

## **New Mexico Humanities Council and Selected Libraries Across the State To Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Pulitzer Prizes**

Six libraries across New Mexico will partner with the New Mexico Humanities Council beginning in April to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the prestigious Pulitzer Prizes with a five-month reading and discussion series centered on five works of fiction deemed among the best of the best by Prize judges over the years.

Libraries taking part include the South Broadway Cultural Center in Albuquerque, the Clovis-Carver Public Library in Clovis, the Marshall Memorial Library in Deming, the Octavia Fellin Public Library in Gallup, the Thomas C. Donnelly Library at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, N.M., and the Thomas Branigan Memorial Library in Las Cruces.

The Pulitzer Dialogues, part of the Pulitzer Prize Board's Campfire Initiative, are being made possible in New Mexico through a \$24,743 grant by the prize board to the New Mexico Humanities Council.

"The New Mexico Humanities Council supports the Pulitzer Campfire Initiative because everybody should have the opportunity to read and enjoy good novels," said Dr. Craig Newbill, executive director of the New Mexico Humanities Council.

"Reading fosters emotional intelligence and enhances social and personal interactions," Newbill said. "The best literature provides for valuable experiences and personal growth. It is enjoyable and personally rewarding to read really good books and share details about life. It is pleasing and not just a theoretical activity."

Each library will host a program designed to challenge and engage members of its respective community to read and discuss one Pulitzer Prize novel each month — novels that represent different historical periods, regions and cultures but that all reveal meaningful perspectives on ourselves, our own culture and the world we live in.

The five novels are *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, a 2008 Pulitzer Prize winner by Junot Diaz; *The Plague of Doves*, a 2009 finalist by Louise Erdrich; *The Stories of John Cheever*, the winner in 2009; *Beloved*, Toni Morrison's winner in 1988; and *Lovely, Dark, Deep*, a 2015 finalist by Joyce Carol Oates.

### **About the Campfires Initiative**

To prepare for the centennial of the Pulitzer Prize, the Pulitzer Prize Board announced the Campfires Initiative, which aims to ignite broad engagement with the journalistic, literary, and artistic values the Prizes represent. To inspire year-long programming throughout the country, the board partnered with the Federation of State Humanities Councils on the initiative. After a review of grant proposals, the Pulitzer Prize Board awarded more than \$1.5 million to forty-six state humanities councils.

The programs will feature Pulitzer Prize-winning work in journalism, arts and letters, and music. The goal of the board and the Federation of State Humanities Council is to engage American communities in discussion about the values these disciplines represent. “We look forward to bringing the centennial to life next year with a diverse array of council programming that reconnects Americans with the nation’s amazing cultural production of the last 100 years,” said Dr. Esther Mackintosh, president of the Federation of State Humanities Councils.

The Federation and the Pulitzer Prize Board, which is headquartered at Columbia University, worked together to develop this initiative. It is supported by grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and the Pulitzer Prize Board.

To learn more about the Federation of State Humanities Councils, please visit [www.statehumanities.org](http://www.statehumanities.org).

To learn more about the Pulitzer Prizes Campfires Initiative, please see their March 2015 announcement.

This program is part of the Pulitzer Prizes Centennial Campfires Initiative, a joint venture of the Pulitzer Prizes Board and the Federation of State Humanities Council in celebration of the 2016 centennial of the Prizes. The initiative seeks to illuminate the impact of journalism and the humanities on American life today, to imagine their future and to inspire new generations to consider the values represented by the body of Pulitzer Prize-winning work.

For their generous support for the Campfires Initiative, we thank the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Pulitzer Prizes Board, and Columbia University.

The New Mexico Humanities Council is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Since 1972, the NMHC has sought to engage New Mexicans with history, culture, and diverse humanities topics through public programming. The NMHC promotes and helps advance discussions in the humanities, allowing for community conversations and civic dialogue to take place at each public program. The NMHC supports these non-profit organizations to help develop their public humanities programs for New Mexico audiences and provides general support to help accomplish their core humanities missions.

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