia



Qualifications:

- a U.S. citizen for at least 10 years
- a resident of the circuit for at least 1 year
- a qualified state voter for at least 3 years
- licensed to practice law in the state
- at least the age of 30

The Missouri Municipal Courts

The Missouri Municipal Courts have primary authority over violations of municipal ordinances. Typically, each court is overseen by a presiding Circuit Court judge and may have one or more municipal judges. Missouri has more than 500 municipal divisions.

SCAN ballotpedia.org

SCAN courts.mo.gov

Information on the Missouri Judicial Courts System was obtained from Ballotpedia and Missouri Courts webpage. For more information on the state's judicial system, please visit ballotpedia.org and courts.mo.gov.

The Electoral College

The process of using electors to select the President & Vice President.
It is a compromise between a popular vote by citizens and a vote in Congress.

Who is in the Electoral College?

Each state gets the same number of Electoral College votes as the number of representatives they have in Congress (Senate and House of Representatives).

How Does the Electoral College Voting Process Work?

1. Once you cast your vote, it is counted in a statewide tally. 48 states and Washington, D.C., award electoral votes on a winner-takes-all basis. Maine and Nebraska, however, allocate their electors using a proportional system.

2. A candidate needs to receive the majority vote (at least 270) to win the presidential election.

3. A projected winner is typically declared on the November election night after the popular vote. However, the actual Electoral College vote occurs in mid-December when the electors convene in their respective states.

Unusual Scenarios

If no candidate wins the majority of electoral votes. . .

the vote goes to the House of Representatives where each state delegation gets 1 vote. The winner must obtain a majority of votes.

Winning the Popular Vote but losing the Electoral Vote occurred in 2016, 2000, and multiple times in the 1800s.

Resources Available to Missourians

60 Second Civics from the Center for Civic Education

"60 Second Civics" offers daily podcasts and quizzes by the Center for Civic Education, delivering bite-sized lessons on American government and history. Perfect for quick, engaging civics education, it helps listeners grasp essential concepts in just a minute, making learning about democracy accessible and enjoyable. Find out more at civiced.org/60-second-civics.

Citizen Education Program from The Missouri Bar

The Citizen Education Program by The Missouri Bar provides comprehensive resources for classroom learning about law and government. From lesson plans to teacher workshops, it equips educators to teach students about the legal system and civic responsibilities, fostering informed citizenship across Missouri. Learn more at missourilawyershelp.org/educational-resources.

Citizenship Exam – Could You Pass?

The Citizenship Exam, produced by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, tests knowledge of American civics required for naturalization. It assesses understanding of U.S. history, government, and rights, providing a tool for prospective citizens to prepare and demonstrate readiness for American citizenship. Take the test at americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/test.

Civic Engagement an Essential Part of Tribal Sovereignty

This article emphasizes the crucial role of civic engagement in upholding tribal sovereignty among Choctaw Nation members. Through active participation in local, state, and federal governance, including advisory roles and voting, tribal members influence policy and protect cultural autonomy.

Civil Discourse Toolkit from the Center for Civic Education

The Civil Discourse Toolkit from the Center for Civic Education enhances civic education with tools for respectful dialogue on constitutional principles and democratic values. It promotes constructive engagement on diverse issues through educational resources, empowering individuals to effectively engage in civil discourse within their communities. Learn more at civiced.org/civil-discourse.

Discover Missouri Courts

Discover Missouri Courts educates the public about the state's judicial system through engaging resources. Created by the Supreme Court of Missouri, it fosters understanding of court processes and the role of judiciary in society, promoting informed citizenship and participation in Missouri's legal framework. Learn more at www.courts.mo.gov/CivicEducation.

Do You Know as Much as an 8th Grader About Civics? Quiz Yourself

"Do You Know as Much as an 8th Grader About Civics?" is an interactive quiz challenging adults' knowledge of fundamental civics concepts. Hosted by Education Week, it tests understanding of government, rights, and responsibilities essential for informed citizenship. Scan the QR code to take the test.

Educating for American Democracy

Educating for American Democracy initiative integrates civics and history, encouraging inquiry-based learning to deepen understanding of American democracy. It equips educators with tools to engage students in meaningful discussions about civic responsibilities and challenges. Learn more at educatingforamericandemocracy.org.

Find My Legislator

"Find My Legislator" is a tool provided by the Missouri Senate that enables residents to discover their state legislators and U.S. Congress members by entering their address. It facilitates engagement with local civic issues by connecting constituents directly with their elected representatives, promoting informed participation in democracy at both state and federal levels. Learn more at www.senate.mo.gov/legislookup.

Focus St. Louis Civic Engagement Toolkit

The Focus St. Louis "Civic Engagement Toolkit" offers diverse programs and events that facilitate networking and exploration of regional community issues. Designed to empower citizens, it provides resources for informed civic participation, encouraging dialogue and collaboration to address local challenges and enhance community engagement throughout St. Louis. Scan the QR code to learn more.

Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy

The Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy at the University of Missouri is dedicated to excellence in research, teaching, and community engagement. It explores political thought, history, and institutions while emphasizing the impact of the American Founding on global democracy. The institute promotes critical inquiry into constitutional principles and their impact today. Learn more at democracy.missouri.edu.

Library of Congress Services and Programs

The Library of Congress offers extensive services and programs, providing access to the world's largest collection of historical and cultural artifacts. Available online and in-person, it supports research across diverse fields including history, literature, and law, serving as a vital resource for Congress and the public alike. Learn more at loc.gov/services-and-programs.

The Missouri Bar

The Missouri Bar provides essential legal education and resources to the public, supporting the understanding of legal rights and responsibilities. From educational programs for students to resources for community members, it provides Missourians with knowledge to navigate the legal system effectively and participate meaningfully in civic life. The Missouri Bar provides speakers for kids and communities, coloring pages for kids, guides on legal topics, and extensive support for classroom learning. Learn more at missourilawyershelp.org.

Missouri Civic Learning Coalition

The Missouri Civic Learning Coalition is a statewide, nonpartisan coalition dedicated to promoting civic education and engagement. It offers resources and supports initiatives aimed at enhancing civic knowledge and participation, fostering informed citizenship, and strengthening democracy at local and state levels. Learn more at mociviclearning.weebly.com.

Missouri Constitution (PDF Download)

The Missouri Constitution, available for download from the Secretary of State's website, outlines the foundational principles and laws governing the state since its adoption in 1945. It serves as a vital document shaping Missouri's governance and legal framework, reflecting historical context and ongoing constitutional developments. Download this resource at sos.mo.gov, or scan the QR code for a direct link.

Missouri Historical Society

The Missouri Historical Society operates a history museum, library and research center, and memorial museum dedicated to preserving and sharing the history of the region. Through exhibitions, collections, and educational programs, it explores diverse aspects of Missouri's past, fostering public understanding and appreciation of the state's rich cultural heritage. Learn more at mohistory.org.

Missouri State Archives

The Missouri State Archives is the official repository for permanent and historical state records. Its mission is “to foster an appreciation of Missouri history and illuminate contemporary public issues by preserving and making available the state's permanent records to its citizens and their government.” The Archives is open to the public, and visitors can make research requests online, by phone, or in person. Learn more at sos.mo.gov.

National Congress of American Indians

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving the interests of tribal governments and communities. NCAI advocates for tribal sovereignty, rights, and policies that improve the quality of life for Native communities. Their website provides a tribal directory and resource library listing publications and resolutions. Learn more at ncai.org.

National Constitution Center

The National Constitution Center is an institution dedicated to promoting civic education and engagement. Located in Philadelphia, PA, it offers interactive exhibits, educational programs, and debates that explore the U.S. Constitution's history, significance, and impact on American democracy. Learn more at constitutioncenter.org.

National History Day

National History Day is an organization that works to promote and improve history teaching and learning through student contests, teacher development programs, and more. There are national and state-wide programs available. Learn more national history at nhd.org and Missouri history at nhdmo.org.

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PBS Civics and Government Collections

PBS Civics and Government Collections provide comprehensive resources for educators focusing on civics and government topics. Featuring a diverse array of multimedia resources, including videos, lesson plans, and interactive activities, PBS facilitates engaging and informative learning experiences that promote civic knowledge and participation among students of all ages. Scan the QR code to learn more.

Project Citizen from the Center for Civic Education

Project Citizen engages students in hands-on learning about government by researching community issues and proposing policy solutions. Through its curriculum, students collaborate to identify local problems and develop policy recommendations requiring governmental action. Showcases at state and national levels allow students to present and share their findings and solutions with peers nationwide. Learn more at civiced.org/project-citizen.

Restoring Youth Civic Engagement by Noah Tesfaye

"Restoring Youth Civic Engagement" by Noah Tesfaye, featured in a TEDx talk, advocates for meaningful youth involvement in civic affairs. Tesfaye reflects on his interests in civics and history and describes how he feels young people can have more meaningful civic engagement through educational preparation and inspiration. Scan the QR code to watch Tesfaye's talk.

St. Louis on the Air (St. Louis Public Radio)

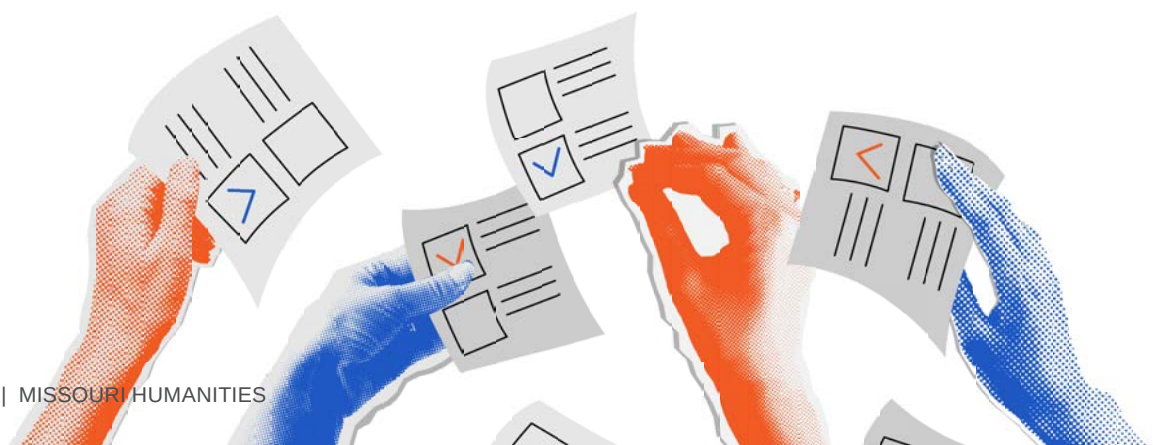
"St. Louis on the Air," broadcast by St. Louis Public Radio, brings local voices and perspectives to the forefront through engaging discussions on civic issues. Featuring interviews and community stories, the program explores diverse topics affecting St. Louis, sparking meaningful dialogue and raising awareness about civic life in the region. Scan the QR code to listen to "St. Louis on the Air."

State Historical Society of Missouri

The State Historical Society of Missouri is dedicated to preserving and sharing the state's history through its publications, research centers, and programs. It collects and showcases documents, photographs, and oral histories that generate interest and appreciation of Missouri's cultural heritage. Learn more at shsmo.org/research/guides/civic-affairs.

Tribal Sovereignty: Why it Matters for Teaching and Learning About Native Americans

This video, part of Native Knowledge 360°, provides foundational knowledge about tribal sovereignty in the US. Native Knowledge 360° is the National Museum of the American Indian's initiative to transform teaching and learning about Native Americans. Scan the QR code to watch Part 1.



Join Missouri Humanities

Help us enrich lives and strengthen communities by taking the humanities all across Missouri.

Missouri Humanities depends on the support of individuals, foundations, and our partners to connect Missourians to the people, places, and ideas that shape society.

Through our in-person and digital programming, our efforts reach over 300,000 Missourians each year, offering hundreds of educational opportunities for little or no charge. Your membership will move our work forward and help us reach even more Missourians in the coming years.

Membership opportunities begin at the student level and increase incrementally. Memberships at the partner level and above are available for individuals as well as organizations. Benefits are subject to change as the needs of Missouri Humanities, our partners, and Missourians change. Please see our website for up-to-date benefit information.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

SUPPORTER
$25

FRIEND
$50

CONTRIBUTOR
$100

PARTNER
$250

PATRON
$500

BENEFACTOR
$1,000

SALUS POPULI SOCIETY
Our Salus Populi Society recognizes planned gift and estate donors as well as those making gifts of $5,000 or more.

View your Missouri Humanities membership options at mohumanities.org/become-a-member, or scan the available QR Code.

Meet the Team!

Our staff is passionate about engaging and connecting with the people of the Show Me State to create a more thoughtful, informed, and civil society. We look forward to meeting our readers at events and programs across the state of Missouri!

(Left to right) Clarice Britton, Greg Wolk, Caitlin Yager, Michael Saldivar, Ashley Beard-Fosnow, Christina Highsmith, Lisa Carrico, Chris Kempke, Chrissy Sommer, Claire Bruntrager, Ashley Vogel.

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Let's Stay in Touch

To keep up to date with humanities activities in Missouri, send us a message at mail@mohumanities.org to be added to our Friends of the Humanities contact list.