



Self-Assessment Report

Submitted September 6, 2018

Prepared for

National Endowment for the Humanities
Site Visit
September 26-27, 2018

7935 E. Prentice Avenue, Suite 450
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
303.894.7951
coloradohumanities.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNCIL SNAPSHOT

ANALYSIS OF THE COUNCIL

Context for Colorado Humanities' Work	1
The Council and the Humanities	7
The Council's Organizational Effectiveness and Management	10
Biographies	16

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

1. 2014-2018 Programs Assessment
2. Financial Information
 - Revenue and Expenditures FY2017
 - Revenue and Expenditures FY2016
 - Revenue and Expenditures FY2015
3. Organizational Documents
 - Bylaws
 - Organizational Charts
 - Conflict of Interest Policy
 - Employment Guidelines
 - Statement of Compliance with Nondiscrimination Laws
 - Colorado Map
4. Self Assessment Process
5. Program Evaluation



COLORADO HUMANITIES, founded 1974

**7935 E. Prentice Ave., Suite 450,
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
tel: 303-894-7951; fax: 303-864-9361
website: www.coloradohumanities.org**

Council organizational information

- Fiscal year beginning and ending dates: **November 1 - October 31**
- Current fiscal year budget: **FY18 is \$1,444,125;**
actual expenses and obligations to date, 6/30/18: **\$725,093**
- Actual (cash) expenses for the two previous fiscal years:
FY17: \$1,213,670; FY16: \$1,362,699
- % of NEH operating grant funding in the annual budget and expenses for the current fiscal year and the two previous fiscal years: **(cash) FY18: 54%; FY17: 64%; FY16: 57%**
(cash + in kind) FY18: 43%; FY17: 46%; FY16 43%
- Total in the Council's reserve/savings/investment fund: **\$361,900.**
- Mission Statement: **Colorado Humanities inspires the people of Colorado to explore ideas and to appreciate our diverse cultural heritage.**

Colorado Center for the Book's mission is to promote a love of books and reading.

- Vision Statement: **Passing on the knowledge of the past, the inspiration of the present, and the hope for the future, we envision a Colorado that celebrates its heritage and its diversity; that reads, embraces cultural activities, participates in critical discussions, and listens, teaches, and learns.**
- Year the last/current strategic plan was written: **2013; 2018 in process**
- Last year the bylaws were revised: **2012**

Council staff and board information

- Executive: **Margaret A. Coval, executive since 1997; 5th (?) executive director**
- Board Chair: **Michel Dahlin, retired history professor;
5th year on the board, 3rd year as board chair**
- Staff: **6 full-time; 4 part-time; 7 casual employees**
- Current number of board members, potential board members: **15/20**
- Current number of gubernatorial appointees, potential gubernatorial appointees: **4/5**
- Does the council carry directors and officers insurance? **Yes**

Those primarily responsible for writing the Self-Assessment Report:
Margaret A. Coval, Executive Director
Josephine Jones, Director of Programs

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

B.1. Context for Colorado Humanities' Work

Colorado's state boundaries were carved out of four different territories by the U.S. Congress in 1861. These straight lines represent no river, no mountain range, no tribe or language group, yet within the state are many dividers, both geographic and human. Understanding the historical divisions and exploring the diversity and splits within regions and communities today is key to being effective in any statewide enterprise.

Population

Colorado is experiencing strong population growth, but that population is not distributed equally around the state. Urban areas, especially along the Front Range, are booming, leading to serious housing shortages and increased traffic, while 25 rural counties are losing population; along the southern border of the state, four counties have lost 12% of their population (2000-2015) and 23 counties meet the census definition of "frontier," i.e., fewer than seven residents per square mile. Economic opportunity is the primary driver of this population growth pattern; urban areas capitalize on their highly educated populace and amenities to draw in employers and thus more people, particularly young and well educated. Most rural areas lack the highly educated workforce and amenities that draw economic opportunities and thus lose jobs and population. For example, 25% of rural residents lack broadband and Internet access.

In 2017, an estimated 5.6 million people lived in Colorado, an 11.5% growth since 2010; this is a trend that is expected to continue to a projected 8.7 million people by 2050. In 2017, 6.1% were under five years old; 22.8% were under 18; and 13.4% 65 and over. White persons not Hispanic declined from 70.3% to 68.6% overall (comparing five-year averages 2007-2011 and 2012-2016). Hispanic/Latino/as origin persons (2016 data) overall grew to 21.3% (roughly 3.5% higher than the national average of 17.8%); Blacks make up 4.5%, about one-third the national average of 13.3%; American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 1.8%; Asian, 3.3%; persons reporting two or more races, 3%; foreign born, 9.8%. 17% speak a language other than English at home and 14% of public school children are English Language Learners. The child population is 56% white, 31% Hispanic, 4% Black, 4% bi-racial, and 4% other.

While rural counties are generally more white and older than urban counties, exceptions can be found in areas where large agribusiness firms provide employment opportunities that draw Hispanics, Somalis, and other East Africans to its abundant but generally low-wage jobs, and help grow the population, making it younger and more diverse. Ft. Morgan in Morgan County is the exemplar. With 19.1% of its population nonwhite, it is second only to Aurora (20.4%) in its diversity. Immigration and modest growth of seniors (fleeing higher housing costs and stresses of urban living) may offset some of these rural population declines. Motherread/Fatheread Colorado helps address the needs of English-learning parents and is offered in many rural areas, including Morgan County. Museum on Main Street's *Changing Rural America* exhibit will tour rural communities in Colorado in 2020.

There are approximately 384,000 veterans in the state. We are piloting veterans writing programs in Denver, and seeking partnerships in Colorado Springs for programs for active military and spouses, recovering wounded, and veterans.

Geography

Dry plains cover much of eastern Colorado, the Rocky Mountains dominate the center of the state, and high plateaus form the west. There are distinct regions in Colorado,

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

each with its own history, geography and economy. Southern Colorado includes the San Luis Valley and plains south of the Arkansas River, the old boundary of the Spanish Empire. The vast land called Western Colorado covers most of the mountain ranges, including North, Middle and South Park, and extends west of the mountains across the high plateau. The Eastern Plains stretch out from the Front Range north of the Arkansas River, although the plains south of the Arkansas are often identified with this region as well. Along the age-old passageway at the eastern foot of the mountains is the Front Range corridor, which holds 83% of the state's population, and within the Front Range are the seven counties of Metropolitan Denver, a total population of 3,116,501. Water is a precious commodity in this semi-arid state; a string of very dry years has created drought conditions affecting farmers, ranchers, mountain ski communities and urban areas. This has exacerbated tensions over current and future uses of water.

The distances and terrain separating these distinct regions provide challenges for statewide organizations.

Economy

Colorado's economy is strong, recently ranked fifth nationally, and growing at a faster rate than most other states, with its GDP ranked second. In June 2018, Colorado was tied for first in lowest unemployment in the nation. It is ranked fifth in median annual household income. Per capita personal income in 2016 was \$51,999 compared to the U.S. average, \$43,194; Median household income was \$70,566, the U.S. average was \$59,039.

In WalletHub's 2018 report of three overall "key dimensions," Colorado ranked third in the nation for economic health, eighth for economic activity, and fourth for innovation potential. While overall Colorado is doing well, economic gains are uneven. Statewide, 11% live below the poverty line; almost 15% of children live in poverty. For an estimated 25% of workers in 2016, wages were too low to cover basic needs. 11 counties in the south/southeast suffer from high poverty rates, many vacant houses, low median incomes and loss of jobs and businesses. This is true for some urban areas also, such as north/northeastern Aurora, a city amid prosperous Arapahoe and Denver counties.

As is true nationally, Colorado's poverty rates vary by racial and ethnic groups. American Indian children are four times and Black and Hispanic children three times more likely to live in poverty than white children.

There is solid growth in most of the sectors of the economy. Colorado is a leading producer of renewable energy. Natural resources and mining are doing well, but provide an area of serious conflict between oil and gas companies and local communities that feel threatened by potentially unsafe conditions, practices such as fracking, and increased pollution. Professional and business services, trade, transportation and utilities, education and health services, leisure and hospitality, government, and financial activities are doing well, expanding employment. Agriculture faces uncertainties of weather, commodity prices, and politics. It is predicted the growth rate may slow somewhat in the future due to increasing retirement of the older population and shortages of skilled professionals.

Political System

Within the national political partisan context, Colorado is a "purple" state. The Front Range tends to vote blue while the eastern and western sides of the state vote red. These divisions reflect different economic circumstances and cultural values of the regions.

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

Colorado has long been a tax-averse state. It has one of the country's lowest state tax rates, as well as state and local combined rates. Low tax rates mean fewer social services and less support for public education and infrastructure. State government has been affected by a series of citizen direct democracy initiatives over the past quarter century. The state constitution is a patchwork of occasionally conflicting amendments. Colorado was one of the first states to legalize medical and recreational marijuana use; taxes on marijuana contributed \$1.5 billion, about 2.3% of general funds revenue, in 2017. Two-thirds of jurisdictions, via local control provisions, ban all marijuana sales. Sales are concentrated in Denver, Arapahoe, Boulder and Adams counties.

The TABOR (Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, 1992) and Gallagher (1982) amendments have curtailed the legislature's power to raise taxes to cover needs in education, infrastructure and social services. Public education, both K12 and higher education, was hit hard during the recession and, despite Amendment 23 (2000), which mandated increases in school funding, only recently has the legislature been able to restore some of the lost funding, though still not to previous levels. In addition, term limits reduce the power of seniority and increase the influence of lobbyists. In 2017, marijuana taxes provided 1.6% of the Colorado Department of Education's budget.

There is limited state-level control over public education; local control is strong and poorly funded rural schools have a hard time supporting enrichment efforts. They cannot afford materials and they cannot match urban teacher pay scales.

Colorado Humanities (CH) has enjoyed good working relationships with Colorado governors and staff. The governor appoints five of our board members with the most recent appointments made by Governor John Hickenlooper in 2018. During his time as Denver mayor, he presented at nearly every major CH event. As Governor, he has called on CH and the state arts council twice to help him select the Colorado Poet Laureate and administer the Poet Laureate program. We have consulted with the governor's staff on development and funding of the Colorado Encyclopedia. Our early childhood and family literacy program Motherread/Fatheread Colorado is aligned with the former Lt. Governor's initiative on literacy. This initiative inspired Mile High United Way (MHUW) to seek a major grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund (SIF). MHUW received the grant and selected MFC and 10 other Colorado programs to receive multi-year funding design and conduct a study of the program's efficacy.

Local, state and federal government officials are invited to attend and participate in programs. This past spring, Rep. Diana DeGette (CO District 1) made opening remarks at the Colorado Book Awards ceremony in Denver. Greeley's mayor annually proclaims the first week of August "High Plains Chautauqua Week." Congressional representatives send messages of congratulations to us upon receipt of federal and other major grants, and to recipients of Colorado Book Awards. Congressional representatives provide letters of support for funding proposals and several actively support federal funding for NEH and Colorado Humanities. We communicate regularly with Congressional representatives and participate in Humanities on the Hill.

Education

Despite legislation's curtailed power to cover education needs, Colorado residents are better educated than the national average; 91% have a high school diploma compared to

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

87% nationally, and, of those, 38.7% have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 30.3% nationally. Colorado has 31 public higher education institutions, 103 private, and 354 private occupational institutions (2014 data). Total enrollment is just above 400,000 students. There are 14 four-year colleges/universities (enrollment 156,934) and 17 two-year colleges (94,844). CH has a good working relationship with numerous colleges and universities. Our Black History and Latino Heritage Live tours are hosted by several community colleges; Aims Community College partners with us for our High Plains Chautauqua program; Colorado State University partners for Colorado Encyclopedia; and campuses statewide are the source of scholar advisors, presenters and evaluators.

The gap between affluent and low-income residents is very evident in our educational system. Colorado does not have comprehensive pre-K care. The Colorado Preschool Program, designed to subsidize costs for low-income families, is only serving about 20% of three and four-year-olds. Efforts to close the student performance gap between white and other racial groups have not yet produced significant results. This gap was reflected in the low representation of young, diverse, low-income English Language Learning parents when we initiated our early childhood and family literacy program, Motherread/Fatheread Colorado (MFC), in 2004. The five-year, million-dollar impact study funded by SIF showed that MFC sped the rate of growth in the language domain of the children of participating parents. We are working hard to spread the word and connect with decision-makers at district and state levels to further the program's reach.

While CH has had cordial relationships with members of the state legislature and the governor, tight state budgets discouraged us from seeking state funding. In FY 2013, after a working group met for three years, CH received a NEH Preservation and Access grant to develop the digital resource, Colorado Encyclopedia (CE). We partner with Colorado State University Libraries and University Press of Colorado for CE, with input from numerous other educational and cultural organizations. With the Encyclopedia Governance Committee, we determined that CE had potential to attract state funding. We worked with a former state legislator, who advised us on the process, and we gave a presentation to the State Joint Budget Committee in 2016. The presentation was well received, but limited discretionary funds were available to support new budget items. CH can only receive state funds through an agency of state government; efforts to find an agency recipient of potential funds were unsuccessful. We plan to try again in 2019.

Relevant Issues

A major issue affecting our work over the past few years is Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) increasing emphasis on standards testing for K12 students. The growing emphasis on curricular goals toward testing impedes schools' use of resources for programming not immediately recognized as related to them. We work with teachers to assure our K12 programs meet their curricular goals, and provide the programs at no cost to schools in many cases. Nevertheless, schools continue to find it difficult to spend time or resources to take advantage of our efforts, and it has become a daunting challenge for CH to secure adequate funding to continue to widely provide K12 programs year to year.

Linked to this issue, are the funding trends of foundations and corporations. Giving interests can change with board turnover, or become fixed for years by board loyalty. They can move from one area to another from one year to another. In recent years, basic needs have dominated funding interests, along with programs that address such areas

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

as financial literacy, STEM, and programs that directly lead to job placement. Literacy and school-readiness, too, has become a funding trend in recent years.

Also affecting program development and fundraising is a tendency for businesses to tie philanthropy to marketing strategy. Typically, they seek highly visible, broadly distributed name recognition, high-volume opportunities for employees to volunteer with funded programs, and emphasis on reportable impact. We continually seek affordable ways to recognize our sponsors according to their sponsorship levels, and listen to their ideas. Although volunteer opportunities abound for some of our programs, we have only recently recognized how much offering employee volunteer opportunities to businesses encourages their sponsorships. We are developing strategies for including volunteer opportunities in program design whenever possible.

Outcome and impact measurement also weigh heavily in the fundraising challenge. We are amply supplied with anecdotal evaluation information from our program partners and program participants for every program every year, but do not have the capacity to do impact measurement for all our programs. For MFC and our K12 Writers in the Schools program (WITS) we received grant funds and donated services to complete studies that showed definitive, measurable impact. But such studies are necessarily very time consuming and, because they must be authoritative, require experts outside of our organization to conduct. It is a very expensive process, and, although most funders require and appreciate the information, they are not willing to support such studies financially. We are simply not equipped with time, resources or expertise to provide extensive, conclusive studies for impact measurement across all programs.

We have learned a great deal from our work with professional evaluators for MFC and WITS. They helped us devise feedback forms, participant surveys, data collection forms, and other evaluation materials and best practices to use for all our programs.

We have also found that the anecdotal evidence provided by our program partners and participants through verbal and written feedback has always provided strong indication of what a program's direction should be, and whether or not it is meeting its goals.

Known For

CH is known for different things in different communities. We know this because stakeholders and communities ask us for different things. CH is known for its individual programs and as a program designer, convener, facilitator, and advisor. In rural areas, among library, historical organizations and museums, we are known for the touring programs Museum on Main Street and Latino Heritage Live, and for MFC training. In the K12 arena, we are known for programs that enhance teaching of history (Young Chautauqua, CE) and writing (WITS, River of Words, Letters About Literature). In the literary community, we are known for recognizing and promoting high quality writing, and for bringing the writing community together through the Colorado Book Awards and its finalist readings. In and around the larger communities of Greeley, Grand Junction, and Durango, and across the country, we are known for community-based Chautauqua programs. We are recognized for producing or participating in high quality documentary films, such as *The Great Divide*.

All of our work is accomplished through more than 100 partnerships and collaborations annually. Among all kinds of organizations, we are known as an active, knowledgeable

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

and generous partner, and are sought after to help plan new ventures.

Planning

We see the Self Assessment process as our strategic planning framework. The 2014-18 major objectives were the heart of our strategic plan, and we evaluated progress on meeting benchmarks quarterly and annually, first with the Program Policy and Evaluation Committee (Program Committee) and then with the full board. The Individual Program Plan Status Update documents our progress, charting outcomes and informing recommendations and changes (see Supplemental Materials).

Board and staff discussion and preparation of the 2018 Self Assessment began in early 2016, and included many research, evaluation and analysis steps.

CH staff began discussing the evaluation and planning process with Program Chair Thor Nelson, who prepared an introduction of the process for our Program Committee. The Committee decided to form teams from across the board and staff to research program offerings and needs in various areas and segments of the population. In June 2016, board members were invited to sign-up for teams: Evaluation Criteria, Fundraising Opportunity, Landscape Analysis, Needs Assessment, Internal and External Evaluation, and Initial Decision teams. The Committee named the effort, “Blue Sky, Green Field,” with Blue Sky representing our openness to new ideas and Green Field grounding our efforts in past successes and community need.

Also in June, the full staff met with the Program Committee Chair in a half-day retreat to share priorities, plans and hopes that formed the basis for questions for a survey in July of board and staff to inform decisions about future goals and objectives.

In September, Program Chair Thor Nelson wrote the first draft of the Major Objectives that provided criteria for the selection of current and new programs to consider for inclusion in our plan. The Evaluation Team met to establish primary criteria for evaluating current and new programs: strategic relevance, effectiveness/impact, efficiency, sustainability. The Board reviewed two programs using the criteria and then applied the criteria to all programs to rank them against *new* objectives.

In October, Director of Programs Josephine Jones and Board Member Bill Convery planned a schedule of focus group meetings to be held across the state. Communities were selected by geographic and social diversity, with a preference for cities and towns where we had not offered programs recently. The first series of meetings posed questions about new developments in communities to determine needs and strengths.

In December, our year-end program status report mapped current programs in terms of the proposed Major Objectives’ focus on geography, effectiveness/impact, and efficiency to demonstrate the gap between hoped-for reach/performance and capacity, leading to a revision of the Major Objectives. The first round of focus groups was conducted between December 2016 and May 2017 in 20 communities. Focus group findings were compiled in a spreadsheet.

From June through September 2017, the Board reviewed program analysis tools, various analyses of the programs, proposed programs for the new plan, and the final draft of Major Objectives. A special board workshop in October finalized the 2019-2023 Major Objectives (see Supplemental Materials), reviewed the list of programs, and

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

made initial decisions to identify a set to pursue in the next five years (see Self Assessment Process in Supplemental Materials).

In November, we returned to the 20 focus group communities with a draft plan for new programs that might meet community needs and to gather levels of interest in the programs. Overwhelmingly, communities asked for conversation-based programs led by process facilitators to help bridge divides between Latino/as and non-Latino/a residents, newcomers and old timers in rural communities, and diverse other community groups. The Board approved the final set of programs for 2019-2023 at the December 2017 board meeting.

We also asked over 2,600 community leaders in the state to review a draft slate of our 2019-2023 programs, and invited those interested in partnerships to begin early planning with us to design a CH program to meet their communities' interests. We discussed the need to raise funds together for program implementation. We hope this will result in deeper, more satisfying partnerships as we provide process facilitation and other activities. We will also provide online resources through our new website.

We hope that in the next five years CH will continue to increase in value to Coloradans as a resource for program design and expertise relevant to their everyday lives. As we work with local partners for programs, facilitate discussions and provide humanities resources, we will intentionally connect and activate regional and statewide networks to increase reach and effectiveness of our combined resources for humanities learning.

B.2. The Council and the Humanities

Colorado Humanities (CH) is in its 44th year. Hundreds of successful programs and partnerships attest to our understanding of the state and our broad reach. Our overall goal is to integrate the humanities into public life in Colorado while identifying and adapting to its changes. Our program menu for 2014-2018 falls into three general content areas: writing and reading; history; and educational resources, and all served to fulfill one or more of our major objectives. Cutting across the programs in each area are the target audiences of preK12 students, K12 teachers, parents, English Language Learners, early childhood educators, and adult learners, including senior adults. Program formats include Chautauqua presentation, K12 student workshops, lecture/discussion, curricula, publication, readings, award competition, exhibits, film, and professional development for educators. In 2014-2018, we worked with hundreds of partner organizations (130 in 2017) and served between 335,000 and 456,000 Coloradans annually. 85% of our audiences were reached through a media format.

CH's Major Objectives for 2014-18 were: (1) Enhance individual learning by developing and implementing programs that deliver humanities content, including programs and resources that help preK12 students and especially youth from diverse backgrounds and those at risk improve academic achievement and become lifelong students of the humanities; (2) Enhance positive and meaningful connections within and across diverse communities through humanities programs, forums, and resources that deepen understanding and engagement in community life; (3) Increase CH's organizational capacity and community support, develop CH resource technology and deliver more humanities content through an updated website and other digital tools.

To meet these objectives in 2014-2018, we developed and implemented hundreds of

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

activities through 16 unique programs. **Each program's development, sources of humanities content, achievement highlights, outcomes, partner relationships, outcomes and prospects for the future are detailed in the Programs Supplement to this report.** Audiences for all of the programs are described in the individual program pages. The following is a summary connecting the programs to the objectives.

Motheread/Fatheread Colorado (MFC) provides professional development for educators who work with parents and/or children. MFC serves families, most of whom are low-income, English Language Learning, immigrants or otherwise disenfranchised from educational communities. Besides gaining skills to help their children succeed in school, MFC parent groups become support networks for sharing problems and working together to improve their lives. Educators have reported that parents become more confident in their dealings with the education infrastructure. Parents also increase their language skills and families become centers of learning through important conversations around books and ideas.

Letters About Literature and River of Words inspire elementary through high school students' reading, observation and creative expression, expose youth talents and accomplishments to the wider community, and inspire teachers and parents to support humanities education.

Writers in the Schools workshops help students improve their reading and writing skills while learning directly from professional poets and writers in their classrooms. Through the American West As Living Space theme, students and teachers gained understanding of the uniqueness of the American West.

Young Chautauqua challenges students to delve deeply into the life and times of an historical figure; to research, write, present, and answer questions. Teachers and students work with professional Chautauqua coaches. Teachers report that students are inspired to study history. The program highlights student achievement, and engages parents, teachers and community members.

High Plains and Two Rivers Chautauquas, and the Durango Living History program offer opportunities for community engagement and lifelong learning, and many entry points to topics and different annual themes such as The 1960s, The American West, and Echoes of World War I. Chautauqua is truly "the people's university," offering programs for all ages and fueling ongoing conversations. Local volunteer committees drive the programs and have become very sophisticated evaluators of content and marketability.

Black History and Latino Heritage Live tours provide forums for learning and increase understanding of the challenges posed by race and ethnicity in America. They add history content to community college and high school offerings, and encourage discussion of the legacy of race and ethnicity.

The Great Divide film about the complexity of managing water in Colorado premiered in communities all over the state, followed by discussions that allowed audiences to explore the issues in their own community and region. The film aired on NBC affiliate 9 NEWS and Rocky Mountain PBS, greatly expanding the audience. We distributed DVDs and downloads to public, school and academic libraries statewide.

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

Museum on Main Street brings high quality Smithsonian exhibits such as “Journey Stories” to Colorado and builds the capacity of small, local museums.

Colorado Encyclopedia (CE) is a vetted online resource for anyone worldwide to learn about Colorado. Its humanities themes and design help users connect events and ideas. CE also provides articles leveled for K12 students and resource packets for teachers.

Colorado Book Awards elevates authors, the book community, and Colorado’s literary profile. CBA honors the achievement of Colorado authors, makes them more accessible to Colorado readers, and inspires collaborative efforts in the book community.

Speakers Bureau is the home of on-call Chautauquans, the state’s Poet Laureate and occasional special programs such as the World War I commemoration. Throughout the five years reported, the Poet Laureate has had an ambitious schedule of visits to schools and communities, providing high quality experiences to engage with poetry.

Veterans Writing is a relatively new program. It has introduced us to veterans organizations and others supporting veterans’ health, education and well-being. A first round of veterans’ workshops resulted in the anthology, *Still Coming Home*, that will be used in 2019 as a basis for 10 community discussions about the experience of war.

After cuts to NEH funding in 2011 and 2012, we decided to suspend awarding grants after many discussions and budget revisions. To achieve the necessary mid-year cut in our FY2012 budget, we had to choose between eliminating several programs and some program staff, or suspending grant-making. We reasoned that the grants program could be reinstated on short notice, whereas other programs, once suspended, would be very difficult to reinstate. The suspension was unanimously recommended by the Program Committee and approved by the Board. Grants programs expand the reach and content of the humanities in Colorado, and the decision greatly pained us, but it is our Board’s intention, with sufficient funding, to recreate the grants program to serve as a vehicle for delivery of planned programs through RFPs, initiatives and other means.

Our efforts to attract various audiences to our programs and to communicate about our work overall have evolved and improved over the past few years. After assessing our need to improve our marketing efforts, we focused on video delivery of stories about our programs. We first worked with Fireside Productions to create a showcase video about several CH programs, titled Learn More About Our Programs, on our website and YouTube channel. Supported by funding from a board member we cultivated a partnership with Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting Service (RMPBS). The RMPBS studio at Colorado Mesa University filmed 15-second underwriting spots focused on Chautauqua and Writers in the Schools, and RMPBS’ Denver office produced in studio 15-second spots for MFC and River of Words. These aired 2015-2017.

We also added RMPBS underwriting to CE’s funding proposals and marketing efforts. RMPBS’ locally-produced Colorado Experience program about Colorado historic sites invited us to team up with them to cross-link CE articles to Colorado Experience. They returned the favor in their website and educator resources, helping CE to its successful engagement of users in 2016-2017.

RMPBS underwriting included access to its extensive list of educators who receive their newsletters. We continued to use video to tell our story, recording awards events,

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

readings, Chautauqua festivals, and interviews of supporters, participants and others.

We post videos to our website and YouTube channel. Our most recent effort explores the meaning of the Colorado Book Awards to participating authors and can be viewed at: <http://coloradohumanities.org/content/colorado-book-awards>. All the videos can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYRU-bCbTfLSvb-romtb2Qw>.

Videos are also found on the following CH website pages: Colorado Book Awards; Letters About Literature (Sarah Lurie, 2016 national winner); River of Words; Writers in the Schools program (2015); and Living History – Chautauqua (RMPBS 15-second spot).

We also entered CH into social media and are still cultivating our skills in this medium. Our Veterans Writing program attracted support from the Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation's young professional program "IMPACT Denver." A senior global software marketing professional on the IMPACT team, who reviewed Veterans Writing program documents, advised us on how to use media analysis tools, built relationships with reporters to enhance the impact of our publicity efforts, and arranged for a volunteer videographer to capture interviews with participating veteran writers. We are editing small videos from those interviews to promote the conversation programs about the veterans' writing this fall. She also showed us tools for social media effectiveness, which we employ to good effect now.

We have nearly completed development of a new website which will be easier for visitors to navigate, will hold more audio and video content, and will be easier for staff to maintain and update.

We are learning how to work more effectively with partners to engage their audiences in our programs, and detail our expectations in memos of understanding with them. Our next step is to integrate new skills and understanding as we implement new and continuing programs. Staff continue to learn about the latest marketing strategies.

B.3. The Council's Organizational Effectiveness and Management

Established in 1974, Colorado Humanities (CH) was incorporated in 1976 as a 501(c)(3) organization. Our primary purpose was to award NEH funds in Colorado. We began to develop our own programs in 1988 and have operated as both a grantor and program provider since then. The Colorado Center for the Book merged with CH in 2004 to become a program department. Our mission is to inspire the people of Colorado to explore ideas and to appreciate our diverse cultural heritage. The Colorado Center for the Book has the added mission to encourage a love of reading and books. Our mission conveys the value of the humanities and our commitment to involve communities and individuals across the state. It shapes the programs we produce or support that reflect the importance of access to the humanities, working with humanities scholars, supporting and partnering with other organizations that share our mission, and communicating about our programs.

CH is governed by a 20-member board of directors selected from throughout the state for effective leadership, scholarly and other expertise and community relationships. The Board meets quarterly. Members are expected to support the mission, set policy and direction, employ and evaluate the executive director, take fiduciary responsibility, contribute funds, support fundraising efforts, and participate in the work of at least one standing committee. Five of our board members are appointed by the state's governor. There is a lot of competition for accomplished, experienced, and committed board

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

members. We seek and welcome board nominations from the general public, but have learned over the years that we often need to seek out individuals for board membership. We look first for individuals who have a commitment to our mission. Each year, we create a matrix of characteristics to determine board membership needs. The Nominating Committee and Executive Director look at upcoming projects and goals to develop a list of board development priorities such as financial expertise, media relations, or relationships with major funders. The Nominating Committee discusses priorities with the Board annually and the Board approves the recommended priorities. Current board nomination priorities are: willingness and position to help with fundraising; geographic distribution; balance and diversity in age, gender, ethnicity and race representation; and representation from various humanities disciplines.

The Nominating Committee seeks nominations from board alumni, funders, partners, project directors, and their own networks of colleagues and contacts. Nominating Committee members and the Executive Director interview board prospects. The Nominating Committee develops a slate of nominees and sends it to the Board to review before voting at the next board meeting. At present, the Board has five vacancies, mostly due to early resignations for personal reasons. Once elected, board members receive a board handbook and attend a three-hour board orientation.

The Governance and Nominating Committee also executes a nomination process and prepares an annual slate of officers for election to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of the Board Chair and the chairs of the standing committees: Program Policy and Evaluation, Governance and Nominating, Finance and Infrastructure, Development and External Affairs. The Governance and Nominating Chair is also Vice Chair of the Board. Executive Committee members may serve for more than one year in their positions. The Executive Committee generally has a mix of returning and new members, which contributes to internal mentoring, maintaining historical memory, and introduction of new ideas. Committee chairs are encouraged to cultivate future leaders within committees. All board members are encouraged to attend the National Humanities Conference.

The Executive Committee meets monthly to coordinate committee work and planning, receive progress reports, and act on behalf of the Board when issues cannot wait until the Board convenes. The Program Committee reviews programs and makes program policy recommendations. The Finance Committee exercises general oversight of finances, develops budget policies, reviews the budget, makes recommendations on fiscal and infrastructure matters, convenes the Audit Committee, monitors our reserve funds in consultation with a professional investment advisor and in accordance with the CH investment policy. The Development Committee recommends annual fundraising goals and strategies, and provides leadership for CH fundraising efforts.

CH's long-term financial goal set in 2011 was to expand our base of support and diversify funding sources to achieve a level of 50% of our budget from sources other than our NEH operating grant. In 2016, we reached 43%. A secondary goal was to establish a four-month operating reserve, which we accomplished in 2012 with the sale of a building we owned. Reductions of NEH funding for several years have posed challenges, especially when funding is not confirmed until midyear, prompting us to revise budgets and increase fundraising efforts. Recent increases to NEH operating grants have been very helpful. Our FY2018 operating grant is \$784,770, compared to

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

\$711,060 in FY2015. In 2015-2017, we raised \$473,308 - \$607,339 cash and \$404,167 - \$464,219 in kind annually. Cash donors numbered 368 in FY2017. Most of the cash raised came from grant support for specific programs: from a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant and foundations for Motherread/Fatheread Colorado (MFC) and from NEH and the State Historical Fund for Colorado Encyclopedia (CE). Funding sources for programs include, in addition to NEH, foundations, businesses and individuals, the National Endowment for the Arts, and program cost shares from educational and cultural organizations. Our primary source of unrestricted funds is individuals, accounting for about \$17,000 annually. Most of the in-kind comes from program partnerships and volunteers. In FY2017, 346 in-kind donors included 7,000 volunteer hours.

Development and fundraising activities are the combined responsibility of the Executive Director, the Development Coordinator, the Development Committee, and the CH Board. The Development Committee meets every month, and, among other things, oversees CH's board giving policy. The policy requires a total annual obligation of \$750; each board member is asked to make a minimum personal cash gift of \$100 and to facilitate gifts from outside sources to make up any remainder. Board members sign pledges and are invoiced for payment. The Development Committee also presents, for full board approval, annual fundraising goals that correspond directly with the annual budget. The Committee reports monthly progress at each board meeting. In recent years, the Board Chair, working with the Development Committee and Executive Committee, has significantly increased focus on board participation in fundraising activities. The Development Chair issued two board challenges directly related to raising cash dollars for FY 2018: to collectively bring in a targeted amount in unrestricted funds; and to each donate to a research and development fund for future programming. Individual board members often also take special interest in particular programs, and will make donations above the annual board obligation to meet specific programmatic needs. For example, in 2016, one board member donated significant airtime earned by underwriting Rocky Mountain PBS, which increased organizational visibility. Another large board gift in 2017 supported media communications. Board members may work together to fund specific programs or other needs.

For example, in 2012, the Board formed a task force for MFC to help address significant matching requirements of the large SIF grant. The grant award required an impact study, which necessarily took place over several years and was the most expensive evaluation process we had ever undertaken. The Board unanimously agreed to commit to the study, and to see it through all five years of funding requirements. Beginning in 2013, the MFC Task Force met monthly, and devised and executed strategies, such as a fundraising campaign among Denver's legal community to support books needed for MFC implementation. One MFC Task Force member personally financed a billboard to increase MFC awareness and participation in northern Colorado. With childhood education and literacy a major focus for foundations on both state and national levels, and the recognition we received with the selective SIF grant, we have enjoyed an unprecedented success obtaining foundation support from large funders, including the New York city-based Leon Lowenstein Foundation, RGK Foundation out of Austin, and, locally, Anschutz Family Foundation, Buell Foundation, Daniels Fund, David & Lucille Packard Foundation, Denver Foundation, and El Pomar. Smaller family foundations such as the Ackerman Fund, Duncan Charitable Trust and others also contributed, as did corporate foundations such as those of Northrop Grumman and

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

Wells Fargo. Targeted fundraising efforts also gleaned donations from such diverse organizations as Denver Post's Pen & Podium Series, MileHiCon, and the Left Coast Crime writers' group. MFC's visibility, reputation and desirability have greatly increased in the past five years, and we are working to get major partners such as school districts to provide funds for implementation.

In other program areas, we continue to have success with community-based fundraising with the help of volunteer committees for such programs as High Plains Chautauqua (HPC). The program, just completing its 19th year, is implemented in Greeley every August, and receives tremendous support from Weld County individuals, businesses, education and cultural organizations, service clubs, and more. While we strategize each year to take best advantage of cost-cutting opportunities, the volunteer HPC Committee spends the entire year developing the content and theme, and helping to organize the event, including obtaining in-kind services and goods as well as cash donations. Local media support the program with dedication. The resounding community participation and support presents an ideal model for fundraising for humanities programming, and we pursue such volunteer and partnership collaboration whenever we identify the potential.

CE is another important program that presents significant fundraising challenges. We have received one NEH grant that allowed us to initiate the program working with Colorado State University Libraries, University Press of Colorado, and others. A grant from History Colorado State Historical Fund allowed us to include hundreds of additional articles for publication. CE is an ongoing project that has endless growth potential far into the future as an important and lasting humanities resource. Our struggle to raise funds includes two subsequent proposals declined for funding by NEH, and, as a result, the need for CH to decline a second award from the State Historical Fund because we did not find the matching funds needed. Colorado State University has submitted a still pending proposal to NEH. We continue to seek support in public and private sectors, and are considering such strategies as bundling smaller groups of articles for tightly targeted sponsorship, and even onsite advertising. In the meantime, CE is in hiatus until adequate funding to proceed is obtained.

We increasingly understand the need to identify, create and budget recognition opportunities most appealing to corporate donors, who typically seek marketing opportunities through their contributions. We are exploring volunteer opportunities for donor employees, including their training to facilitate community discussion series. In 2012, we initiated a friend-raising program, D.I.N.E. (Dinner, Ideas 'N Exchange). We now offer significant corporate donors the opportunity to host a D.I.N.E. for private guests. We continue to work with donors to identify their specific recognition needs.

The CH Board and Executive Director recognize the importance of managing risks and liabilities. The Executive Director reviews expenditures monthly and the Finance Committee reviews financial statements at least quarterly. Midway through the year the Executive Director begins to make periodic year-end projections which are reported to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee and Executive Director develop recommendations for cost-cutting or deferring expenses. CH is audited every year by a certified public accountant. There has not been a reportable or material condition in at least twenty years. Our accounting, including payroll and check writing, is handled out of the office by a contract accountant. The Administrative Assistant prepares bills for

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

payment and checks for deposit twice monthly. She calculates the expenses, deposits, and funds on hand for the Executive Director who determines the amount of funds to draw from our NEH grant. The contract accountant writes checks and balances the bank accounts. The Executive Director approves all payments and deposits. The Executive Director, Finance Chair and Director of Operations may sign checks. We have established an Audit Committee to: review financial reports and other financial information; review the system of internal controls over financial reporting, legal compliance and ethics; and monitor the hiring, independence and annual performance of the auditor. The independent auditor presents the annual audit to the Audit and Executive Committees, and later to the full Board. When orienting new members, we include the budget and materials that make clear the fiduciary responsibility of board membership. The Nominating Committee assures that the Board includes members with financial expertise.

With the help of the Colorado Nonprofit Association, we review liability insurance annually, and carry both property and directors' and officers' liability insurance. Because we are responsible for children's programming, we implement background checks for all employees and for contract presenters working with children. We have a conflict of interest policy which all board and staff members receive and provide written confirmation that they have reviewed.

Governance and policy documents are kept up to date and accessible to leadership. CH bylaws were last amended in 2012. Employment guidelines were updated in 2013. We have an Executive Director Succession Plan. The current board and committee structure serves us well and allows for ad hoc committees and task forces to be established as needed. Our staff organization chart has changed several times in the past few years. With the evolution and growth of some of our programs, some staff responsibilities have shifted, staff and contractor roles have changed and some part time positions have been added.

The Executive Director works for the Colorado Humanities Board of Directors, most closely with the Executive Committee on management matters. She reports directly to the Board Chair. The Executive Committee regularly reviews the Executive Director's performance utilizing a self-evaluation and board survey. The Executive Committee recommends compensation and reports to the Board. The Board Chair then meets with the Executive Director.

The board and staff members enjoy a collegial relationship. The Board Chair and Executive Director meet by phone weekly. The Director of Programs and Development Coordinator participate in board meetings and work closely with their respective board committees. We encourage staff members to include board members in programs and fundraising activities and to consult them when appropriate.

Staff is listed in the organizational chart according to the areas of Operations, Programs and External Affairs. In the past few years, the Executive Director, Director of Operations and Director of Programs have evaluated program and administrative staffing on several occasions, each time adjusting job descriptions and considering the skills and wishes of individuals, as well as creating new positions as programs were added or expanded. The position of Development Coordinator was created with significant responsibilities for needed grant writing. We do not have staff dedicated exclusively to marketing. For now, program marketing is conducted by the program

Colorado Humanities Self-Assessment 2019-2023

staff and overseen by the Director of Programs, and organizational marketing is done by the Development Coordinator and Director of Programs. We recognize that more support staff dedicated to marketing, fundraising, and several other areas, would help boost outreach. These will be topics to explore in the performance and job reviews the Executive Director will conduct in September and October 2018.

Supervisors and the Executive Director meet with those supervised frequently throughout the year to discuss responsibilities, schedules, plans and outcomes. Reviews have been less formal, but feedback is provided regularly. The Executive Director also consults immediate supervisors of staff for their assessments and recommendations. The Executive Director schedules weekly meetings with the Director of Operations, Director of Programs and Development Coordinator. Formal performance reviews will help inform the plan for 2019-2023. The Executive Director determines compensation, sometimes in consultation with the Finance and Executive Committees. Compensation is informed by the Federation Salary Report and by local salary surveys.

CH is challenged to offer competitive salaries and benefits in an environment of increasing costs. The Executive Director and Board are committed to rewarding and retaining good staff, and budget for salary increases to the extent possible. Full-time staff members have the mandatory benefits of social security and workmen's compensation, as well as health insurance coverage and a 10% employer contribution to a 403b plan, after one year's full-time employment, which does not have to be matched by the employee. CH has a flexible benefit plan, which is reviewed annually. Due to rising costs of health insurance, we will be reviewing our flex benefit plan in the next few months. Depending on employment status and tenure, full-time workers accrue twelve to eighteen vacation days/year. Paid sick leave accrues at the rate of a day/month to a maximum of 70 days. We have 11 paid holidays. Part-time staff members receive mandatory benefits, and after a year of employment, vacation and sick leave benefits if they work at least 30 hours/week. CH can support the staff in professional development activities, which include taking courses to improve skills and travel to conferences, as well as networking activities.

CH utilizes a variety of consultants and advisors: Jeanne Surbrugg, CPA for accounting, a Charles Schwab advisor for investment management, K3 for technology, and Mark Mock Design for identity and brand development and publications design. CH is a member of the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the Colorado Nonprofit Association, as well as several professional organizations. Through our memberships, we have access to a myriad of webinars, publications, conferences and other means of sharing best practices and consulting resources. We are fortunate to have on our board individuals from a range of professions who kindly offer or procure *pro bono* services in areas such as leasing office space and legal services.

CH operates on an annual planning and evaluation cycle, beginning with program evaluation. Staff and Program Committee evaluation of programs flows into presentations and full board discussion. Staff uses the recommendations and perspectives gathered to develop the annual program plan. The program plan goes through committee and board review for approval. In tandem, the Executive Director develops the draft budget and fundraising goals, which are reviewed by the Finance and Development Committees. The Board approves a balanced budget and annual fundraising goals before the start of the fiscal year.