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OUR MISSION:

Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue McNab".

Sue McNab
2016-17 President, Board of Trustees

A QUICK GLANCE AT CURRENT HEADLINES would suggest that we are a hopelessly polarized and intolerant society. But based on what we have seen the past year at Humanities Washington, I believe the opposite to be true.

Across our state in 2015, neighbors gathered for Speakers Bureau presentations, and discussed—with curiosity and respect—potentially divisive topics such as human rights and digital privacy. Audiences at Think & Drink events considered new perspectives related to race relations and equity. Through our Prime Time Family Reading program, families came together at local libraries to use children's literature as a gateway to discuss complicated ethical issues like tolerance and honesty.

2015 was a remarkable year for Humanities Washington. Attendance at Speakers Bureau events jumped by 4,000 people — an increase of 55% — and we served 78% more people at Think & Drink events in Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, and Yakima. For the third year in a row, we expanded Prime Time Family Reading to reach additional libraries and schools.

None of this would have been possible without *you*, our dedicated and generous donors. On behalf of the hardworking board and staff of Humanities Washington and the communities we serve, I would like to express my gratitude for your support. *You* enable almost daily opportunities for Washingtonians to learn more about their past and present in a way that deepens connections between neighbors and within communities. I hope you share the pride we feel in all that we accomplished in 2015, because we did it *together*.


Thank you for your support and partnership. I hope to see you at a Humanities Washington event in the very near future!

Prime Time Family Reading

Children's books aren't always child's play—they can inspire important philosophical discussions of topics such as fairness, greed, courage, and compassion. Humanities Washington's Prime Time Family Reading program encourages shared connections around books and reading, boosting long-term academic achievement and lasting connections with local libraries.

[READ MORE](#)
ABOUT PRIME
TIME FAMILY
READING.

Photo: Kirk Hirota



"We [librarians] all believe in the importance of the Prime Time Family Reading program and think that it makes a big difference for the families who attend it. It also helps to bring in families who may not have been using the library before they were part of the program."

— Librarian, Issaquah Public Library

 656

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PARTICIPATED IN 16 FAMILY READING PROGRAMS at libraries in Monroe, Marysville, Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, Ritzville, Airway Heights, Clarkston, Cheney, Spokane Valley, Fall City, Issaquah, North Bend, and Tacoma.



“Humanities Washington does essential work bringing communities together to have important conversations. The organization is a state treasure. Thank you for all you do!”

— Everett Speakers Bureau attendee



11,019

PEOPLE ATTENDED 255 SPEAKERS BUREAU PRESENTATIONS in 2015, an increase of nearly 55% – 4,000 people – over 2014.

Drawing from a vetted pool of leading cultural experts and scholars, our Speakers Bureau provides conversational lectures that are always free and open to the public. Topics are as diverse as the communities they serve, with 31 speakers covering everything from religion and human rights to a history of Washington’s fruit industry.

FIND A SPEAKERS BUREAU EVENT
NEAR YOU.

*Photo courtesy of
Edmonds Community College*

Think & Drink

Think & Drink events enlighten, engage, and inspire audiences by providing context and new perspectives on current – and sometimes controversial – issues in the casual, fun environment of pubs and tasting rooms. 2015 audiences heard from scholars on such topics as: “Last Rights: The Ethics of the Death Penalty,” “Earth, Interrupted: Climate Change and Geoengineering,” and “Seattle Skin: Being Black in a Liberal City.” The events—most at capacity and some standing-room-only—drew attention from such major media as *The Seattle Times* and Spokane’s *Spokesman-Review*.

[READ THE SEATTLE TIMES’S COVERAGE OF OUR THINK & DRINK EVENT, “BLACK AND BLUE: POLICING AND RACE.”](#)

Photo: Mike Hipple



1,395

PEOPLE ATTENDED 24 THINK & DRINK EVENTS in Seattle, Spokane, Yakima, and Tacoma, up from 782 in 2014—a 78% increase.

“This was illuminating, thought-provoking, and disturbing in a way that inspires all of us to do better, to change—thank you.”

— Seattle Think & Drink participant




Poet Laureate



The Washington State Poet Laureate builds awareness of and appreciation for poetry, including the state's legacy of poetry, through public readings, workshops, lectures, and community presentations around the state. The 2014-2016 laureate was Elizabeth Austen, author of *Every Dress a Decision* and a finalist for the Washington State Book Award. The Poet Laureate program is co-sponsored by Humanities Washington and ArtsWA/Washington State Arts Commission.

VISIT THE
[POET LAUREATE'S
WEBSITE.](#)

A portrait of Elizabeth Austen, the 2014-2016 Washington State Poet Laureate. She is a woman with short, wavy brown hair, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved top with a subtle pattern. She is seated at a wooden table with her hands clasped, wearing a silver ring and a silver cuff bracelet. A necklace with a small pendant is visible. The background shows a window with white blinds and a red wall.

"I just want to say thank you, again. Your presentation was beautiful, your poetry delightful, and your ability to handle questions and comments from all types of people was supreme. You have succeeded in fanning the flame of my own passion for poetry."

— Reading attendee, Cathlamet

3,517 

PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN 109 POET
LAUREATE events across the state.

Photo: Mike Hipple

Communities around Washington have important stories to tell and issues to discuss. Humanities Washington's grants program provides the financial resources for citizens to come together to talk, discuss, debate, feel, think, and tell stories through the lens of the humanities. We support existing efforts as well as new opportunities for grassroots projects conceived of and implemented locally.

[READ MORE](#)
ABOUT
OUR GRANT
OPPORTUNITIES.

*Photo courtesy of
Jack Straw Cultural Center*

*"Your gift helps make it possible
for us to produce programming
that addresses the culture and
history of our region."*

— Grant recipient



 **38**
GRANTS FUNDED
250 EVENTS
throughout the state.

Special Initiative: Yuyi Morales

I loved seeing this special time where parents come and bring their children and look at books—it's like a party. I hope that what happens is the children see that reading books, creating books, loving books, is a celebration. And that books can be a part of everything beautiful in life.

— Yuyi Morales

Humanities Washington brought Caldecott-award winning children's book author Yuyi Morales to Eastern Washington for a tour in which she told stories, shared illustrations, and inspired children to read. An immigrant from Mexico, Morales is bilingual and reached primarily Latino audiences at libraries in Yakima, Sunnyside, the Tri-Cities, and Walla Walla. Morales is the author of numerous books, including *Viva Frida*, about the life of Frida Kahlo, and *Thunder Boy, Jr.*, an upcoming book with Sherman Alexie.

[READ AN
INTERVIEW](#)
WITH YUYI HERE.


Photo: Antonio Turok

Special Initiative: Talking Service

The journey into military service is different for each soldier, but one fact holds true for all who serve: the experience is like no other. Talking Service, a reading and discussion group for veterans, helped them reflect on their past experiences, current concerns, and aspirations by examining powerful works by authors who have thought long and hard about the military experience. The program was originally created by the Great Books Foundation and implemented in partnership with the New York Council for the Humanities. The program was presented in Spokane, Spokane Valley, Wenatchee, and Kelso.

READ MORE
ABOUT TALKING
SERVICE ON
OUR [BLOG](#).

Photo: Lewis Taylor



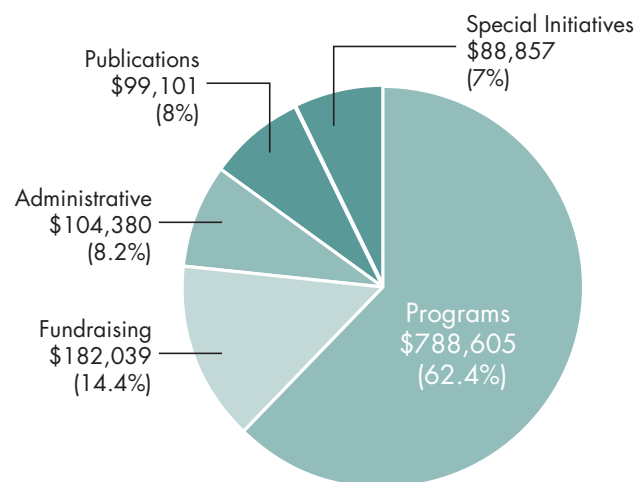
“Talking Service is important both for the answers it yields and the questions it raises. A good question is never put to rest. It’s something that becomes an impetus to a questioning way of life, and that’s exactly what we do with Talking Service—help instill the habits of mind that serve veterans well as they make their way in the world.”

*- Donald Whitfield, editor of *Standing Down*,
the Talking Service anthology*

Financials

2015 TOTAL EXPENSES:

\$1,262,982



CONTACT US

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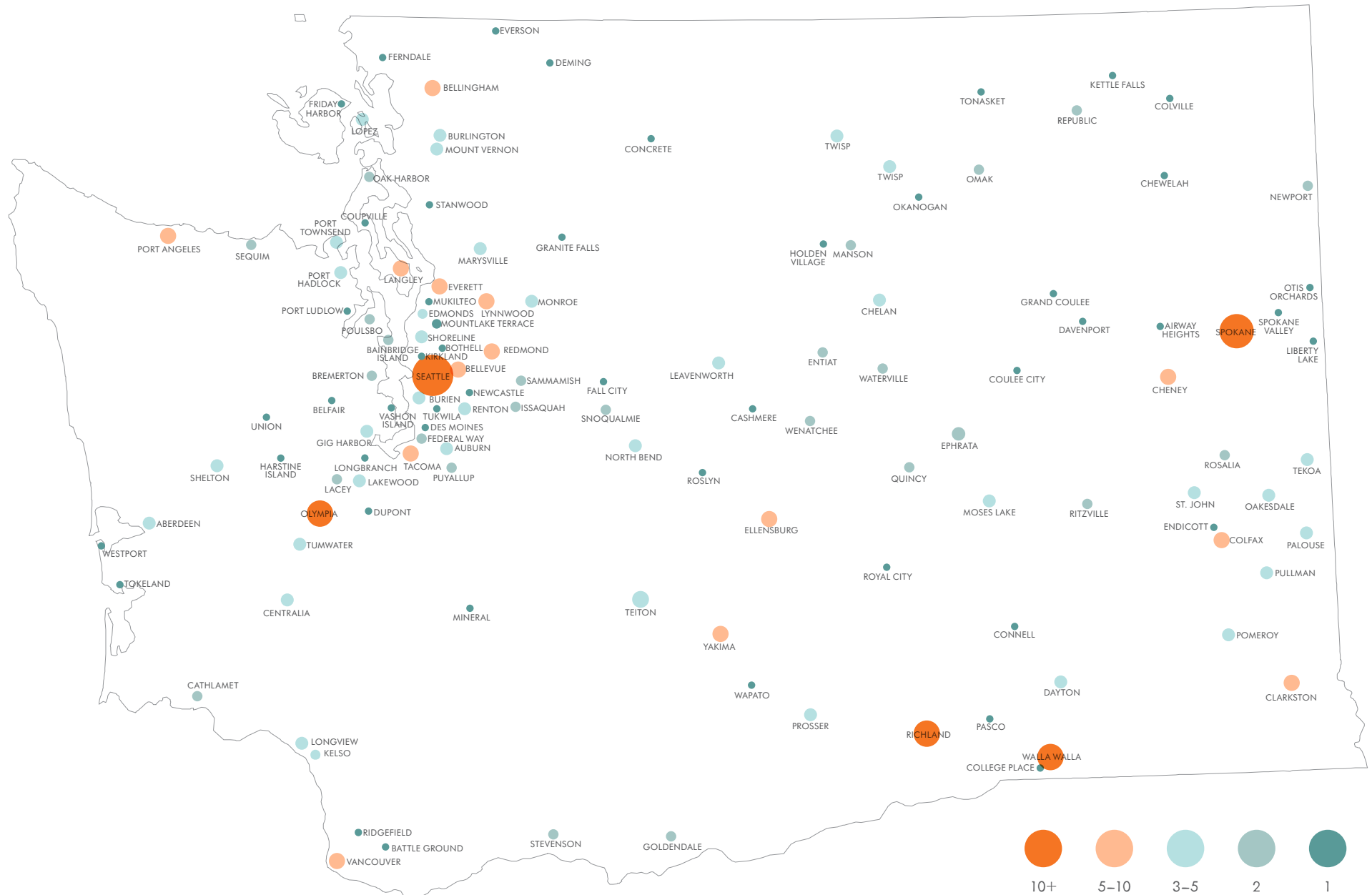
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Communities Served in 2015: 134



YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN: THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 SUPPORTERS!

Our friends and supporters help Humanities Washington nurture thoughtful and engaged communities by ensuring we can continue to provide free or very low-cost programming in all corners of the state.

50,000+

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\$25,000 – \$49,999

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*Collaborating to engage communities
in every corner of the state*

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Holden Village
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Hugo House
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Issaquah Library

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Kennewick Library
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LitFuse!
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Lopez Island Historical Society

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