

Narratives (Cont.)

Veterans' Voices Audio Stories

A series of short audio stories from Veterans' Voices awardees and others in the Minnesota Veteran community.

5-12 📖 🎧 *Ampers*

Veterans' Voices Literature Resource

Literary selections for educators to explore the absent narratives of Veterans, military service members and families in the classroom.

5-12 📖 ✎ *Veterans, writers, educators, Great Books Foundation*

Reflections on War and Service: Memorials on the St. Paul Capitol Mall

This guide helps students make meaning of war memorials, and better understand military service through Veteran experiences.

5-12 📖 ✎ *Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs*

Water Audio Stories

A series of interviews where Minnesotans share their relationship to water. Stories are still being accepted by the Smithsonian!

5-12 📖 🎧 *Smithsonian Institution, EPA, MPCA, MNDNR, MDH, AWWA, Minnesota Historical Society*

Water Educator Guides

These lessons build upon the *Water/Ways* and *We Are Water* exhibits, providing activities that study watersheds, pollution, water travel, cultural relationships with water, and more.

3-12 📖 ✎ *Smithsonian Institution, EPA, MPCA, MNDNR, MDH, AWWA, Minnesota Historical Society*



Veterans' Voices explores the lived experiences of military veterans.

Through public conversations, Veteran-focused workshops, and the Veterans' Voices Award we honor and amplify their stories.



Educator Tools

Digital Suitcases 📁

Online lesson plans developed by educators from Saint Paul Public Schools around specific social studies themes and standards.

Minnesota Storytime Reading Guides

Over 60 reading guides developed for librarians, teachers, child care providers, parents, and anyone interested in reading and literacy activities with children pre-K-5.

Absent Narratives Resource Assessment Tool

This helps the process of building relationships to stories and the people who tell them, aiming to help you create a 'balance of stories' and open space to increase engagement.

Selecting and Assessing American Indian Resources

Reflect critically about how American Indians are represented and presented in classroom texts and resources. This tool helps educators include authentic stories and experiences in classrooms.

Ojibwe Vocabulary Project: Aaniin Ekidong

A dictionary developed by Ojibwe elders that allows you to use newer concepts to teach math, science, social studies, and more.

ABSENT NARRATIVES Resources

Our free collection contains over 1,000 educator resources, including videos, literature, and guides.

The Minnesota Humanities Center is committed to amplifying marginalized voices, the absent narratives often left out of Minnesota's story and classrooms. Resources are developed in partnership with our state's diverse cultural communities.

mnhum.org/resources



mnhum.org/resources



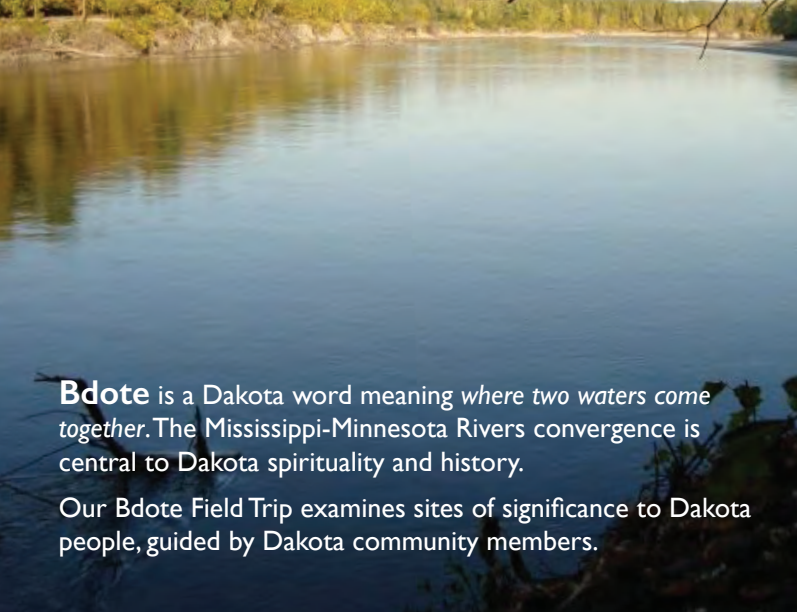
Minnesota
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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities



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Bdote is a Dakota word meaning *where two waters come together*. The Mississippi-Minnesota Rivers convergence is central to Dakota spirituality and history.

Our Bdote Field Trip examines sites of significance to Dakota people, guided by Dakota community members.



Why Treaties Matter is a traveling exhibit focusing on treaties between Dakota and Ojibwe Indian Nations and the U.S. government. Visit mnhum.org for tour info.

This award-winning exhibit is also on permanent display at the Minnesota State Capitol (3rd Floor).

Dakota & Ojibwe Nations

mnhum.org/resources

Bdote Memory Map bdotememorymap.org

This place-based website examines Dakota people's relationship to the place we now call Minnesota, and provides many resources.

K–12 *Allies:MediaArt*

Bdote Field Trip Resources

A guide to helping plan your Bdote Field Trip, and a video primer to enhance learning through indigenous perspectives.

5–12 *Allies:MediaArt, Saint Paul Public Schools*

American Indian Responses to Statehood

Dakota and Ojibwe people tell how statehood affected their homes, families, and future—stories painfully absent from history textbooks.

5–12

Between Fences, Land & Borders: Indigenous Perspectives

This documentary accompanied the Smithsonian Museum on Main Street traveling exhibit *Between Fences*.

5–12 *Allies:MediaArt*

Four Seasons of the Ojibwe

Four short, informational videos introducing Ojibwe culture.

K–5

A Day in the Life of Tribal Nations in Minnesota

This video accompanies the *Why Treaties Matter* exhibit.

3–12 *Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, National Museum of the American Indian*

Why Treaties Matter Resources treatiesmatter.org

This companion website contains an enhanced virtual tour of the nationally recognized *Why Treaties Matter* exhibit, and educator guides to provide background, vocabulary, readings, and activities.

5–12

**Leadership in History Award
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, National Museum of the American Indian*



Treaties affirm the sovereignty of American Indian nations, enabling tribal governments to maintain a nation-to-nation relationship with the U.S. government.

Narratives Across the State

mnhum.org/resources

Absent Narratives Author Series

Latino, Hmong, Dakota, and Ojibwe authors discuss their work, influences, experiences, and student questions about the craft.

9–12

Braided Lives: An Anthology of Multicultural American Writing

Over 40 literary pieces (and 10 lesson plans) geared toward high schoolers. Currently out of print—available online.

9–12 *Minnesota Council of Teachers of English*

Community Voices and Experiences

Community members discuss family experiences, economic contributions, adjusting to a different culture, and journeys.

5–12

Somali Bilingual Books

Four illustrated Somali folktales authentically preserve heritage languages while increasing English literacy in Somali families. Books available print-on-demand.

K–5 *Minnesota Somali Community*

Latino Arts: A Community Vision

Learn how 12 of Minnesota's finest Latino artists convey a vision of our future enriched by Latino culture during this documentary.

3–12 *Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs, tpt*

Latino Voices Across Minnesota

This series explores the contributions of Latino communities to the arts, culture, and economy of different regions in Minnesota.

6–12 *Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs*

Yellow: Where We Can Be

Youth share experiences of growing up Asian American in the Twin Cities. Currently out of print—available online.

6–12 *Asian Pacific Youth Council, Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans*

Prayers on the Prairie

This documentary illustrates how Asian Minnesotans from five different faiths are able to thrive, practice, and live in Minnesota.

3–12 *Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans*

The Reading Together Project

These six books speak to the experiences of Asian Pacific Islander youth in the U.S. Books available print-on-demand.

K–5 *Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans*

Iron Range: Minnesota Building America

This Emmy-awarded documentary highlights the history and future of the Iron Range, with many accompanying resources.

5–12 *tpt, *Emmy Award: Best Cultural Documentary*



Firsts: Minnesota's African American Groundbreakers

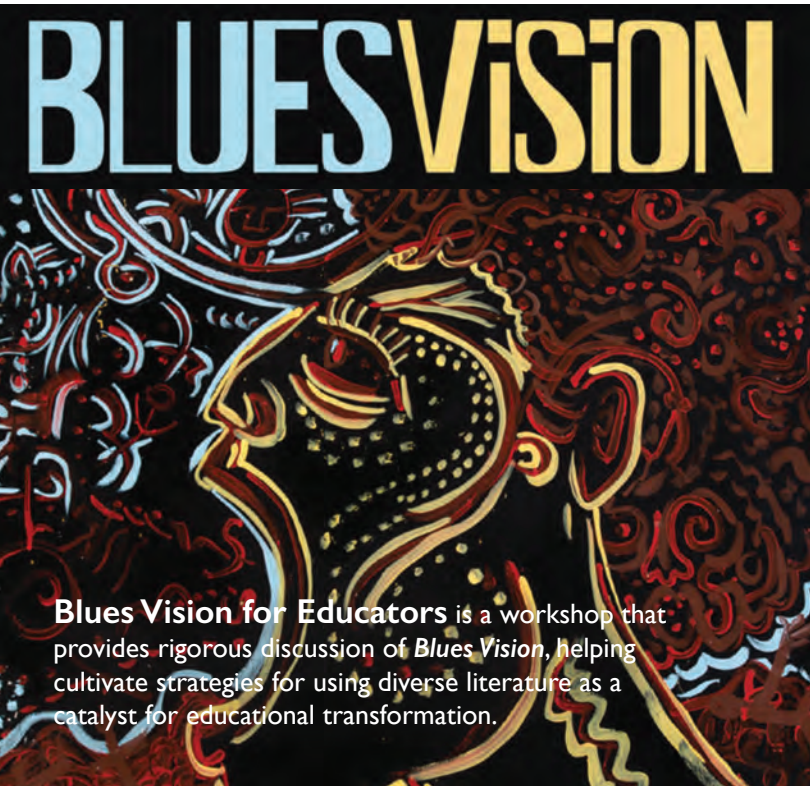
A series of interviews capturing what it means to be a “First,” hosted by award-winning author Alexis Pate.

5–12 *Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage, *National Hometown Media Award: Cultural Perspectives*

Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota

Edited by Alexis Pate, this anthology includes over 60 pieces by African American authors, exploring the Black literary tradition and experiences in Minnesota.

5–12 *Minnesota Historical Society Press*



Blues Vision for Educators is a workshop that provides rigorous discussion of *Blues Vision*, helping cultivate strategies for using diverse literature as a catalyst for educational transformation.

- PDF download
- hard copy book
- guide(s) available
- A/V file
- aligned to Minnesota state standards



MHC's Programs Support and Connect Minnesota Educators

Overview:

The Minnesota Humanities Center's (MHC) has been a center for education since our founding in 1971. Our **K-12 Education** work continues our education legacy through new and innovative workshops and immersions that examine the manifold cultures alive across Minnesota.

MHC's **K-12 Education** work happens throughout the year with professional development workshops like Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives, Learning from Place: Bdote, and more. The work is anchored each summer by our Educator Institute which brings together educators from across the state to effect education reform through our proven Absent Narratives Approach™.



2018 Educator Institute



2018 Educator Institute.

By the Numbers:

K-12 Education hosted **89** events in **24** communities attended by more than **3112** people and distributed more than **600** MHC produced cultural relevant educational resources to schools and educators statewide.

Partners:

Through **K-12 Education**, MHC has partnered with dozens of organizations including (but not limited to): Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA), Walker Art Center, Minnesota Historical Society, Carleton College, Duluth Public Schools, Equity Alliance MN, Mahtomedi Public Schools, Heart and Soul Drum Academy, St. Catherine's University, and Roseville Area Schools.

Testimonials:

"An incredibly powerful and emotional experience that all residents of this area should participate in." —
Learning from Place: Bdote participant

"This session gave me tools, language and processes to lead conversations and evaluate whose voice/narratives are included in our materials and practices. It increased opportunities and access as a result." —*Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives participant*

"A comprehensive, impactful workshop that introduces the power of story — and the lens of the person doing the telling — as a foundation for cultural development, growth, and dexterity." —*Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives participant*

"The work that is begun, done and carried on through and because of the Minnesota Humanities Center cannot truly be measured. The connections made through this work happen at many levels. Educators connect, plan and positively disrupt across the state, within their school districts, within their school teams as well as at a personal level. Rarely do you see this multi-level impact happen during a professional development opportunity. I feel blessed to have been invited into this unique experience through the Minnesota Humanities Center." —*Educator Institute participant, Minneapolis Public Schools*

"Not just another diversity training, Transforming Education Through Absent Narratives is a journey toward truth telling." —*Marquita Stevens, Educator Institute participant*

Ongoing Events:

- **Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives** – This quarterly workshop introduces the core strategies and concepts of the Minnesota Humanities Center’s approach to community engagement through absent narratives — those voices or stories often left out or marginalized.
- **Learning from Place: Bdote** – This daylong workshop, offered publicly five times per year, is spent visiting local sites in the Twin Cities that are of significance to Dakota people and learning about them from Dakota perspectives.

2018-2019 Featured Events:

- **Educator Institute** (June 17-22, 2018) – This annual weeklong experience immerses participants in MHC’s proven approach to increase student engagement through absent narratives. The institute prepares Minnesota educators to develop meaningful connections with their students and implement practical classroom strategies to bring absent narratives pedagogy into their practice.
- **Learning from Place: Rondo/Selby Neighborhood** (July 11, 2017) – This immersive workshop was spent learning about Saint Paul’s historic Rondo and Selby Avenue neighborhoods with members of the community. The day included a bus and walking tour, revealing the rich histories of a community grounded in unity and resilience.
- **Blues Vision for Educators** (July 26, 2017 and January 27, 2018) – This workshop prepared participants to have meaningful engagement with students through a deeper understanding of African American experiences and the Black literary tradition in Minnesota using MHC’s published anthology, “Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota.”
- **Reflection Retreat: Bdote** (Nov. 4, 2017) – A two-hour session for past Bdote trip participants to reflect and explore how lessons learned from this immersive experience can be applied in their local communities.
- **Educator Institute Reunion** (Feb. 24, 2018) – A day where past participants of the Educator Institute shared what they have implemented since the Institute, learned what is working in districts across the state, and deepened connections with other educators.
- **American Indian Storytelling** (Feb. 27, 2018) – This interactive workshop highlighted Ojibwe and Dakota cultures, explored the history of traditional American Indian storytelling, examined storytelling techniques, and discovered the storyteller in all of us.
- **Inclusive Science** (April 28, 2018) – Through presentation and discussion, participants examined the ways in which Western science has been privileged while other forms of science have been marginalized and erased. Participants learned about science, culture, history, and the relationship among different forms of science and the humanities.
- **Teaching Bdote: Tools for Educators Teaching American Indian Content** (May 19, 2018) – Educators who have been on a Bdote trip gathered to receive additional support on how to share the experience with their students.
- **Čhokáta Nážij: The Dakota Language Table** (Aug. 14, 2018) – Through language, identity, and storytelling, workshop participants strengthened connections to people and place, and came away with hands-on activities, ideas for student engagement, and an opportunity to self-reflect.
- **Writing Absent Narratives Lesson Plans** (Dec. 1, 2018) – This workshop provided participants with a review of the Absent Narratives Approach™ and introduced a practical curriculum-development process.

Upcoming 2019 Events:

- **Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives**
- **Learning from Place: Bdote**
- **Teaching Bdote**

For more information:

Sung Ja Shin

Minnesota Humanities Center, Program Officer

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Learning from Place: Bdote



MHC's Programs Support and Connect Minnesota Veterans

Overview:

The Minnesota Humanities Center's (MHC) **Veterans' Voices** program draws on the power of the humanities to call attention to the contributions and often-missed stories of Veterans. This program empowers all Minnesota Veterans to speak in their own voices through storytelling, literature, theatre, discussion groups and more — amplifying the voices of Veterans throughout our state and helping to bridge the Veteran-civilian divide.

Thanks to the work of the Humanities Center and their Veteran and legislative partners, state law now designates October as **Veterans' Voices Month** in Minnesota.



2018 Veterans' Voices Awardees



2018 Veterans' Voices Awardee Stevena Pen and his family

By the Numbers:

Veterans' Voices hosted **27** events in **18** communities attended by more than **1,436** people. **145** Veterans from **83** communities have received the Veterans' Voices Award since 2013.

Partners:

Veterans' Voices partnered with dozens of organizations including: Camp Ripley, Veteran's Defense Fund, University of St. Thomas, Minnesota Historical Society, West Point Society of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, St. Paul Public Library, The Moth Community Program, Veterans Defense Project, Veterans for Peace, Metropolitan State University, AMVETS, and Twin Cities PBS.

Testimonials:

"I took a chance and attended this event and was surprised to see female veterans that I already knew. I remember thinking, 'I am not the only one who is having these feelings of searching for something.' I felt affirmed." — "The Telling Project" participant

"The freedoms and liberties we and so many around the world cherish are owed to the sacrifice of many brave Minnesotans who answered our nation's call in pursuit of freedom and a safer world. [The] Minnesota Humanities Center's Veteran Voices [...] help[s] our men and women in uniform transition to civilian life." — Former Congressman John Kline, Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony attendee

"We have all suffered enough in our lives. The truth is that when I have the support of my fellow Veterans and this awesome organization — the Minnesota Humanities Center. There is nothing more that I can ask for!" — Mohammad Zafar, Marine Corps Corporal, Veterans' Voices Awardee

"Hosting the exhibition provided another opportunity for the Carleton Humanities Center and the Office of the Director of the Arts to reach out to a variety of faculty and students [...] and bring them together to discuss this important topic. Carleton is not a place where Veterans' issues are routinely discussed, and the presence of the exhibition and related program was a good opportunity to bring these voices and issues into the community." — Steve Richardson on hosting "Always Lost" at Carleton College

2018-2019 Featured Events:

- **America's Secret War Community Planning** — This project was a collaboration between the Minnesota Humanities Center and Twin Cities PBS, to explore *why* and *what* is important for the community (Minnesota middle school and high school students and educators) to know about the Secret War.
- **Warrior Writers Workshops** — Warrior Writers Workshops provide a safe space for Veterans to tell their own stories, using prompts and discussion covering a variety of military issues and experiences. We collaborated with Combat Paper on art and paper-making workshops.
- **Veterans' Voices Educator Salons** — This three-part salon is designed for educators working in the humanities fields at local colleges and universities who are interested in exploring the deeper context and consequences of war, remembrance, memorials, monuments, as well as past and present social issues facing their Veteran and non-Veteran students.
- **Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony** — The Veterans' Voices Award recognizes Veterans in Minnesota who served honorably and are making substantial contributions to their communities. The 2018 event featured keynote speaker, Sebastian Junger, the internationally acclaimed author, journalist, and documentarian.

Upcoming 2019 Events:

- **America's Secret War Educator's Toolkit** — An inclusive curriculum that recognizes plurality over a singular narrative brings to light untold stories that make Minnesota's history and identity more complete. Such curriculum can impel social justice by giving voice to silenced groups, paying homage to the contributions of different groups to Minnesota's diversity and prosperity, and encouraging equity and engagement in the community and classroom.
- **Veterans' Voices Educator Salon, Duluth** — Expanding on the concept from last year, MHC plans to continue the program in another community with a large higher education population. The goal is to give educators the opportunity to interact with Veterans' content using tools from our Absent Narratives Approach™.
- **Warrior Writers Workshops** — This year will focus on greater Minnesota. Workshops will take place in Duluth, Granite Falls, Minneapolis, and St. Cloud, and Winona.
- **Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony** — This year, the celebrated Veterans' Voices Award is being re-envisioned to be more centered in the voices of Veterans and to truly highlight the transformative power of the humanities.

Grants:

In 2018, MHC awarded \$54,068 in **Veterans' Voices Legacy Grants** to nine organizations to celebrate/commemorate Veterans' Day and/or Veterans' Voices Month (October) by engaging communities with projects or programs to bridge the Veteran-civilian divide through the humanities.

These organizations included: Carleton College, the Dakota County Historical Society, Hero Now Theatre, Macalester College, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, the Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance, the Scott County Historical Society, and the Winona County Historical Society.

For more information:

Blake Rondeau

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Governor Mark Dayton signs Veterans' Voices Month legislation, May 2014



MHC’s Programs Support and Connect Minnesotans

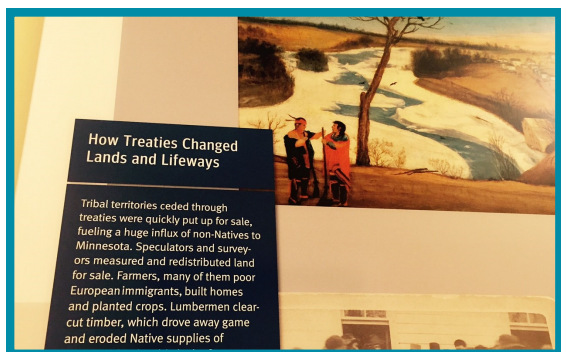
Overview:

“Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations” is a nationally recognized, award-winning, traveling exhibit made in partnership with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian.

The exhibit explores relationships between Dakota and Ojibwe Indian Nations and the U.S. government in this place we now call Minnesota. Participants learn, through a video presentation and 20 banners featuring text and images, how treaties affected the lands and lifeways of the indigenous peoples of this place, and why these binding agreements between nations still matter today.



“Why Treaties Matter” at the Minnesota State Capitol



“Why Treaties Matter” exhibit banner

By the Numbers:

“Why Treaties Matter” hosted **14** tour stops and events in **10** communities attended by more than **10,420** people with **3** more scheduled in 2019, and the exhibit is on permanent display at the Minnesota State Capitol.

Partners:

Through **“Why Treaties Matter,”** MHC partners with dozens of organizations including: Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC), Red Lake Nation College, Lower Sioux Agency, Folwell Performing Arts Magnet School, Minneapolis Community & Technical College, Otter Tail County Historical Society, Blue Earth Community Historical Society, City of St. Cloud—Whitney Senior Center, Lower Phalen Creek Project, Century College, and East Side Freedom Library.

Testimonials:

“It was inspiring, thought provoking, challenging, insightful, and fun!” —Manuela Thames, “Why Treaties Matter” participant

“It’s a powerful learning tool that prompted many people to consider treaties as living documents that are relevant today—not just part of the history books.” —MacRostie Art Center, Host Site, Grand Rapids

“I believe that for our organization the exhibit, along with Martin Case’s presentations, was a turning point in how the Fur Trade will be interpreted here in the future. I also believe that the 6th grade teachers, across the curriculum, will include more Native American instruction and have gained additional knowledge of the impact and importance of treaties in our state.” —Melissa Hermes, Otter Tail County Historical Society, Host Site, Fergus Falls

“We had over 300 local educators come out to and get a day filled with cultural awareness, the energy was well respected for the Dakota people and the treaties.” —Georgina Drapeau, Lower Sioux Agency, Host Site, Morton

2018-2019 Tour and Events:

- **University of Minnesota, Twin Cities** (Sept. 2017) — Host site
- **Folwell Performing Arts Magnet School** (Oct. 2017) — Professional development workshop, Minneapolis
- **Folwell Performing Arts Magnet School** (Oct. 2017) — Host site, Minneapolis,
- **Host Site Retreat** (March 2018) — St. Paul
- **Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site** (July 2018) — Host site, Morton
- **Host Site Retreat** (Aug. 2018) — Red Lake
- **The Relentless Business of Treaties: Two Critical Perspectives** (Aug. 2018) — Red Lake. Author Martin Case spoke about his book, “The Relentless Business of Treaties” with scholar Dr. David Wilkins (University of Minnesota, American Indian Studies) about how indigenous land became property in the United States system and why the relationships and connections between treaty signers led to structures and systems still in place today.
- **Red Lake Nation College** (Aug. 2018) — Host site, Red Lake
- **The Relentless Business of Treaties: Two Critical Perspectives** (Sept. 2018) — St. Paul. Author Martin Case spoke about his book, “The Relentless Business of Treaties” with scholar Dr. David Wilkins (University of Minnesota, American Indian Studies) about how indigenous land became property in the United States system and why the relationships and connections between treaty signers led to structures and systems still in place today.
- **Otter Tail Historical Society** (Oct. 2018) — Host site, Fergus Falls
- **Minneapolis College** (Oct. 2018) — Host site, Minneapolis
- **Blue Earth County Historical Society** (Dec. 2018) — Host site, Mankato
- **Cass Lake-Bena Public Schools** (Dec. 2018) — Host site, Cass Lake
- **Whitney Senior Center** (Jan. 2019) — Host Site, St. Cloud

Upcoming 2019 Tour and Events:

- **Century College** (March 2019) — Host Site, White Bear Lake
- **East Site Freedom Library** (March 2019) — Host Site, St. Paul
- **Park Rapids Area Schools** (May 2019) — Host Site, Park Rapids

“**Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations**” is also now on permanent display in the 3rd floor public spaces at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul.

For more information:

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“Why Treaties Matter” title banner



Minnesota
Humanities
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2017 Annual Report

Welcome



Tumultuous as 2017 was, I affirm my faith in America and in its constant efforts to build democracy. At times, it seems that the foundations of our democratic effort are under attack: people and cultures demeaned, courts and judges are challenged, elections claimed as fraudulent. Yet the building of democracy goes on—because it must.

For our part here at the Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC), it is our mission “to build a thoughtful, literate, and engaged society.” We do this with people and cultures all over the state and beyond. We do it by delving deeply into challenges and concerns about which many of us care deeply and feel strongly. We draw upon all of the humanities, using literature, philosophy, theater, ethics, law, history – whatever is needed and helpful. We do it by asking questions, by creating and providing over 1,000 original resources that build understanding and broaden views.

Here are a few highlights of our work in 2017:

Last fall, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “The Sympathizer,” Viet Thanh Nguyen, joined MHC and St. Catherine University to explore the reality that war lives on in memory and in our souls. His book “Nothing Ever Dies” served as the foundation for the conversation. His was the first event in a discussion series with notable authors around war and memory that launched our new Community Conversations program.

Starting with a relationship with the Smithsonian Institution in 2016 and 2017, MHC convened multiple state partners and communities across the state in a multiyear project (*Water/Ways*) to examine their own understanding and stewardship of water. Communities included: Detroit Lakes, Sandstone, New London/Spicer, Red Wing, St. Peter, and Lanesboro. MHC and our partners have taken action to help build (in relationship with our Dakota and Ojibwe neighbors) a new, informed understanding of water; its uses, our values around it, and our responsibility to it and each other. In 2018 and 2019, “We Are

Water MN” (the local accompanying exhibit to *Water/Ways*) will travel the state in eight new host communities.

The war in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, known often as the Vietnam War, was a turning point and a crisis. It was 50 years ago. We still don’t understand it fully, but it affects us every day. In 2017, we convened Vietnam Veterans, Veterans from the Allied Forces (the special guerrilla units that we recruited from Laos and Cambodia and Vietnam to fight on behalf of the United States), and others impacted by the war in Vietnam and Southeast Asia to help build programming that amplifies the absented stories of that conflict. In 2018 and 2019, in partnership with Twin Cities PBS (TPT) and six host communities, there will be Minnesota Remembers Vietnam conversations held across the state where the voices and experiences of these people can be heard.

MHC’s award-winning exhibit, “Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations” is now on permanent display at the Minnesota State Capitol. The exhibit (a partnership with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council) explores relationships between Dakota and Ojibwe Indian Nations and the U.S. government in this place we now call Minnesota. It is a significant piece of Minnesota history and governance that we are honored to have helped bring to such an important space.

2017 was a year of building relationships, learning from and with community, and new ventures for MHC. We look forward to continuing to build a thoughtful, literate, engaged society in 2018 and beyond. We invite you to join us in that effort, and we thank you for your support.

David O'Fallon, PhD
President & CEO

\$2M

awarded in
26 grants

557

resources
distributed

9,644

Event Center guests
at 347 events

109

total MHC events

21,501

Participants in our programs, events, and exhibits:

1,553

52 events



K-12 Education

1,005

23 events



Veterans'
Voices

10,311

19 events + 5 tours



We Are
Water MN

411

6 events



Community
Conversations

8,221

4 tours



Why Treaties
Matter

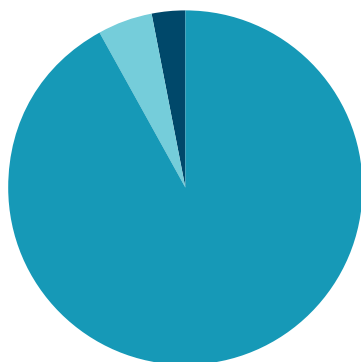
City Academy
Collegeville Institute
Education Minnesota
University of Minnesota
CommonBond Communities
Gillette Children's Specialty Care
Sheltering Arms Foundation
Fairview Medical Group
Penny George Institute
and more!

Ka Joog
Somali Museum
MN Children's Museums
Veterans Defense Project
St. Paul Federation of Teachers
North Junior High School
Anishinabe Academy
and more!

By the Numbers

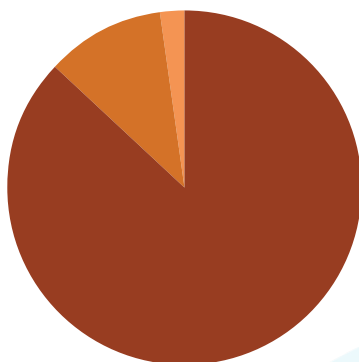
This report reflects our 2017 fiscal year:
November 1, 2016 – October 31, 2017

Support & Revenue



■ **Government Grants:** 92%
■ **Earned & Other Revenue:** 5%
■ **Contributions:** 3%

Expenses



■ **Program Services:** 87%
■ **MGMT & General:** 11%
■ **Fundraising:** 2%

Support & Revenue

Contributions	\$231,539
Government Grants	\$7,992,423
Earned & Other Revenue	\$402,559

Total Support & Revenue **\$8,626,521**

Expenses

Program Services	\$6,611,924
Management & General	\$798,432
Fundraising	\$188,439

Total Expenses **\$7,598,795**

Net Income from Operations

\$1,027,726

Programs

K–12 Education

by Sung Ja Shin & Eden Bart, Program Officers

One educator at a time leads to transformed school culture and systemic change. In 2017, MHC held the third annual Educator Institute, an intensive weeklong experience that led 40 educators to deeply examine their practices and take action to increase student engagement. They joined a network of 120 educators who completed this program and are leading relationship-based educational change throughout the state. As a direct follow up, many of these educators invited MHC into their communities—including Winona, St. Cloud, Moorhead, and Osseo—to provide additional resources and training.

MHC supports educators throughout the state to integrate stories that are typically missing into their classrooms through foundational workshops like Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives and Learning from Place: Bdote, as well as the Absent Narratives Resource Collection. Through 52 presentations, conferences, and workshops, over 1,550 educators learned how to bring these resources into their classrooms.



Veterans' Voices

by Blake Rondeau, Program Officer

Veterans' Voices programming had an exciting year of change and collaboration in 2017. A key feature of this year's work was a partnership with Twin Cities PBS (TPT) surrounding the war in Vietnam and Southeast Asia and the epic documentary from Ken Burns and Lynn Novick "The Vietnam War." This work kicked off with a series of four community listening sessions that shaped the direction of our Minnesota Remembers Vietnam work with TPT, and culminated in grants to six community organizations around the state to support dialogue and understanding around a complex, traumatic part of our shared history.

This year also brought exciting growth and new connections to our Veterans' Voices network thanks to 21 new recipients of the Veterans' Voices Award, 11 participants in our storytelling training, and 15 new Echoes of War discussion leaders.



Community Conversations

by Kirk MacKinnon Morrow, Program Officer

Community Conversations programming experienced a year of growth and development in 2017. From our Common Place events in partnership with Sweet Potato Comfort Pie to the launch of our War and Memory dialogue series, this was a time of new activities, new audiences, and new connections!

One highlight of a busy year came in September when we hosted An Evening with Viet Thanh Nguyen with St. Catherine University as the first installment of our War and Memory series. This event drew 300 people to the campus of St. Kate's to hear Minnesota's own Kao Kalia Yang in dialogue with Nguyen, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, "The Sympathizer." The event touched on topics of war, justice, and collective memory. MHC's Community Conversations programming will draw on the lessons learned and connections made in 2017 as we chart the course for the future.



We Are Water MN

by Jennifer Tonko, Program Officer

In 2017, we completed the last half of the *Water/Ways* and "We Are Water MN" tour, with stops in Red Wing, Sandstone, Lanesboro, and Detroit Lakes. Each of these communities hosted the exhibitions in their own way, creating complementary exhibits, engaging students and children, and bringing together local artists, scientists, academics and educators, public servants, and the business community.

These communities examined how water influences the culture, history, and economy of the places where they live and work. Over the summer, we spent a lot of time on the road, finding new host communities to partner with, and in the fall, we were able to bring them together in St. Paul to begin work with our new cohort of communities: Minneapolis/St. Paul, Bemidji, Crookston, Fond du Lac/Duluth, Austin, Northfield, Grand Rapids, and Mille Lacs/Onamia.



Event Center

by Nicole McMahon, Event Center Director

We had a great 2017 in the Event Center, hosting hundreds of events and introducing thousands of people to MHC! Over 9,000 people visited our center throughout the year hosting a variety of events including healing retreats, art of hosting trainings, strategic planning retreats, school graduations, board retreats, and weddings.

The MHC program staff had the chance to partner with multiple Event Center clients to bring our educational programs to their organizations while meeting here. Event Center staff have worked hard to ensure everyone who walks through our doors is welcomed to our center and has a great experience. We look forward to another successful year.



More Than Just an Exhibit

Annamarie Gutsch

“Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nation” is a nationally recognized, award-winning, traveling exhibit made in partnership with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. This exhibit explores relationships between Dakota and Ojibwe Indian Nations and the U.S. government in this place we now call Minnesota, focusing on, how treaties affected the lands and lifeways of the indigenous peoples of this place, and why these binding agreements between nations still matter today.

Within our time to create, there always seemed to be an even more profound time to silently reflect and think – time to stretch our minds beyond why we were creating a project with ongoing deep reflection to envision exactly what we were trying to portray to our audience. What was our goal? We wanted to change Minnesota’s dismal understanding of our American Indian communities and create a hunger to learn more while perhaps creating new relationships in a way never accomplished before. With this goal in mind, the greatest collaboration I’ve ever participated in—the “Why Treaties Matter” exhibit—was born.

From start to the finish, the “Why Treaties Matter” collaboration and exhibit run, several members of the development team—consisting of me and a core group of outstanding Humanities Center program directors and administrators—spent endless hours of vision-building time together. Time spent sitting around a table, coffee or some beverage and snacks nearby, papers strewn about, where we pondered the simplest or the most complex ideas or thoughts, or just ripped apart raw details in an agenda for an upcoming program. This was far more than just your everyday nine-to-five working group. It was a group on a mission; a mission that we often proclaimed was “to change the world.” This team of inspiring leaders seemed the perfect group of individuals whose eyes, when mixed together, could see far beyond what most people are capable of envisioning. And as we gathered, it became clear to me that this magnetic force drawing our visions together was truly one that would lead to great success.

The “Why Treaties Matter” exhibit success wasn’t due to any one person’s academic or intellectual abilities or because we

From start to the finish...several members of the development team—consisting of me and a core group of outstanding Humanities Center program directors and administrators—spent endless hours of vision-building time together.

were equipped with greater administrative capacity or even money to turn out such a successful exhibit and programming. It was truly a recipe with healthy doses of eager world changers coming together to contribute their collective knowledge and stories. Most importantly, we were not necessarily the masters of the knowledge but more like the gatherers of it. The true master creators and voices of this project were the cultural leaders, elders, and community members who led this initiative. They came together with us, to sit around the table and helped create a tangible, truth-filled exhibit that has successfully moved towards changing how treaties and the history around them are viewed by both native and non-native people.

The “Why Treaties Matter” exhibit has touched over 84,000 lives since 2011. For an exhibit that existed well beyond its imagined time to tour various venues across Minnesota for six total years, that’s some spectacular record. What is even more profound is that out of the countless pairs of eyes and minds that gathered information from this rich visual and personal learning experience, most had likely never seen or heard any of this before. Although we knew this was the case, the responses were still overwhelming to us. Email after email proclaimed, “Why haven’t I heard this history before?” Think about that. The real history and story of the lives of our American Indian/ indigenous people to this land and most people have never heard anything of it before. This is why we so steadfastly held to our claim that we would “change the world.” As we embark on the seventh year of this remarkable journey, I like to think in a small but profound way that we did. ♦

Annamarie Gutsch is the former Executive Director of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, and a Government Relations Director for the Red Lake Nation. She has also worked for the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, for Veterans Affairs, and at the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. Annamarie serves on the Minnesota Humanities Center’s Board of Directors and was instrumental in creating the traveling exhibit Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nation.

Veterans' Voices Found

Dr. Bradley Sidle

Hush.

Stop talking.

I'm not interested.

Talk to the hand.

And so it is, when our voices are silenced, our stories cut short, our contribution squashed.

The Minnesota Humanities Center offers a course, the Veterans' Voices Workshop for Educators, which I was honored and pleased to take, on giving place to a too often neglected voice—namely, the voice of the Veteran. We in the social studies discipline study wars and war plans; we count the number of fatalities and clearly communicate the final outcomes of the battles waged on the field. But the voices of the Veterans we too often overlook.

Our class was held at Camp Ripley in central Minnesota. I have driven past this area many times, and had no idea of the vast resource for military training here in my backyard. I checked in at the gate with the slightest twinge of fear and trepidation. I certainly did not know quite what to expect. My first real inclination that I was in a different world was when we came out of our first plenary and went to the dining hall. Everywhere were uniforms and insignia that I did not understand and could not interpret. The Veterans in our group were quite familiar; and told me that though I felt like a thousand eyes were on these non-uniformed civilians, I was underestimating the truth! Many eyes were on us, but it turned out the vast majority were friendly eyes. Many conversations took place with women and men on active or reserve duty, and the narratives that had long been absent were already being spoken in a sense of honesty and frankness that I greatly appreciated.

We toured the facilities of Camp Ripley, and the Veterans in our midst were quite entertaining as they told of their own experiences at camp and in service. I rather expected a monolithic sharing of the same old, same old. I think my first major learning was that there is not one Veteran's voice, but a wide variety of Veterans' voices. I certainly knew that multiple sources and multiple attestations of a narrative give that

I left the professional development with a profoundly greater appreciation for the sacrifices and accomplishments of all who engaged in military service.

narrative verifiability, but I also learned with new confidence that no voice accounts for all voices. Hearing the highly individualized and significant narratives of a wide variety of Veterans brought a vitality and personal representation to the truth.

The plenaries themselves were filled with extraordinary bursts of insight. I will never forget the passion in the story of an officer speaking about the Minnesota First in the battle of Gettysburg. I wanted to thank him for what felt like his personal presence at the battle! We were all visibly moved. The resources I received from the experience were also tremendously valuable and immediately applicable when teaching about the behind-the-scenes experiences of war. The extraordinary resource, *Standing Down: From Warrior to Civilian* by Donald H. Whitfield, ed., contained short readings I could use to examine a wide range of reporting on the Veterans' experience. Each reading contains a brief introduction and discussion questions that provided ample material for use in my seventh grade classroom. Interestingly, the History Theater in St. Paul recently staged a show, "The Things They Carried," which is represented in this anthology with a nice excerpt.

I left the professional development with a profoundly greater appreciation for the sacrifices and accomplishments of all who engaged in military service. On a more personal note, it also gave me the opportunity to talk to my 100-year-old father about his service in World War II and hear his response to the lectures I heard and the articles I had read. This was a tremendous workshop offered by the Humanities Center, and I encourage anyone who is able to take part in the Veterans' Voices Workshop for Educators. I am confident in stating that no one will leave without their professional and personal sensitivities engaged and enlarged. ♦

Dr. Bradley Sidle teaches 7th Grade U. S. Studies at Folwell School (Performing Arts Magnet) in Minneapolis, MN. The student body at Folwell is urban, diverse, and committed to learning in and through the arts.

An Evening with Viet Thanh Nguyen

Anh-Hoa Thi Nguyen



Bearing witness to the conversation between Viet Thanh Nguyen and Kao Kalia Yang hosted by MHC, I felt the rare experience of being reflected as a Vietnamese refugee and immigrant, an Asian woman, a poet, artist, scholar, activist, and human.

What does it feel like to be invisible? What does it mean to be heard? How does one exist if their experiences are never accounted for? How do we break the cycle of violence towards people that structures of power refuse to see?

I came to Minnesota in July of 1975 as a baby, a war refugee with only my immediate family, in a US government-issued white onesie. I grew up in St. Paul isolated, without any other Vietnamese families in my neighborhood. My six older siblings and I made up the Vietnamese population at school. Although my father spoke a little English and my mother only Vietnamese, English was the language I spoke with my siblings at home. My parents had neither the emotional capacity nor the vocabulary to tell me about “the War” that we fled from, leaving all of our extended family, belongings, and history behind.

Growing up, no one else seemed to want to talk about the Vietnam War. None of the kids in class knew what it was, and it was never taught in school. As I got older, I couldn’t shake this haunting need to learn more about the war in order to understand my parents and my own identity and history as a Vietnamese person. I didn’t realize it then, but the tools I used to unearth this past were the tools of the humanities. I sought out Vietnam history books and Vietnamese/Vietnamese American literature, war documentaries and Vietnamese art and artists. I travelled to Vietnam to visit the “American” war museums and to see and touch the land that instantly felt like home. And, standing in the swirling sea of Saigon traffic, I felt, for the first time in my life, as if I were whole.

Bearing witness to the conversation between Viet Thanh Nguyen and Kao Kalia Yang hosted by MHC, I felt the rare

experience of being reflected as a Vietnamese refugee and immigrant, an Asian woman, a poet, artist, scholar, activist, and human. Both Viet and Kao Kalia spoke to the heart of those that feel invisible, sharing with a captivated audience their thoughts and theories about the complexity of constructed memories, cultural and economic complicity in war, the need to confront one’s own capacity to be inhumane in order to prevent future harm, and the role of the artist/writer to create change. They gave validity to ghosts and civilians, and voice and value to the unseen, the unheard and the forgotten. Viet and Kao Kalia generously shared their gifts of genius with vulnerability, courage, and tremendous vision.

In gratitude for their words and wisdom, I no longer feel alone. ♦

Anh-Hoa Thi Nguyen is a poet, community artist, activist and educator. She was born in Saigon, Vietnam and grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Mills College in Oakland, California where she was awarded the Mary Merrit Henry Prize in Poetry and the Ardella Mills Literary Composition Prize in Creative Non-Fiction. She is the founder of Pomelo Press, completed a residency at Hedgebrook, a Voices of Our Nation Arts Foundation (VONA) alumna, Elizabeth George Foundation Fellow, and a Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant Winner.

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Voices

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“To believe in the power of the humanities is simply to believe in the power of education. The study of history, of languages, of cultures, of civilizations, of the human impulses to make art and literature, to organize ethical lives, to fashion ways of seeing and believing that are rooted in fundamental values...

These enterprises are called the humanities because they are what makes us human, what makes us creatures of principle rather than circumstance, of honor rather than expedience, of foresight rather than accident and happenstance.”

—1991 Minnesota House Testimony on behalf of MHC

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*Building a thoughtful, literate,
and engaged society.*

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Professional Development

2019 Educator Institute

June 16–21, 2019



The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC) is now accepting applications for our 2019 Educator Institute. If you are passionate about bringing real change in student engagement and achievement to your learning community and are looking for an innovative approach to education reform—we encourage you to apply! Let's transform education in Minnesota together.

This week-long institute immerses participants in MHC's proven approach to increase student engagement through absent narratives, and incorporates instruction and field experiences taught by a host of diverse community members and instructors. Plus, it's really fun!

Apply by Thursday, March 14

- Access to absent narratives resources, materials, and experienced content leads
- A field trip examining Dakota narratives in Minnesota
- All meals provided
- Lodging available for those outside the Metro area
- Certificate for 45 clock hours

Learn more and apply: mnhum.org/institute



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Upcoming Events



“We Are Water MN”

Crookston, Keihle Rotunda, U of M Crookston
Jan. 21 – March 4, 2019

Explore how water plays into greater Minnesota communities, from travel and pollution to identity, history, and cultural relationships.

Duluth, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
March 10 – April 22, 2019

“Why Treaties Matter”

Mankato, Blue Earth Co. Historical Society
Dec. 3 – March 10, 2019

Examine the treaties between Dakota and Ojibwe people and the U.S. government. Learn how treaties affected the land and lives of indigenous peoples, and why these binding agreements still matter today.

St. Cloud, Whitney Senior Center
Jan. 28 – March 10, 2019

*Permanent display in State Capitol Building, 3rd Floor



Truth & Transformation

Changing Racial Narratives in Media

St. Paul, Hamline University
Tuesday–Wednesday, March 19–20, 2019
Free Conference

This statewide conference is aimed at helping news professionals uncover their own biases and assumptions, and amplifying community solutions to narrative change.

Increase Engagement Through Absent Narratives

St. Paul, Minnesota Humanities Center
Wednesday, May 8, 2019 \$90, 8 clock hours

Perfect for educators and community leaders, this workshop reveals our approach to engaging through *absent narratives*—voices often left out or marginalized. Learn strategies to engage across race and cultural experiences.

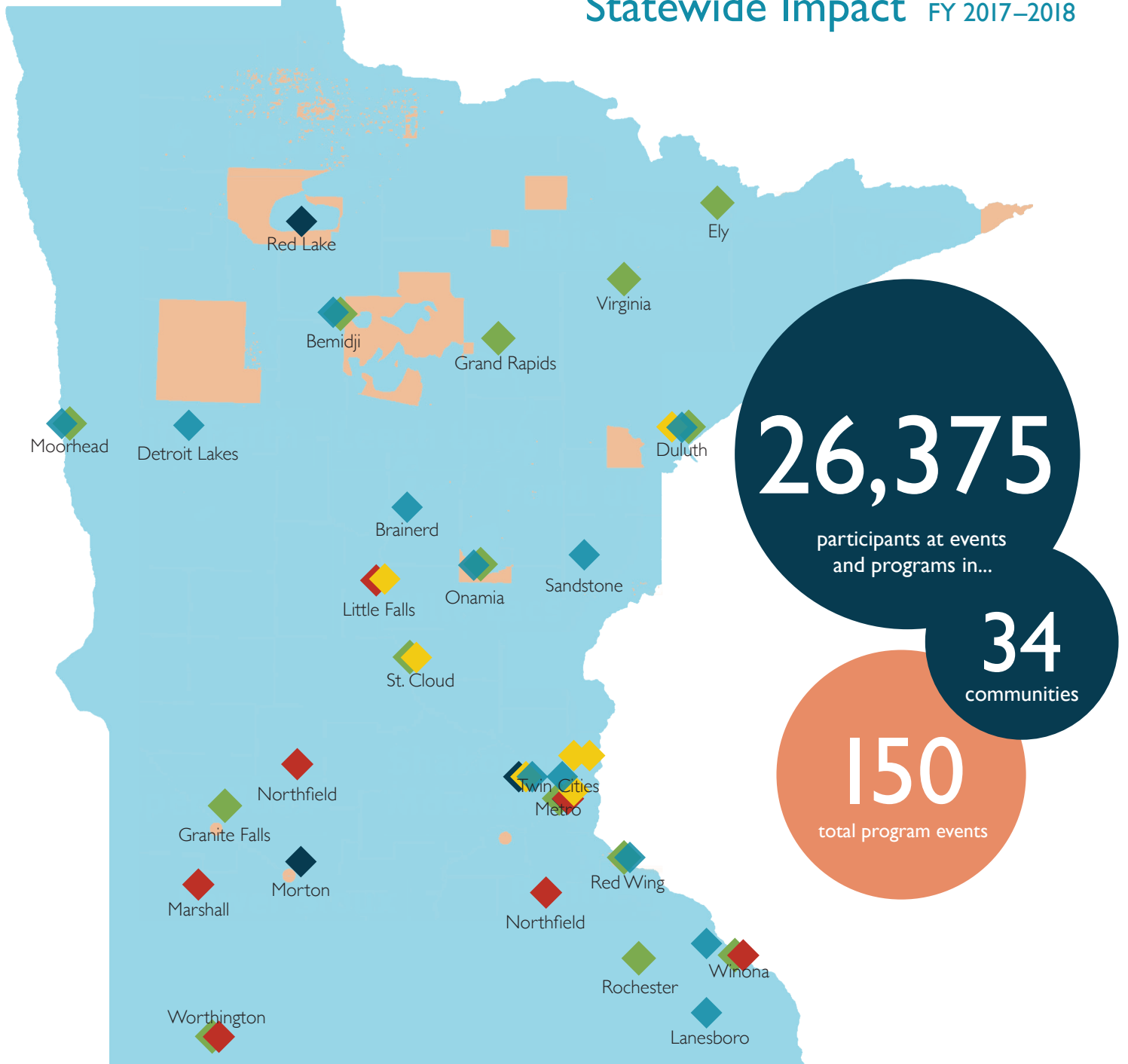


RSVP + more:

mnhum.org

Minnesota Humanities Center

Statewide Impact FY 2017–2018



- ◆ Veterans' Voices Event
- ◆ "Why Treaties Matter" Exhibit Site
- ◆ "We Are Water MN" Exhibit Site/Event
- ◆ K-12 Education Event
- ◆ Public Humanities Event



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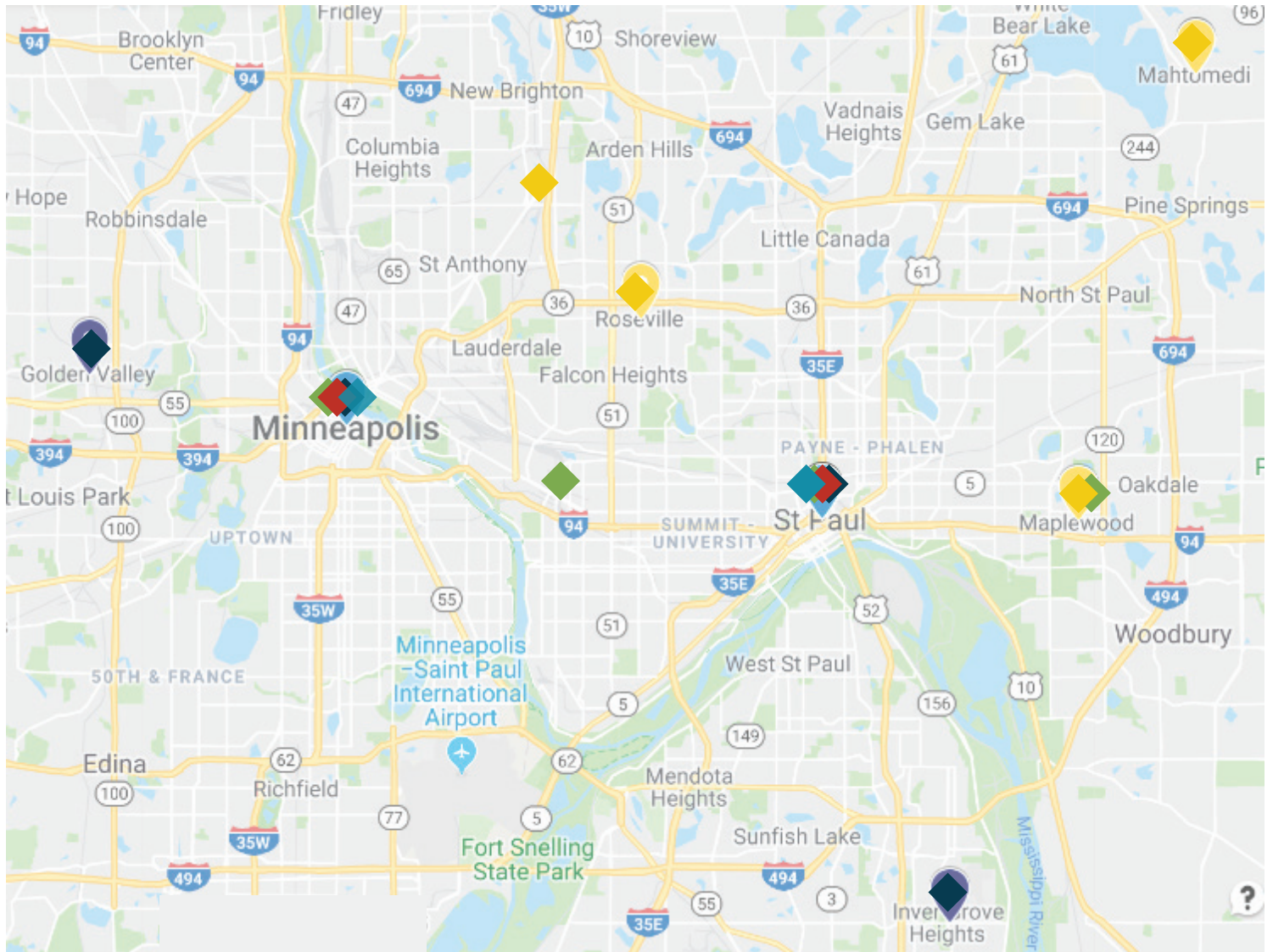


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Minnesota Humanities Center

Twin Cities Metro Impact FY 2017–2018



◆ Veterans' Voices Event

◆ "Why Treaties Matter" Exhibit Site

◆ "We Are Water MN" Exhibit Site/Event

◆ K-12 Education Event

◆ Public Humanities Event



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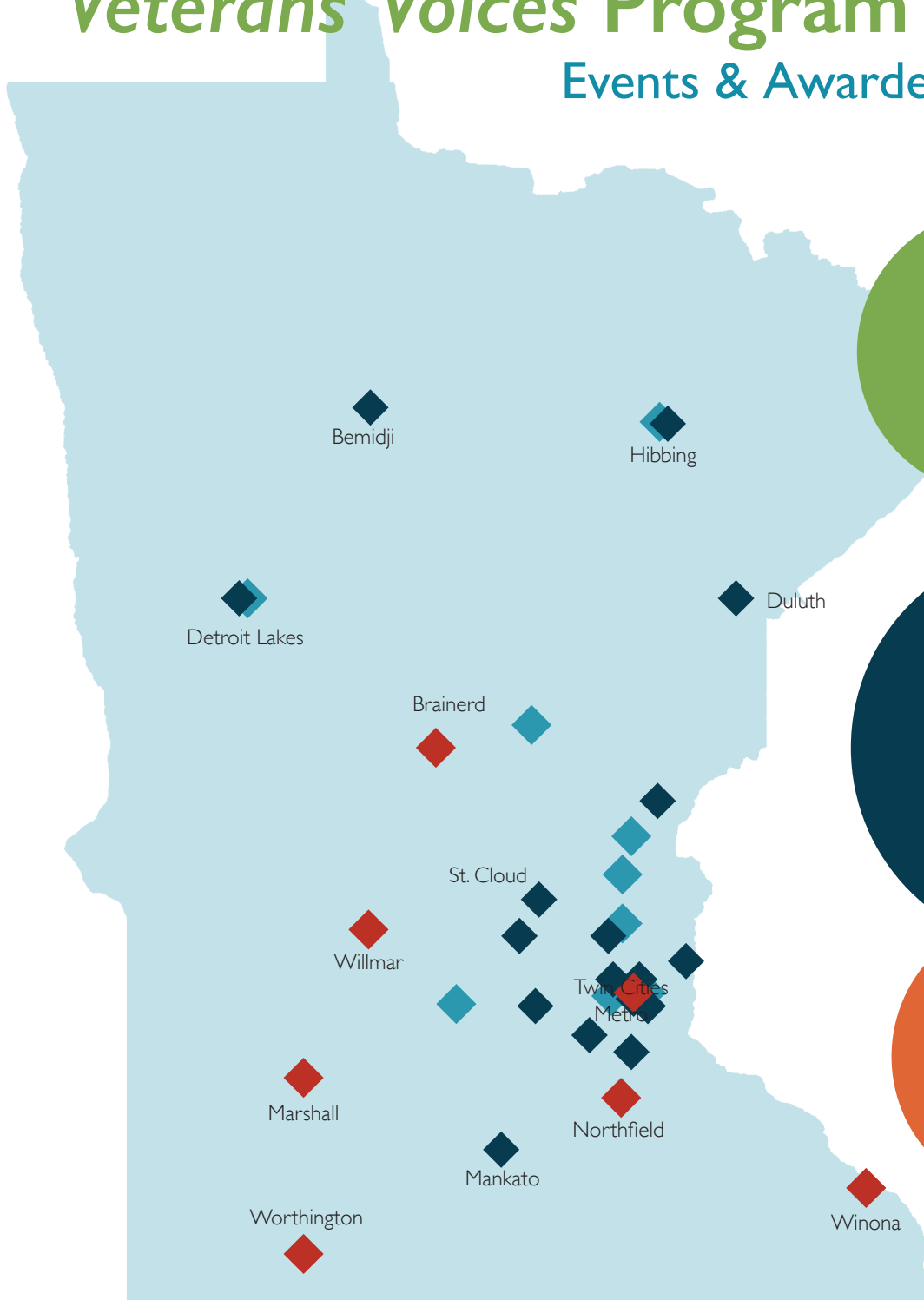


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Veterans' Voices Program Impact

Events & Awardees FY 2017–2018



37

events held in...

7

communities.

More than

1,349




people attended events.

141

Veterans awarded from...

74

communities since 2013.

-  Veterans' Voices Event
-  2017 Veterans' Voices Awardee
-  2018 Veterans' Voices Awardee



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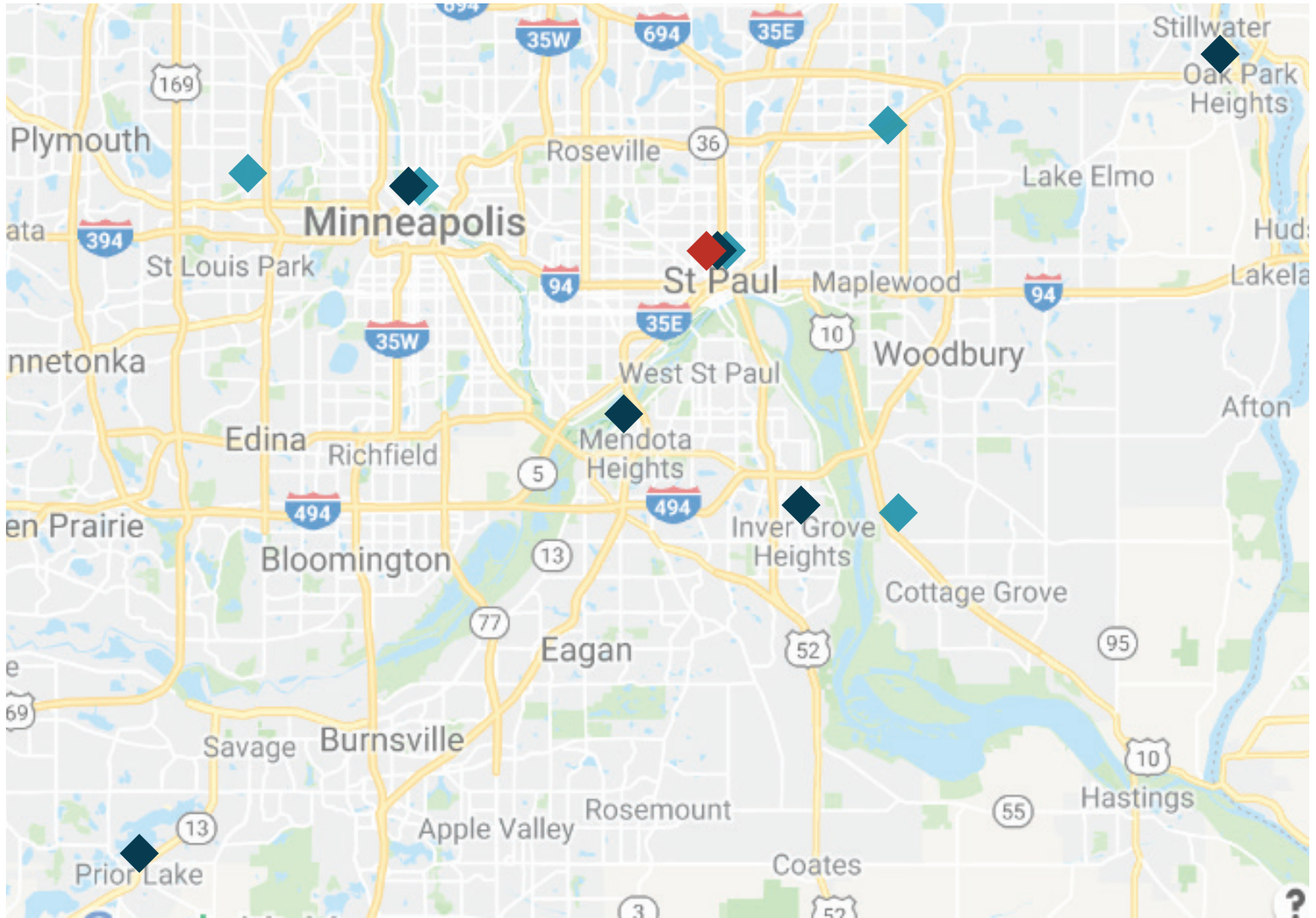


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Veterans' Voices Impact: Twin Cities Metro

Events & Awardees FY 2017–2018



- ◆ Veterans' Voices Event
- ◆ 2017 Veterans' Voices Awardee
- ◆ 2018 Veterans' Voices Awardee



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Impact

from 2017–2018...

26,375

people attended our programs,
events, and exhibits across...

34

MN communities.

150

total program events

Event Center

Our full-service event center is an important complement to our work, reinforcing the Humanities Center as a place where people gather, strengthen connections, and participate in meaningful dialogue.

Book your event today! 651-774-0105



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Building a thoughtful, literate,
and engaged society.

About Us

In a polarized, divided, and overwhelming time, we bring people together through storytelling, history, philosophy, culture, civics, literature—showing what it means to be human.

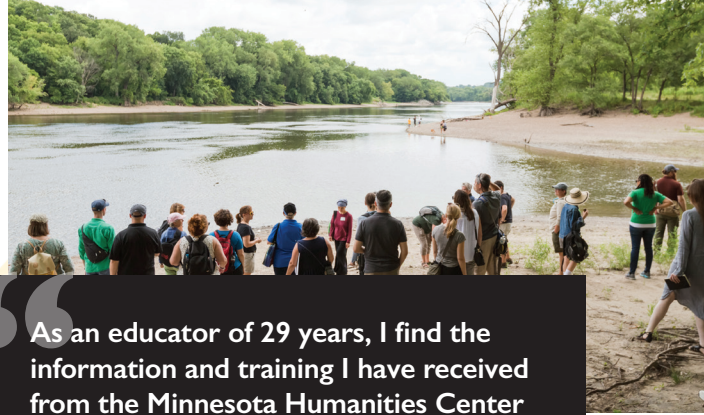
The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC) is a statewide nonprofit and full-service event center located in St. Paul. We collaborate with organizations and people through education, partnerships, and public programs to inspire community conversations, forge deep connections, and amplify authentic, diverse voices across the state—especially those left out, marginalized, or otherwise absent from our education and public awareness.

You and your fellow Minnesotans can experience the Humanities Center's work through:

- Workshops, programs, lectures, discussion forums, traveling exhibits, resources, field trips, and retreats
- Professional development for educators and community leaders
- An Event Center that convenes communities to share their stories, build and strengthen relationships, cross barriers, and collaborate in new ways
- Print, video, digital, and multimedia resources for educators and communities organized and accessible through an extensive database

The arts and humanities teach us who we are and what we can be. They lie at the very core of the culture of which we're a part.

— Ronald Reagan



As an educator of 29 years, I find the information and training I have received from the Minnesota Humanities Center priceless...The awareness of all the rich history in the different cultures has only increased the richness of my curriculum.



The Minnesota Humanities Center touched my life and gave me the wings that I needed to fly...The Veterans' Voices Award opened opportunities for me as a Veteran and gave me solid ground to pursue my dreams.



Programs

Our approach to humanities programming illuminates the authentic voices of all people, especially those left out or marginalized.

K–12 Education continues our foundational education legacy through workshops, online learning, and experiences that examine the manifold cultures alive across Minnesota.

Veterans' Voices works to address the military/civilian divide and create empathy around the experiences of Veterans through storytelling, workshops, recognition, and more.

We Are Water MN is a traveling exhibit and partnership between the sciences and humanities examining the practical, spiritual, cultural, and environmental roles of water in our lives.

Native Nations of Minnesota and our relationship with them exemplify our deep and meaningful relationship to place. We learn from Dakota and Ojibwe people through stories of this land and its first peoples.

Community Conversations are public events for all Minnesotans who are interested in learning from and with Minnesota's diverse communities and voices and in exploring how the humanities can be a bridge between what divides and unites us.

Resources

Developed with community organizations across the state, we offer over 1,000 curated educator resources that reflect the experiences, cultures, and perspectives of today's diverse student body.

mnhum.org/resources

Created in 2013, this program completes Veteran narratives, drawing on the power of the humanities to honor their contributions and life experiences. More than 381,000 Veterans reside in Minnesota—we amplify these Veterans, speaking through the arts, discussions, and the Veterans' Voices Award.



A 2014 state law, which passed the Minnesota legislature with unanimous support, designates October as **Veterans' Voices Month**. Minnesota is the first state to designate an entire month to Veterans and their experiences. Veterans' Voices Month builds understanding about what being a Veteran means and explores the unique culture of Veterans.

mnhum.org/vets

Questions?

Blake Rondeau

Veterans' Voices Program Officer
651-772-4248, blake@mnhum.org



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CLEAN
WATER
LAND &
LEGACY
AMENDMENT

Veterans' Voices

*Amplifying the experiences and
contributions of Veterans.*



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Minnesota Humanities Center

The Minnesota Humanities Center is a nonprofit that collaborates with organizations and individuals to inspire community conversations, forge deep connections, and illuminate authentic, diverse voices across Minnesota, especially those that are left out or marginalized.

Since 1971, hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans have participated in Humanities Center activities, including community conversations, workshops, lectures, traveling exhibitions, oral histories, radio shows, television specials, documentary films, and more. In the last five years, the Humanities Center has distributed over \$750,000 in pass-through grants to support organizations and individuals statewide.

mnhum.org

The humanities are my battle buddy.

Ryan 'Schmitt' Schmidt
Sergeant, US Army, Sniper



The Minnesota Humanities Center touched my life and gave me the wings that I needed to fly...The Veterans' Voices Award opened opportunities for me as a Veteran and gave me solid ground to pursue my dreams.

Mohammad Zafar, USMC Veteran



Themes

Veterans' Voices activities are guided by eight themes, identified by participating Veterans:

Family

Service

Motivation

Transformation

Perception

Combat & Non-Combat

Reintegration

Duty

Sharing our stories and working with the next generation of Veterans is both a continuation of our service and a moral obligation.

Nick Swaggert, USMCR

Award

The annual Veterans' Voices Award recognizes Minnesota Veterans who have honorably served and are making extraordinary contributions to their communities. These actively engaged, former and current military service members go above and beyond to make significant, positive contributions that improve the lives of people across Minnesota.



the project

Why Treaties Matter began when the partnership of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian was approved by tribes residing in Minnesota.

The exhibit was created through a community-based approach. Since its inception, the knowledge, insight, and perspective of tribal members have been the exhibit's foundation.

From this foundation emerged a vehicle for authentic Dakota and Ojibwe voices upon which these communities tell their own stories of sovereignty, adaptability, and sustainability.



This is a such a wonderful exhibit for non-Native Americans to be exposed to the Native American's history, cultural values of the land/its people and relationship Mother Earth, and why treaties matter in today's American society.

—Brian Xiong, Chief Diversity Officer,
Minnesota State Community & Technical College

For many visitors, both American Indian and those from other backgrounds, *Why Treaties Matter* was their first entry point into beginning to learn about the history of treaties in Minnesota.

—Native American Community Development Institute, Minneapolis

I learned a lot about the Dakota and Ojibwe's past and how they were impacted by the settlers coming here, not just how the settlers were impacted by them. I also learned about Dakota and Ojibwe people's traditions and culture, and how they interpret the world.

—9th grade student, Eden Prairie High School, Eden Prairie

did you know?

What is a treaty?

Treaties are agreements between self-governing, or sovereign, nations. Native Nations existed long before the formation of the United States. European powers recognized the sovereign status of Native Nations when they made treaties with us, as did the United States. Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Chairman Kevin Leecy, Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe,
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council Chairman

I don't understand why American Indians have rights different from anyone else. Do treaties grant "special rights"?

Treaties, affirmed in courts, have not given, but retained for native people the right to hunt, fish, and gather as they have for hundreds of years. These rights are often called usufructuary rights, which is just a legal term for the right to use something.

You can sell a piece of land, but retain the right to use the dock. You can have an easement put in place where two neighbors share the same driveway. This concept was written right into the treaties between native tribes and the U.S. government.

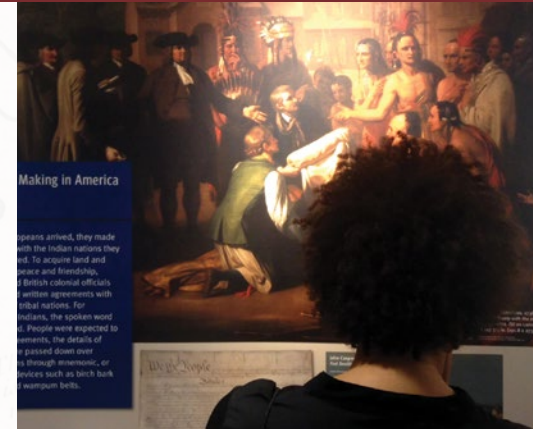
Dr. Anton Treuer, Professor of Ojibwe,
Bemidji State University

What's the benefit of learning about these treaties?

The history of American Indian treaties is the history of all Minnesotans and all Americans. Even now, states, Native Nations, and the federal government continue to engage on a government-to-government basis every day, making in effect new treaties, building upon those made many years ago.

We cannot have a complete understanding of what it means to be Americans without knowing about these relationships, whether we are Native Americans or not.

Kevin Gover, Director, Smithsonian's
National Museum of the American Indian



How are treaties exercised now?

For Native Americans, treaties stipulate the basis upon which their sovereignty rests. The right of their tribes to have their own governments is very much tied up in treaties that define their lands and their history of interactions with the U.S. government.

Dr. Anton Treuer, Professor of Ojibwe,
Bemidji State University

Indians were already given reservations, and all this occurred a long time ago. Why are you still talking about this?

This is a misunderstanding. The Dakotas [and Ojibwe] were not given anything. I always try to explain it like this: What do you do when you want to save a room at a hotel? You make a reservation for it and it's reserved for yourself.

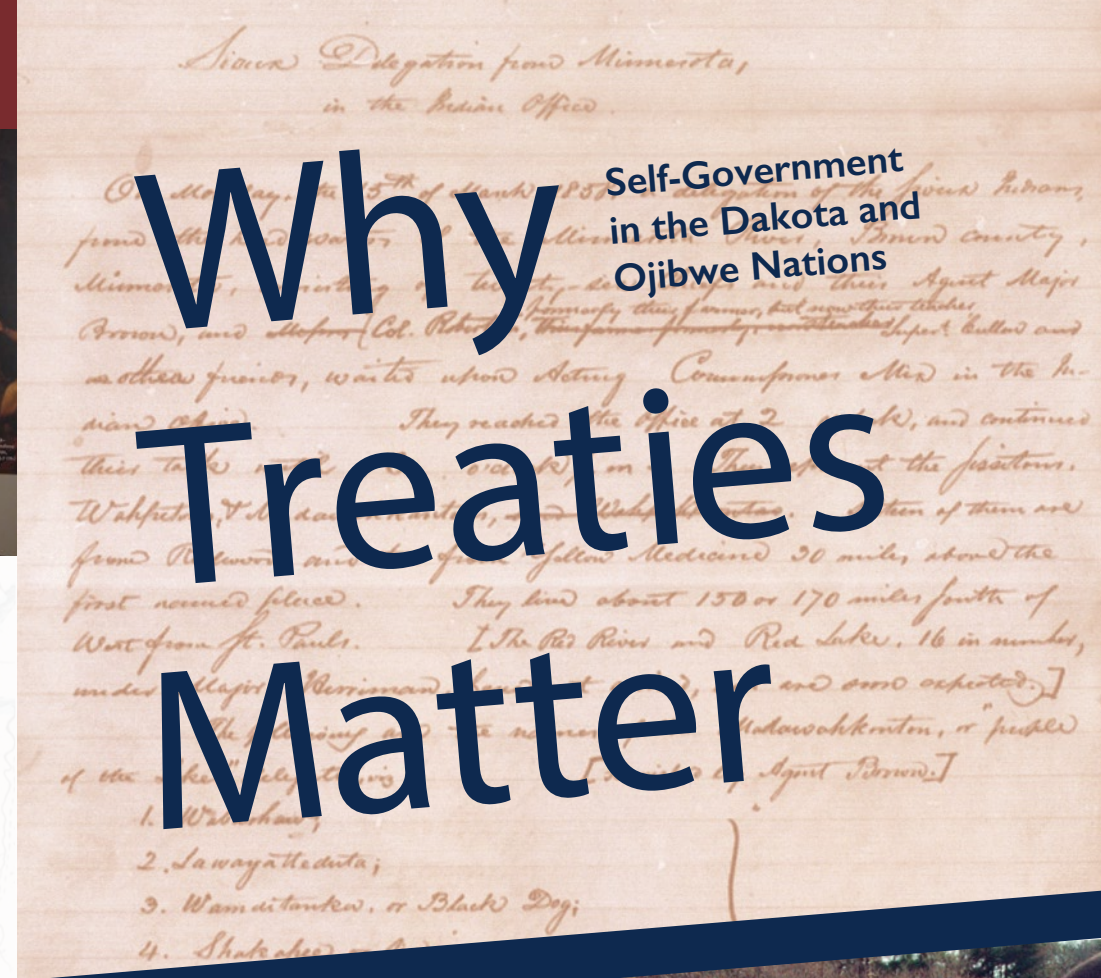
Well, the Dakota did that in the treaty-making process. They were able to reserve some portions of land for themselves, albeit probably not the best for their existence, but it was still reserved by the Dakotas for that purpose.

It was never given. How could the U.S. government give something that they did not own to a people that was already giving up so much? Reservations weren't given to Indian people. They were reserved by Indian peoples for themselves.

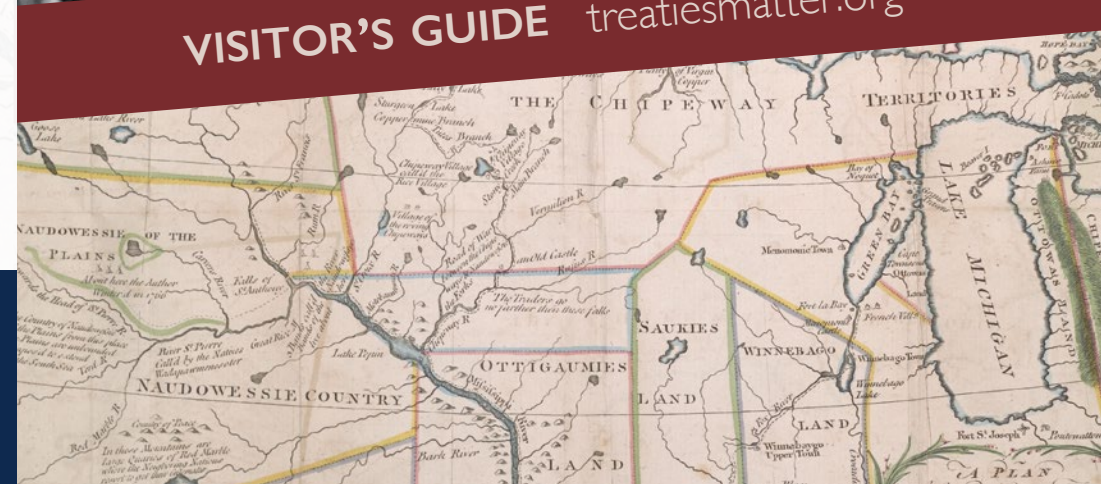
Dallas Ross, Upper Sioux Community

Why Treaties Matter

Self-Government
in the Dakota and
Ojibwe Nations



VISITOR'S GUIDE treatiesmatter.org



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Our sovereignty is not something that anyone gave to us, or can take away. It is inherent: something Indian tribes have by virtue of the fact that we existed long before there were places called the United States or Minnesota.

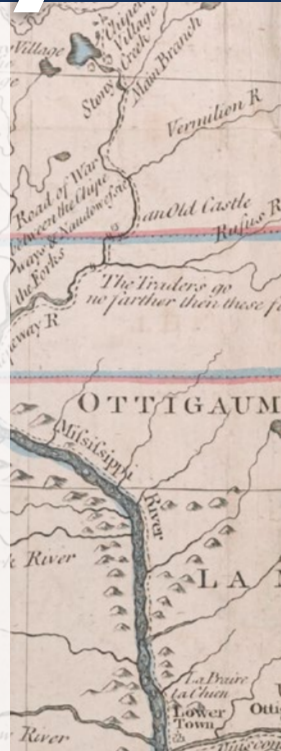
—Chairman Kevin Leecy,
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa

sovereignty

In making treaties, Dakota and Ojibwe operated as independent, sovereign nations, recognized by the Constitution. Their *sovereignty*—the ability to make their own rules, determine their own membership, maintain their own territory—existed prior to the U.S. and remains today.

Even in treaties that ceded land to the U.S., Dakota and Ojibwe often kept rights to minerals, timber, and land use. These rights were not given—they were *retained* by sovereign nations. These treaties are still in effect.

Today, treaty rights are exercised by 11 tribal governments within Minnesota, led by chairs equivalent to state governors. Their sovereignty arises from beyond the U.S. system. It arises from the sense of connection to the land and people that defines and sustains Dakota and Ojibwe nations.



Treaties affirm the sovereignty of American Indian nations, enabling tribal governments to maintain a nation-to-nation relationship with the U.S. government.

treaties

The treaties by which Dakota and Ojibwe ceded—and retained—rights to land and resources are vital to Minnesota history. Peace and trade treaties were also signed among the U.S., Ojibwe, and Dakota. These treaties represent the hard choices tribes were forced to make between resistance and accommodation.

Insisting that land was just a thing to be bought, sold, and owned, these treaties offered American Indians a narrow range of options: move, assimilate, or perish. This rendered Dakota and Ojibwe, and their relationship to land, invisible.



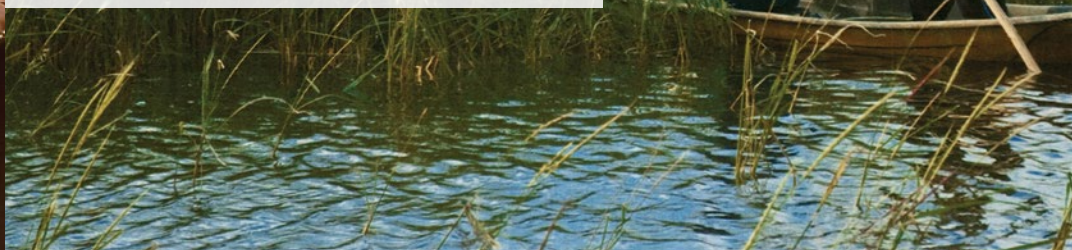
Tribal nations' trauma for survival is often dismissed in public discourse and classrooms.

land

Land-focused treaties were about more than who owns what: the issue at stake was *how people relate to land*.

In U.S. systems, progress is dictated by ownership and economic gain. Land is real estate, measured in lots and acres.

Ojibwe and Dakota systems are rooted in the recognition of human beings as participants in—rather than owners of—the natural world, with progress dictated by sustainability and adaptability.



tribal nations

Two distinct tribes exist in this place now called Minnesota: Dakota and Ojibwe.



today

Treaties are living documents that recognize American Indian governments and guarantee the preservation of Native lands and lifeways for future generations. More than 150 years after treaties were signed, tribes in Minnesota celebrate treaties and their sovereignty.

In the 21st century, Native people in Minnesota are drawing on treaty rights

and tribal traditions to find balance in an ever-changing world.

By restoring prairie habitat, revitalizing their languages, and celebrating their heritage, the tribes are exercising their rights as sovereign nations as well as embracing the Ojibwe concept of *bimaadiziwin*—the “good life.”

