



## **Nevada Humanities to Feature Programs Around Civic Engagement in 2021**

“Why It Matters” Will Explore the History, Importance, and Impact of the American Electoral Process in Nevada

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**January 6, 2021—RENO, Nev—**Nevada Humanities has been awarded \$50,000 by The Federation of State Humanities Councils and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation as part of a new national initiative, [\*\*\*Why It Matters: Civic and Electoral Participation\*\*\*](#), which will explore civic participation as it relates to electoral engagement in a multivocal democracy. Nevada Humanities joins 42 other states and territories of the United States that will be conducting programs throughout the course of the initiative. The initiative began in October 2020 and will run through spring 2021.

Nevada Humanities’ [\*\*\*Why It Matters\*\*\*](#) initiative will host free humanities programs and events to engage the people of Nevada in collaborative, accessible, and thought-provoking dialogues on the importance of electoral and civic participation. Programs will explore the history of civic and electoral engagement in Nevada, the state legislative system, voting access in tribal communities, new voters, and communities working to re-enfranchised formerly incarcerated people to vote, among other related topics. These events are meant to bring people together to talk, share, learn, and listen using the humanities to promote understanding through historical context and conversation.

Christina Barr, Executive Director of Nevada Humanities, notes: “Civic participation has been on all of our minds this year, not only with record-breaking voter turnout in the 2020 President election, but unprecedented public protests and demonstrations in a renewed call for social justice in the United States. With a longstanding commitment to bringing people together to share ideas and perspectives, Nevada Humanities is honored to be hosting conversations about voting rights and the history of voting in Nevada.”

**The following programs will be launched through this initiative:**

[\*Nevada Voices: The First Time I Voted\*](#), is an online series featuring videos and essays from people around the state, reflecting on the first time they cast their vote in an election.

[\*Why It Matters\*](#) includes a special series of online conversation programs through April 2021 around the topics of voting, electoral participation, and civic engagement, featuring academics, journalists, and community leaders working in the field. This series will be moderated by Dr. Todd Felts, Teaching Associate Professor of Public Relations & Advertising at the Reynolds School of Journalism at the University of Nevada, Reno.

[\*Why It Matters: The Past, Present, and Future of Voting in the United States\*](#), the first event in this four-part *Why it Matters* series, will be held virtually on Zoom at **4 pm on January 14, 2021**, and features journalist Erin Geiger Smith and Nevada historian Michael Green. This discussion highlights the history of democracy and how voting rights have expanded over time, both here in Nevada and across the nation. [Register](#) for this event at [nevadahumanities.org](http://nevadahumanities.org).

Other upcoming events in the *Why It Matters* series include a conversation with Nevada elected officials on how they came to politics, Native American voting rights in Nevada, and re-enfranchised voters in Nevada. Visit [nevadahumanities.org](http://nevadahumanities.org) for more information.

*These events are funded by the “Why it Matters: Civic and Electoral Participation” initiative, administered by the Federation of State Humanities Councils and funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.*

**About Nevada Humanities:** Nevada Humanities is one of 56 independent, nonprofit state and territorial humanities councils affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. With offices in Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada Humanities creates public programs and supports public projects statewide that define the Nevada experience and facilitate the exploration of issues that matter to the people of Nevada and their communities. For more information about Nevada Humanities visit [nevadahumanities.org](http://nevadahumanities.org).

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