**Press Release**

 **For Immediate Release**

***Helena, MT – June 16TH 2020***

**MERLIN CCC RECEIVES HUMANITIES MONTANA CARES ACT REFLIEF FUNDS**

Merlin CCC has received $5,000 through Humanities Montana’s CARES grant program. This rapid-response funding provides general operating support to cultural organizations in the state that have been affected by the COVID-19 health crisis.

“Understanding ourselves and the world we live in is critical to our well-being – as individuals and communities. The questions (and answers) that arise from this sort of seeking -- why we do the things we do, how we make meaning of our experiences in the world, what things we ought to strive for and how to best go about navigating life – fall largely within the domain of the humanities. It is for these reasons alone (though certainly many more arguments in favor of the humanities can be made), that funding for the humanities is imperative. We are deeply grateful for organizations like Humanities MT and for their efforts to help keep the humanities alive and thriving in Montana” – *Marisa Diaz-Waian, Director of Merlin CCC*

The funds are part of the CARES Act passed by Congress in March. The $2 trillion aid package included $75 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities, approximately $30 million of which was sent to fifty-six state and territorial humanities councils to redistribute to humanities nonprofit organizations in need.

The state humanities councils were chosen to distribute these funds because of their well-established relationships with museums, historical societies, libraries, and cultural institutions that are the cornerstones of some of the most vulnerable and hardest to reach communities.

Humanities Montana is Montana's state humanities council with a mission to serve communities through stories and conversation. We offer experiences that nurture imagination and ideas by speaking to Montanans’ diverse history, literature, and philosophy. Established in 1972, we are one of fifty-six councils across the nation that the National Endowment for the Humanities created in order to better infuse the humanities directly and effectively into public life. We produce, fund, create, and support humanities-based projects and programs, eye-opening cultural experiences, and meaningful conversations. For more information, please call Merlin CCC at 406-502-2122.

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