



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **FEDERATION OF STATE HUMANITIES COUNCILS SELECTS BIRMINGHAM FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

The Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF) is pleased to announce that on Nov. 7-9, 2013, the National Humanities Conference will take place in Birmingham, Ala., at the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel.

The National Humanities Conference is the annual conference of the Federation of State Humanities Councils. Founded in 1977, the Federation is the membership association of 54 state independent, nonprofit councils. These humanities councils, including Alabama's own Humanities Foundation, are affiliated with and receive funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"The members of the Federation board and staff are very excited about holding our 2013 conference in Birmingham, a city of rich cultural resources and the site of historical events that helped shape the identity of this nation," says Esther Mackintosh, president of the Federation of State Humanities Councils. "We are proud to offer our members an opportunity to become acquainted with this city during the very significant 50th anniversary of the 'Birmingham campaign' of the Civil Rights Movement, and we particularly look forward to working with the Alabama Humanities Foundation, an organization with strong ties to the corporate, cultural and educational networks in the city and state."

With exciting projects underway in Birmingham, such as the newly opened Railroad Park, and attractions that are already immensely popular, such as the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and Vulcan Park, the Federation is likely to find Birmingham, and the state of Alabama

in general, full of rich history and new life. “The Federation’s decision to hold its annual conference here in 2013 fits well into the Blueprint Birmingham plan and Alabama Humanities is pleased to play a role in this new vision,” says 2010 AHF Chairman Bob Whetstone, a former professor at Birmingham Southern College. Jim Noles, a partner with Balch & Bingham LLP and AHF’s incoming chairman, agrees: “This is a great opportunity to showcase Birmingham to a national audience. Last year’s conference was in Albuquerque, next year’s will be in St. Petersburg, Fla., and Chicago will be the host in 2012. We expect 350-400 representatives from the state humanities councils to join us in 2013,” Noles says. “That year, the city will be celebrating 50 years of the city’s lasting contribution to the advancement of Civil Rights in our nation. Our guests are going to find themselves squarely in the middle of a historic moment, and I think they will leave Birmingham with a great appreciation of what this city has accomplished in the past five decades.”

AHF Executive Director Bob Stewart points out that the National Humanities Conference will shine a spotlight on the humanities programs taking place in Alabama. “The state humanities councils represent an astonishing national network for their size and budgets. They reach literally thousands of American communities and millions of citizens through their educational and cultural grants and programs,” Stewart says. “While in Birmingham and visiting sites of memory elsewhere in Alabama, their staff and board members will see how the humanities are improving lives across our state. They will see and learn from our historical struggles—as well as see and learn how our history and heritage are making a positive difference in the 21st century.”

### **About the Alabama Humanities Foundation**

The Alabama Humanities Foundation is a nonprofit organization funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (of which the AHF is the state affiliate), as well as by corporate and individual donors. The foundation is dedicated to the promotion and celebration of the humanities throughout the state of Alabama and, to that end, conducts its own statewide programs and awards grants, on a competitive basis, to nonprofit organizations for humanities projects. For more information on AHF programs or grants, please visit [ahf.net](http://ahf.net) or call (205) 558-3980.

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