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Executive Director

A Federal/State Partnership

There's an interesting history lesson on Oklahoma Humanities' origin. Our nonprofit organization is one of 55 state, territorial, and jurisdictional state humanities councils that serve as affiliates of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), an independent federal agency. When the NEH was authorized in 1965, there was language in the bill that established the presence of state-based organizations to carry out the NEH mission effectively throughout the country. That's where Oklahoma Humanities came to be.

All state humanities councils are nonprofit organizations led by volunteer board members. This model was chosen through an early pilot project that tested three models. The first was partnering with state arts councils to incorporate humanities into their work. The second was university-based outreach programs. The third model, our current

one, was determined to be the best option and it has worked well for over forty-five years.

Annually, each state humanities council receives a general support grant from the NEH. These amounts differ depending largely upon population. For Oklahoma Humanities, NEH funds comprise about 70% of our budget; we raise the remainder through individual and corporate donations. The federal funds go toward administrative costs and our statewide grant program, leaving local fundraising to support our public programs such as *Oklahoma Humanities* magazine, *Let's Talk About It, Oklahoma*, and the Smithsonian's *Museum on Main Street* traveling exhibit program. We depend heavily upon our donors and are very grateful for the necessary support they provide. Thank you, donors, for your part in continuing this successful public/private endeavor!

ON THE COVER: *Vanitas Still Life*, c. 1665/1670, Jan van Kessel. National Gallery of Art. Puzzled by our choice of cover image? Turn to The Editor's Desk, p. 6, for a bit of art history on the Vanitas genre and its relevance to our theme.