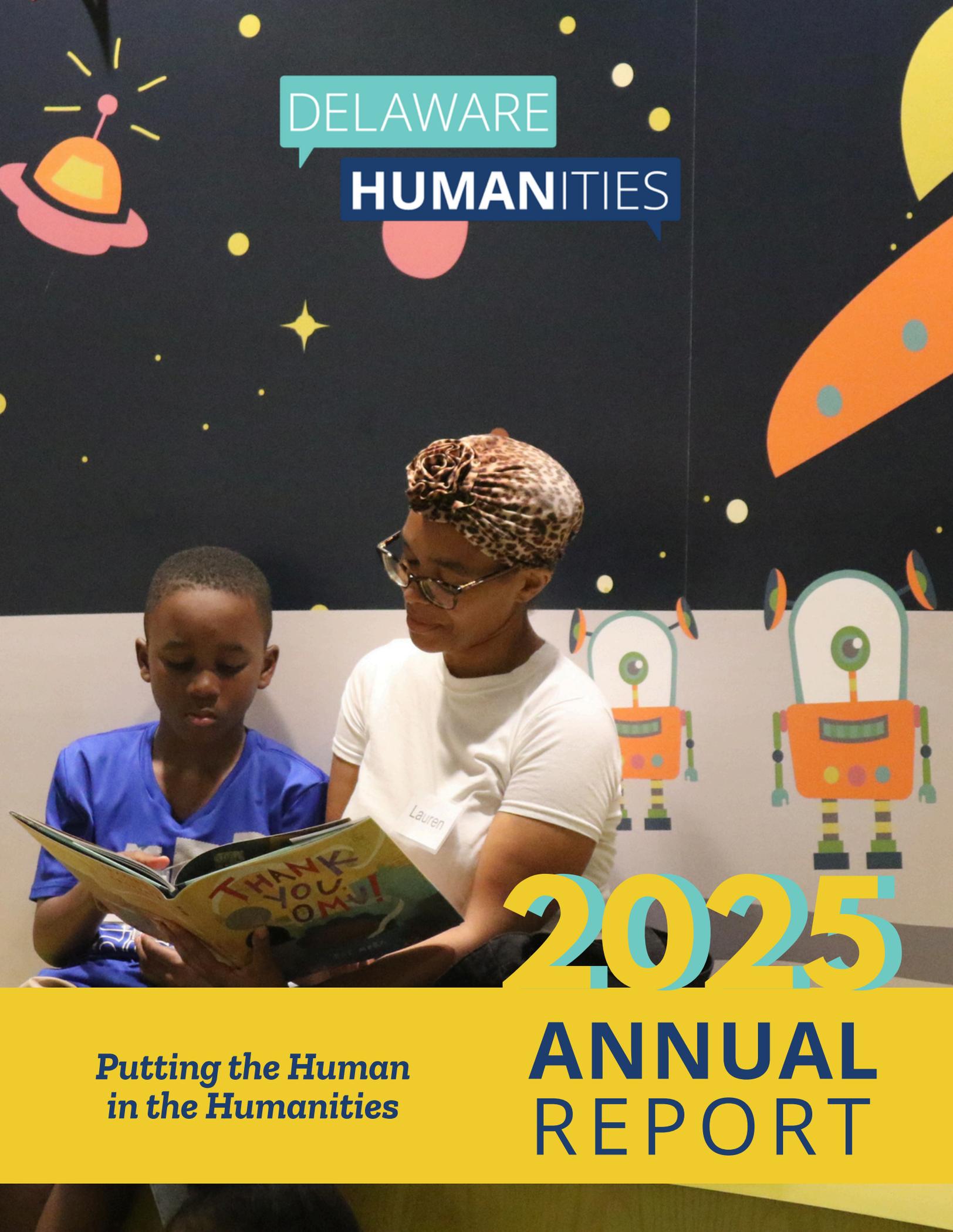


The logo for Delaware Humanities, featuring the word "DELAWARE" in white capital letters inside a teal speech bubble shape.The logo for Delaware Humanities, featuring the word "HUMANITIES" in white capital letters inside a dark blue speech bubble shape.

2025

*Putting the Human
in the Humanities*

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

LETTERS

*Adenike
Davidson*

Board Chair, Adenike Davidson



Only the end of the world is the end of the world. Lately, many have wondered if this statement is entirely true. Our current human experience is marred with instability, fear, anxiety, and insecurity—the very need for more humanities, not less. Resilience is a human trait that cannot be overlooked. History provides instances of resilience in the face of trauma; literature explores through fiction the ways in which we overcome conflict and division and create community; philosophy helps us to explore the existential questions about current situations that leave us feeling on shaky ground; and spirituality reconnects us with core values and beliefs. Even linguistics provides the ground for questioning the changes in which we speak with each other and why. The human experience is constant change—sometimes seen as progress, sometimes seen as regression; resilience is our ability to understand changes, decide how to adapt to these changes, and positively respond. Delaware Humanities stays committed to supporting the Humanities throughout the First State. It is through resilience that we lead in providing experiences that explore the necessity of dismantling barriers, providing hope, and building community. We invite you to join us in that exploration and thank you for your continued support.



Executive Director, Michele Anstine

Michele Anstine

This past year was defined by a profound test of our resilience. While we entered the fiscal year with ambitious goals and promising new partnerships, we were met with an unprecedented challenge: a 50% reduction in federally appropriated funding. This significant shift in the national landscape forced us to make difficult decisions, focusing our attention on delivering our most impactful programs including Speakers, Prime Time Family Reading, and our annual podcast which continues to educate the public about the humanities through our ongoing partnership with Delaware Public Media. Our federal subaward program, approximately 25% of our annual budget, still remains paused. Despite this sharp decline in support, our commitment to our mission never wavered. We responded quickly—streamlining operations and diversifying our revenue streams. I am incredibly proud to report that, through the unwavering dedication of our staff, the extraordinary generosity of private donors, and the belief of foundations in the work we do, we were able to raise \$265,864. In 2025, we introduced Prime Time Family Reading to two new libraries and one community center and made plans with yet two more libraries for 2026. With an increase in \$5,000 of support in funding from Delaware State Grant-in-Aid and the generous contribution of a private donor we introduced seven new Speaker programs, including two that explore Revolutionary-era Delaware in recognition of DE250. Not only did we persevere, we proved that humanities programming is more important than ever! None of this would be possible without you. Your support during this difficult year was not just a gift—it was a lifeline. Thank you for standing with us and for being an integral part of this journey toward a more resilient future.

BOARD & STAFF

Staff



Michele Anstine
Executive Director



Ciera Fisher
Deputy Director



Rebecca Olsen
Senior Programs
Officer



Kelly Murray
Communications
Manager

Board of Directors

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Clay Athey - Vice-Chair

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Devon Filicicchia

Abigail Fischer

Mike W. Jackson

Alana King

Heidi Nasstrom-Evans, PhD

Tim Slavin

Sarah Trembanis, PhD



Claymont Community Center,
Delaware Humanities' new office location as of June 2025

OPERATIONS

For Fiscal Year 2025 (November 1, 2024 - October 31, 2025)

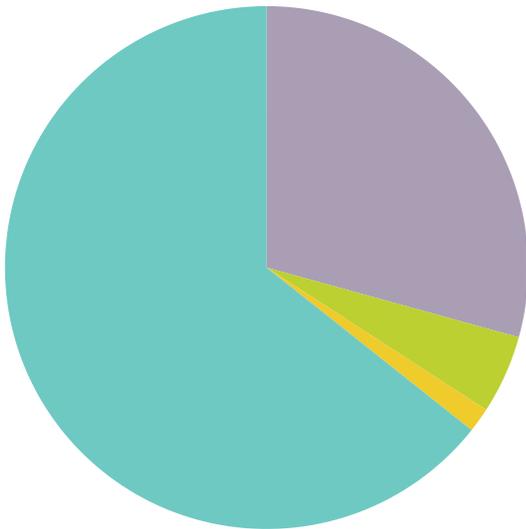
REVENUE

National Endowment for the Humanities	\$583,749
State of Delaware	\$44,104
Public Contributions	\$265,864
Program Income	\$13,815
Total Current Revenue	\$907,533

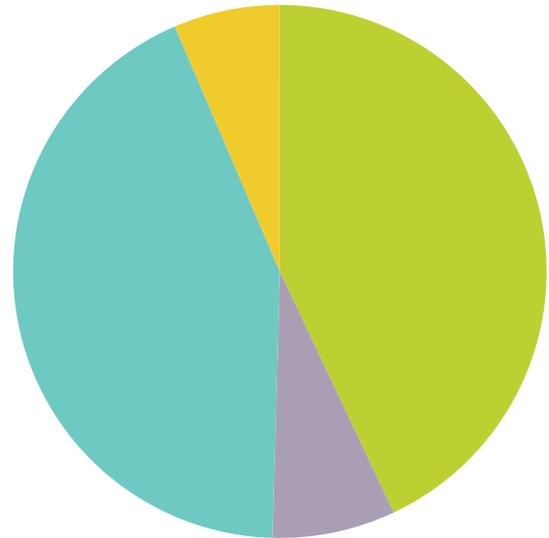
EXPENSES

Programming	\$333,467
Grants	\$57,910
General Management	\$334,556
Fundraising	\$49,969
Total Current Expenses	\$775,902

● Contributions ● State of Delaware
● Program
● National Endowment for the Humanities



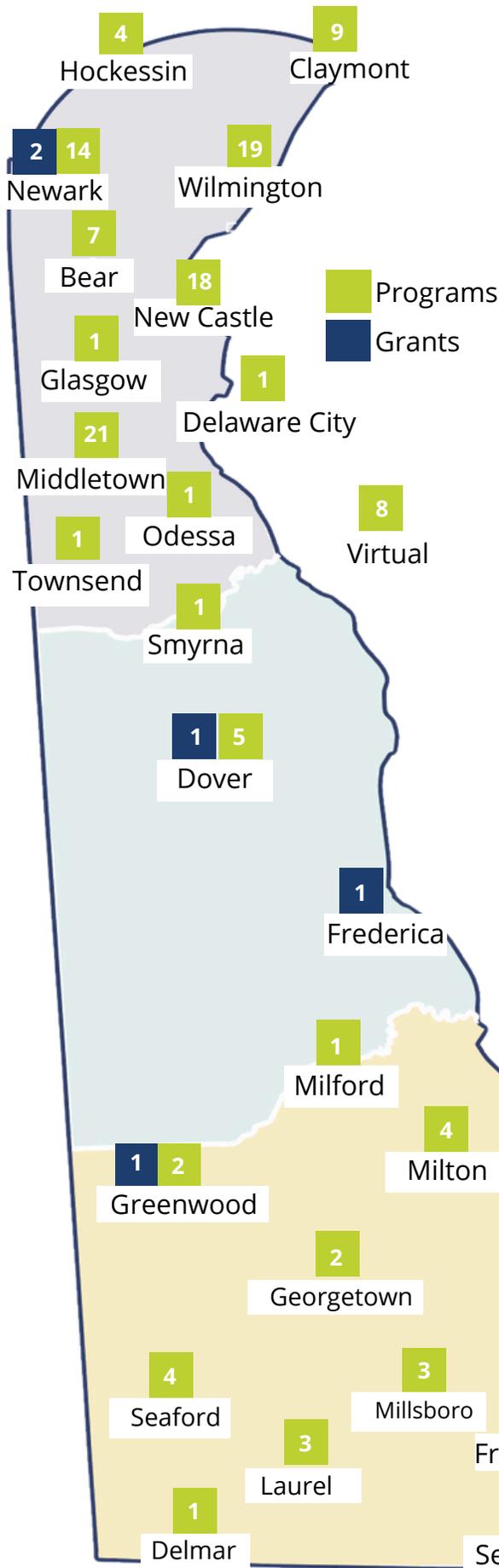
● Programming ● Grants
● General Management ● Fundraising



Fiscal year 2025 data is preliminary, pending audit, and reflects the release of only 48% of NEH federal funding appropriated by Congress and thus an unexpected pause to our grantmaking and programs during the year.



OUR IMPACT



In 2025, we held **152 PROGRAMS** and awarded **6 GRANTS**

In FY25, our programs **reached 10,666** people across Delaware at host sites such as libraries, senior centers, schools, historical societies, museums, and community organizations.

These programs included our **Speakers presentations, Prime Time Family Reading, our 2025 Podcast, People & Planet**, and more.

We were also able to fund **6 projects** through our Opportunity grants. **\$20,690 was distributed to 6 organizations** throughout the state.

For the grant projects completed in FY25, **412,856 people participated in activities** including workshops, festivals, and K-12 education initiatives.

A Difficult Chapter

On April 2, 2025 we received notice of the **abrupt termination** of state humanities councils' NEH general operating support grants. This **funding loss** not only directly impacted our organization, but the many programs and grants available to Delawareans. While we had to **suspend grantmaking** entirely, our ability to provide programs also suffered. Compared to 2024, we saw **26% less humanities programs** with significant decreases in New Castle (22%), Kent (68%), and Sussex (25%) counties.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

SPEAKERS



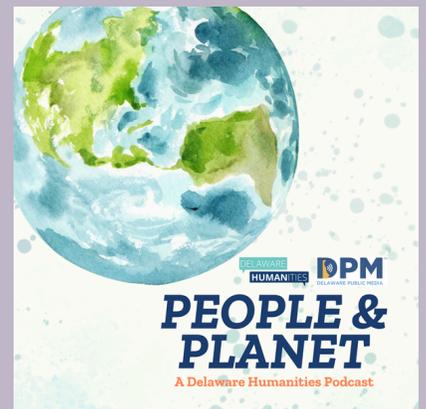
Our Speakers give public talks and K-12 classroom presentations on history, culture, literature, ethics, nature, and everything in between, enriching the lives of Delawareans by providing free opportunities for learning right in their own communities. In 2025, we held 111 total Speaker programs across Delaware, which were attended by a total of 3,281 individuals.

PRIME TIME



Prime Time Family Reading programs support literacy and intergenerational learning for 6 to 10-year-old children and their families. In 2025, we marked our third year as an affiliate partner of Prime Time. We hosted programs at four sites in Delaware: the Bear Public Library, the Claymont Community Center, the Route 9 Library & Innovation Center, and the New Castle Public Library, attended by 558 individuals.

PODCAST



Our 2025 podcast *People and Planet* highlighted how Delawareans grow food, live with animals, fish, spend time outside, and are creatively inspired by the natural world throughout our state. Episodes included interviews with scientists, writers, and performers whose expertise, firsthand experience, and creative works bring us closer to the planet we call home. Over the year, 4,815 listeners tuned in to our *People & Planet* podcast

MUSEUM MEET UPS

We partnered with the Delaware Museum Association to host "Museum Meet Ups" throughout the state. Museum professionals and people working in Delaware's cultural sector participated in onsite learning at archives, historic sites, and house museums.



GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

For over 50 years, Delaware Humanities has consistently awarded 20 to 30 grants annually to organizations throughout the state. In 2025, instead of our usual grantmaking efforts, we were only able to fund 6 projects before our loss of federal funding. We are extremely proud of these grantees and their wonderful projects.

\$20K AWARDED
IN FY25 IN GRANTS

Bowers Beach Maritime Museum, Inc. *"Bowers Beach Buccaneer Bash"* - \$3,068

Delaware Public Archives *"Revolution at 250: Symposium for Museums and Historic Sites"* - \$3,265.40

Rehoboth Beach Historical Society and Museum *"Rehoboth Beach Museum Kids Guide"* - \$3,142.46

University of Delaware, Art Conservation Department *"Conservation Workshops: Repairing and Caring for Personal Treasures"* - \$4,496.78

University of Delaware, Delaware Teachers Institute *"K-12 Educator Enrichment"* - \$1,717.50

Woodbridge High School *"Festival of Words/Authors Among Us"* - \$5,000

Empowering and Educating Delaware's Youth Through the Festival of Words

*Harry, Jason, and
Woodbridge High School
students*



On April 5, 2025, students, teachers, librarians, and community members gathered at Woodbridge High School in Greenwood for the **Festival of Words**.

This free event was developed to encourage a love of reading and writing by introducing young adults to new authors and ideas. Funding from Delaware Humanities allowed for the festival to invite **Jason Reynolds, author and National Ambassador for Young People's Literature**, as the keynote speaker.



However, allowing attendees to hear from well-known national and local authors was not the only important part of the festival.



Harry Brake, teacher and festival organizer, moderates with a student

The event itself was **student-led**. Students became skilled at planning and making connections, and their communities were able to see first-hand the impact of their hard work.

Jason Reynolds signs copies of his book at the Festival of Words

Overall, the Festival of Words demonstrated the **importance of literature** and the power of the humanities to foster community and to teach students new skills.

Festival of Words will return May 9, 2026, with more authors, talks, and community partners.



A YEAR OF RESILIENCE

On April 2, Delaware Humanities received notice of the abrupt termination of our National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) general operating support grant. This funding loss placed the organization into a period of uncertainty as we dealt with an unknown future. As an organization, we responded with action. Despite the many challenges endured, we explored new and unique fundraising methods, kept our community informed through storytelling, and embraced change when we had to move our office location. Throughout this, we discovered a spirit of resilience and a resolute focus to provide the humanities in Delaware.



- 1: News article, *Delaware Business Times*, April 18, 2025
- 2: News article, *Town Square Live*, April 9, 2025
- 3: News article, *Axios*, April 15, 2025
- 4: National Endowment for the Humanities seal
- 5: News article, *Town Square Live*, May 2, 2025
- 6: News article, *Delaware Business Times*, July 15, 2025

A YEAR OF RESILIENCE



7: Claymont Community Center, location of our new office

8: Deputy Director Ciera Fisher and Senior Programs Officer Rebecca Olsen set up new office in Suite 203

9: Blog article authored by Executive Director Michele Anstine

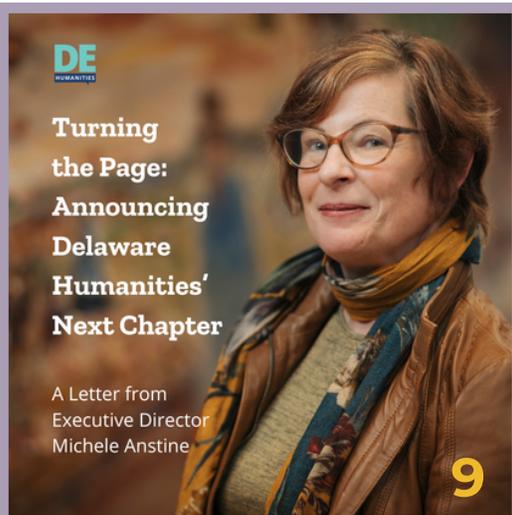
10: Mellon Foundation \$50,000 Challenge Grant campaign

11: Books on display at our Book Fair Fundraiser

12: ACLU Delaware Legal Director Jason Beehler shows his support

13: Happy book readers during our Book Fair Fundraiser

14: Delaware State University students film Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs' Curator of Archeology Karli Palmer for a Delaware Humanities video



Turning the Page: Announcing Delaware Humanities' Next Chapter

A Letter from Executive Director Michele Anstine

AN EVENING WITH JOHN VERCHER

In October, Delaware Humanities welcomed author John Vercher to Delaware State University (DSU) for our 302 Circle event, *An Evening with John Vercher*. Dr. Adenike Davidson, Delaware Humanities Board Chair and DSU Dean of the College of the Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences, joined Mr. Vercher in conversation about his novel, *Devil Is Fine*, which is partly inspired by Delaware history. Guests enjoyed an in-depth discussion, a reading by Mr. Vercher, and an original video produced by Delaware Humanities highlighting how the humanities can influence and inspire literary works.



1: DSU Dean and Delaware Humanities Board Chair Dr. Adenike Davidson, author John Vercher, Executive Director Michele Anstine, Deputy Director Ciera Fisher; photograph by Carlos Holmes, DSU Director of News Services

2: *Devil Is Fine* book cover

3: Mr. Vercher and Dr. Davidson in conversation

4: Mr. Vercher reads an excerpt from *Devil Is Fine*

5: Packed audience at Delaware State University's Early Childhood Innovation Center

GRATITUDE

We are grateful to our supporters for your generous contributions! Your donations and funding help us continue to support organizations throughout the state in strengthening communities by connecting Delawareans through the diversity of human experiences.

\$1 - \$99

Margaret Alexander	Phyllis Brooks Collins	Howard High School	Debra Martin	Kym Rogers	Kathy Trusty
Ann Bawa	Lisa Dill	Alumni Association	Judith Martin	Lola M. Russell	April Veness
Monica Beard	Kathleen Doyle	Margaret Hughes	Sara Rowe Mount	Courtney Sanik	Christine Vistorek
Pamela Becker	Emma Dwyer	Sara D. Hutchinson	Kelly Murray	Tyler Shade	Kristen Wilczynski
Diane Bockrath	Connie Feeley	Frederika Jenner	Cynthia Myers	Dennis & Marilyn Siebold	Juliette Wurm
Diana Brown	Ciera Fisher	Claire Kantar	Shannon Nehrbas	Mollie Statman	Clara Zahradnik
Sara Bucic	Jenn Ford	Jeffrey Lott	Marissa Parker	Ashley Stinson	
Lisa Chase	Allison Glading	Antoinette Maccari	Allison Reardon	Carlene Smith	
Ashley Cloud	Andrea Glowatz	Julia Mercier	John Reshetar	Carolyn Thompson	

\$100 - \$499

Lynda H. Anstine*	Nancy Burd	Theresa del Tufo*	Richard Givens	Alana King*	Thomas Rocek
Wendy Bellion	Kim Burdick*	Keith Duncan*	Priscilla Goldsmith	Eunice LaFate	Lola Russell
Berkana Center for Media & Education	Shane Cannon	Heidi Nasstrom Evans	Carrie Gray*	Laura Lee	Charles Salkin*
Kimeu Boynton	Gregory Campbell	J. Harry Feldman	Susan Hannell	Scott Mangieri	Richard E. Stat
Harry R. Brake*	Justin & Teresa	Devon Filicichia	Peter Horthy	Robert McKennett*	Sarah Trembanis
Michael Brickner*	Carisio*	Amy E. Ferrer*	Lisa Marie Jackson	Michael Oates*	Robert Varipapa
Mary Ann Brown	Dennis Coker	Abigail Fischer*	Micheal Jackson	Thomas M. Powers*	Jenifer Warren*
Stephanie Brown*	Constance Cooper	Kathleen Folliard	Glenn C. Kenton	James Purcell*	
	Adenike Davidson*	John W. Gardner*	David Jinsae Kim	Jessica Redmond*	

\$500+

Aaron Nayer*	Anne M. Boylan*	Suzanne Savery*
Ruthi Adams Joseph*	DCANet	Lynn Herrick Sharp*
Michele Anstine*	Sara Jatcko*	Erik Rau*
John C. Athey*	Matthew Kinservik*	

*302 Circle Members

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ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES



Federation of
State Humanities
Councils



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Foundation

The Laffey-McHugh Foundation

DCF Make
More
Possible.
Delaware Community Foundation



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HUMANITIES

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dehumanities.org

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