

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARIZONA HUMANITIES AWARDS *STORYING ARIZONA* GRANT TO THE VAIL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

*Celebrating Every Voice will support oral history and storytelling projects across
Arizona*

Phoenix, AZ – Arizona Humanities is excited to announce The Vail Preservation Society (VPS) as the recipient of the \$10,000 *Storying Arizona* Special Initiative Grant.

“Congratulations to the Vail Preservation Society. Their outstanding proposal spoke to the heart of the project - collecting stories, hosting conversations, exploring different cultures, engaging middle school and high school youth, and their mission of cultivating local communities,” shared Brenda Thomson, Arizona Humanities Executive Director.

Celebrating Every Voice will build upon the Vail Preservation Society’s current *Voices of Vail* oral history and documentary project, which engages community members and students in capturing stories of the Vail area. The grant will allow VPS to hold oral history events, story slams, and community conversations in the Tucson area, Phoenix, and Flagstaff. VPS is also working on a film featuring these oral histories, to be released in 2018. Several of the programs will explore “a changing Arizona”, and the tension that arises in rural and urban areas from rapid population change.

VPS’s mission is “Connecting Community Through Local History.” In their *Storying Arizona* application they observed that “Stories are a way to connect us and to find the places where our lives, cultures, social imperatives, private lives and values intersect. Stories enrich our present, share our past and inspire our future. Stories open a window into the life of a community.”

VPS is collaborating with the Vail Education Foundation, Odyssey Storytelling, the Martin-Springer Institute at Northern Arizona University, Local First Arizona, and others. The popular 2017 Local First Arizona Fall Festival in Phoenix will include a story slam. The 2017 Rural Development Council’s Policy Forum will also include oral history and storytelling sessions. The grant brings together many talented scholars including Jacelle Ramon-Sauberon PhD, of the Tohono O’odham Nation, Akua Anokye PhD of ASU, Jim McPherson of the Arizona Preservation Foundation and the Martin-Springer Institute which records Jewish Arizona stories.



VPS is re-launching the *Storying Arizona* website (www.storytour.org). The new website will showcase the interviews collected from the groups, and also improve the interactive digital experience for visitors to the web site.

Storying Arizona is a one-time \$10,000 grant opportunity to engage Arizonans in community-centered storytelling, and create program resources for local history and culture. *Storying Arizona* was made possible by a generous donation from the Papago Salado Association, Inc. Arizona Humanities will share program news throughout the year on this special initiative.

To learn more about the Vail Preservation Society and activities related to the *Storying Arizona* grant, contact J.J. Lamb, Director of the Vail Preservation Society at 520-419-4428 or vailpreservationsociety@gmail.com.

For questions about Arizona Humanities grants and opportunities for non-profits, contact Grants Manager Samantha Anderson at 602-257-0335 or sanderson@azhumanities.org.

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Arizona Humanities

Mission: Arizona Humanities builds a just and civil society by creating opportunities to explore our shared human experiences through discussion, learning and reflection.

Arizona Humanities is a statewide 501(c)3 non-profit organization and the Arizona affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Since 1973, Arizona Humanities has supported public programs that promote understanding of the human experience with cultural, educational, and non-profit organizations across Arizona.

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