



# Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award 2009 • 10th Anniversary

## HELP US IDENTIFY THESE UNsung HUMANITIES HEROES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

### Who nominates a Humanities Hero?

Nominations for the Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award are made by Illinois mayors because they know their community best. We welcome your insight into the contributions being made to your community by the extraordinary work of ordinary citizens, and encourage community members to contact mayors to suggest nominees.

### How are Humanities Heroes identified?

The people who deserve this honor might not come immediately to mind. They are the volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes to bring the humanities to everyone or those who go above and beyond their normal duties to bring the humanities to unexpected places in the community.

A mayor may want to designate a small advisory committee to support the nomination process. Members might include:

- The local librarian
- The English teacher at the local high school or community college
- A staff member at the local historical society or museum
- The principal of the local school
- A member of the local tourism board
- A representative from a local cultural organization

### Who is a Humanities Hero?

We are looking for people who have made a sustained and significant contribution to the humanities in their communities.

The kinds of people we seek to honor should:

- Foster the importance of our diverse heritage and cultural traditions
- Understand the importance of reading, storytelling, and creative expression
- Embrace the importance of reflection and critical thinking
- Use the humanities—history, literature, philosophy—in ways that have enriched community life through historic preservation, heritage tourism, civic dialogue, etc.

Examples of such individuals are:

- A teacher who creates after school programs for children about local history
- A volunteer at the local historical society who organizes an exhibit
- A member of a preservation council who organizes walking tours of historic neighborhoods to attract tourists
- A volunteer or friend of the library who develops a summer reading program
- A lawyer who organizes discussion groups at the library on current events
- An amateur historian who writes books on local history, helping preserve the legacy of the community

We prefer to honor volunteers for their work in a civic, educational, or cultural organization; however, we will consider paid staff whose commitment consistently exceeds the call of duty.

All individuals nominated by mayors that meet that criteria will be deemed awardees. A review panel will certify that the criteria were met.

### How can our community honor our Humanities Hero?

The IHC hopes that the process of identifying a local champion of the humanities will bring benefits to your community as well. We urge you to find an appropriate public event at which the medal can be given and the recipient honored.

Some possibilities include:

- A town or city council meeting
- A community celebration
- A mayoral proclamation
- A sign at the entryway to your community

### How will the IHC be involved?

Upon selection of the winners, the Illinois Humanities Council will:

- Send a packet of information, the medal to award, and suggestions on how to publicize the humanities heroes in your community
- Seek proclamations from the Governor and the Illinois General Assembly to honor recipients all over Illinois.
- Notify relevant legislators about award winners in their districts
- Include medalists and their communities on our website and in other promotional materials.
- Print a booklet that profiles all of the recipients for broad distribution
- Seek the attendance of an IHC representative at your public award ceremony
- Hold a Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award Reception in Fall 2010

**“I WAS CONSTANTLY ASTONISHED BY THE  
EXTRAORDINARY DREAMS OF  
ORDINARY PEOPLE.” —Studs Terkel, WORKING**

Illinois Humanities Council



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