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## CT Humanities Awards \$46,814 in Quick Grants to 12 Cultural Nonprofits for Humanities Programs

MIDDLETOWN – At their December meeting, the board of directors of CT Humanities (CTH) awarded \$46,814 in humanities project grants from the CT Humanities fund.

This round of Quick Grants addresses a variety of themes relating to race and the power of the arts and humanities to foster equity, dialogue, connection, and understanding. Programs include explorations of the culture of equitable civic engagement; the Harlem Renaissance; the connection between food, gender, and identity; the history and traditions of the Middle East; conservation, the environment, and the depiction of landscapes; as well as the creation of a storybook trail demonstrating how a local legend can encourage creative thinking about history and problem-solving.

The 12 organizations awarded Quick Grants in December are:

[Western Connecticut State University Foundation](#) (**Danbury**, \$3,150), *No Place Like Home*, [Capital Community College Foundation](#) (**Hartford**, \$4,994), *Pennington Lecture Events*, [Everyday Democracy](#) (**Hartford**, \$4,890), *Civic Ambassadors Summit: Building a Culture for Equitable Civic Engagement*, [HartBeat Ensemble](#) (**Hartford**, \$4,963), *Encounters: Bee Trapped Inside the Window*, [Consonare Choral Community](#) (**Mansfield Center**, \$4,999), *Stars are for All Who Look Up: The Equity of Access to the Night Sky*, [Connecticut Choral Artists \(CONCORA\)](#) (**New Britain**, \$4,978), *Words & Music of the Harlem Renaissance*, [New Britain Museum of American Art](#) (**New Britain**, \$4,993), *The Poetry of Nature at the NBMAA*, [URU The Right to Be](#), (**New Haven**, \$4,999), *Connecticut's Public Enemy #1: A short film by Crystal R. Emery*, [Capital Classics Theatre Company](#) (**Newington**, \$1,900), *2022 Contemporary Classics Conversations Program*, [East Lyme Public Library](#) (**Niantic**, \$1,912), *Legend of Brides Brook - A Local Story*, [Yellow Farmhouse Education Center](#) (**Stonington**, \$1,731), *Food & Gender Virtual Author Series*, [Waterford Public Library](#) in partnership with the [Southeast Connecticut World Affairs Council](#) (**Waterford**, \$3,305), *Great Decisions - Global Topics for Local Discussion*.

For more than four decades, New Britain's **CONCORA** has enriched the Greater Hartford area with concerts of beautiful choral music presented by its professional singers. Their grant-funded program *Words and Music of the Harlem Renaissance* examines the cultural movement of the 1920s that celebrated African American art, literature, and music. Activities include discussions hosted by New Britain Public Library and a concert on Saturday, January 22, 2022, at 4:00 pm followed by a post-show talk with the audience, performers, and special guests.

“We are so grateful for the grant in support of our Harlem Renaissance program. CTH's generosity allows us to go beyond the music, enabling us to look at the cultural scene surrounding the collaboration between Langston Hughes and Margaret Bonds,” says **Chris Shepard, artistic director at CONCOR**A.

First-time applicant, **URU The Right to Be (URU)**, is a non-profit content production company that addresses social issues via film, theater, publishing, educational media, and other arts-based initiatives. Based in New Haven, URU will use the grant to create *Connecticut's Public Enemy #1*, a short film sharing the lived experiences of young Black and Brown men in Connecticut through oral history, archival media, and the written word. As part of URU's Town Hall series, *Courageous Conversations*, the film will be used to engage community stakeholders in deepening their understanding and curiosity of how social power dynamics and biases impact diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in our society.

**Crystal R. Emery, founder and CEO of URU The Right to Be**, explains, “Over these past few years, the pandemic has taken the spotlight from the explicit racist behavior the United States has been experiencing. It is time we allow Black and Brown individuals' voices to share their stories. URU consistently strives to cultivate a more equitable and humane world and we are grateful for this grant to support the development of a short film sharing the lived experiences, particularly in today's society, of young Black and Brown men in Connecticut through oral history, archival media, and the written word.”

The grant awarded to the **Western Connecticut State University Foundation**, a first-time grantee in Danbury, will provide funding for *No Place Like Home*, a program at the Art Gallery at the Visual and Performing Arts Center this February and March, that invites the audience to learn about the Middle East through history, art, film, music, storytelling, and cuisine. With a focus on history and traditions, renowned Syrian American artist and architect, Mohamad Hafez, and other presenters will illuminate the region's beauty and diversity, encouraging connection and empathy, and fostering dialogue.

**Melissa Ralston-Jones, curator and instructor at WCSU and event organizer**, says, “We are honored to receive a grant for *No Place Like Home: Exploring the sights, sounds, and tastes of the Middle East with artist Mohamad Hafez and guests*. It is important to recognize that funding from organizations such as CT Humanities, allows Western Connecticut State University to produce quality events that intrigue and inform audiences. We hope this event will broaden their experiences with Middle Eastern culture, developing an appreciation for different ethnicities and traditions. The overall intent is to awaken compassion and understanding for people from another culture, while creating a meaningful dialogue between the audience and participants and working toward eliminating bias and prejudices.”

There are several opportunities to apply for a Quick Grant from CT Humanities throughout the year. For more information on eligibility and application due dates, visit [cthumanities.org/grants/quick-grants](https://cthumanities.org/grants/quick-grants).

**About CT Humanities**

[CT Humanities](#) (CTH) is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. CTH promotes civic engagement and connects people to the humanities through grants, partnerships, and collaborative programs. CTH projects, administration, and program development are supported by state and federal matching funds, community foundations, and gifts from private sources.