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HUMANITIES WASHINGTON WELCOMES FOUR COMMUNITY LEADERS TO ITS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NEW TRUSTEES REPRESENT ELLENSBURG, YAKIMA, AND SEATTLE

SEATTLE— Humanities Washington, the state’s nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, has announced the election of four new members to its board of trustees: Tera Beach of Seattle, Xavier Cavazos of Ellensburg, Joe Ross of Seattle, and Kimberly Bellamy-Thompson of Yakima.

Trustees are chosen for their community leadership experience, their expertise in the humanities, and their dedication to building bridges across political and cultural divides. Geographically, trustees come from a wide range of communities throughout the state. Each serves a three-year, once-renewable term.

Humanities Washington partners with more than 300 organizations statewide each year to create opportunities for people to come together to explore and consider what it means to be human, and to reflect on our shared past, present, and future. The nonprofit organizes events and programs led by cultural experts, scholars, and storytellers, who discuss everything from Washington State history to philosophy to current social issues. Partner organizations include libraries, community halls, retirement homes, and cultural centers. All Humanities Washington programs are open to the public, and nearly all are free of charge.

THE NEW TRUSTEES

Tera Beach is a longtime community advocate. For 18 years, she worked closely with Congressman Jim McDermott (Ret), which included serving as his district director. Beach is an active contributor to Seattle's art & culture community and currently serves as a trustee of the Wing Luke Museum. While on the Congressman's staff, she was instrumental in achieving the Wing Luke's designation as a National Park Service Affiliated Area—a rare recognition of an Asian Pacific American site as one of America's cultural treasures. Beach has previously also volunteered with One World Now, the Committee for Children, the World Affairs Council, and other community programs.

Xavier Cavazos is the author of *Diamond Grove Slave Tree* (2015), which received the inaugural Prairie Seed Poetry Prize from Ice Cube Press, and *Barbarian at the Gate* (2014), which was published in the Poetry Society of America's *New American Poets* chapbook series. Cavazos was included in the *Best American Experimental Writing* (2015), and earned an MFA in creative writing and the environment from Iowa State University. He currently teaches in the Africana and Black studies program as well as the professional and creative writing program at Central Washington University, and is an editorial assistant for Poetry Northwest.

Joe Ross is the director of the Gates Archive. Prior to that, he spent a decade in management consulting across several industries. Joe has worked as an organizational sponsor for the United Way of King County and is an active member of the Y-Guides through the YMCA.

Kim Bellamy-Thompson is the assistant professor of criminal justice at Heritage University, where she also serves as an undergraduate academic advisor. She is involved in a variety of community organizations around the Yakima area, including the boards of the Yakima YMCA, Yakima Valley Museum, Safe Yakima Valley, and KCTS9-Cascade Media. She was a primary organizer of two criminal justice projects rooted in the humanities: "Race, Justice, and Democracy," a town hall discussion in Yakima; and the "Youth and Justice Forum" for middle- and high-school students. Most recently, Bellamy-Thompson became one of the project leads on the Rural American Digital Lab (RADLab), a learning lab for creating digital projects. The lab is intended to strengthen rural infrastructure, educational opportunities, and community connections.

ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON

Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state. We envision a state where all people are inspired to seek a deeper understanding of others, themselves, and the human experience. For more about Humanities Washington, visit humanities.org.

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