

Arizona Humanities Council

Sharing cultures. Enriching communities.

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The Arizona Humanities Council Board of Directors Elects New Chair & Vice Chair

(Phoenix, AZ) - Arizona Humanities Council (AHC) is pleased to announce newly elected Board Chair Neal A. Lester, Ph.D. and Vice Chair Tom Wilson, Ph.D.



NEAL A. LESTER, Ph.D. has been a board member for five years and served as vice chair for the last two years. Prior to serving on the Arizona Humanities Council Board, he was a member of the AHC Road Scholars Speakers Bureau, a Community Book Discussion facilitator, and a grants review humanities scholar. Also an award-winning teacher, Dr. Lester, in 2003, was named "Distinguished Public Scholar" by the Arizona Humanities Council for his extensive community outreach throughout the state of Arizona.

Currently, Lester is Professor and Chair of the Department of English at Arizona State University, where he has taught African American literature since 1997. Prior to coming to ASU, Dr. Lester was a faculty member at the University of Montevallo (Alabama) and the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa). In 1988, he became the first African American to be awarded a doctorate degree in English at Vanderbilt University (Nashville). Lester grew up in Jefferson, Georgia, and attended the University of West Georgia (Carrollton), where he earned his undergraduate degrees in English and secondary education.

THOMAS H. WILSON, Ph.D. has been a board member for four years and has served on the Grants Review, Marketing and Development, Board Development, and Advocacy Committees. Dr. Wilson has extensive experience in the humanities and with state humanities councils; he was the Museum Program Officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities, where he oversaw funding for significant museum programs nationwide. In addition to the humanities, Wilson's passion is competing in triathlons.



Dr. Wilson is the Director of the Arizona Museum of Natural History (Mesa). He has also been Director of the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe, the Logan Museum of Anthropology and Wright Museum of Art, and the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. After two years as assistant professor at the University of Nairobi (Kenya), Richard Leakey hired him to be coast archaeologist for the National Museums of Kenya. When Dr. Wilson returned to the U.S. he worked in the Museum Program at the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dr. Wilson earned a B.A. from the University of New Mexico and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, in anthropology, and a J.D. from the University of Maryland.

Lester and Wilson will serve a two-year term with fellow Executive Committee officers: Treasurer Bill McDorman, Secretary Linda Arzoumanian, and Past Chair Kim Fernandez.

The Arizona Humanities Council Board of Directors is comprised of 19 members. They are:

Linda Arzoumanian, Ed.D.(Tucson), Paul Espinosa, Ph.D. (Tempe), Kim M. Fernández (Tucson), Carrie Gustavson (Bisbee), Paula Hilby (Phoenix), Sarah Kriehn (Phoenix), Neal A. Lester, Ph.D. (Tempe), Christine Marin Ph.D. (Tempe), Bill W. McDorman (Cornville), Shirley McKean (Tempe), Tammy McLeod (Paradise Valley), Bruce Meyerson (Phoenix), David C. Rubí, Ph.D. (Scottsdale), Fabian Valle (Phoenix), Michael Vincent Ph.D. (Flagstaff), John Ware, Ph.D. (Dragoon), Ronald Austin Wells, Ph.D. (Tucson), Thomas H. Wilson, Ph.D. (Mesa), Suzanne Yale (Payson)

About the Arizona Humanities Council

www.azhumanities.org

Stories convey our histories, traditions, social mores, beliefs and insights about what it means to be human. The Arizona Humanities Council creates opportunities for sharing these diverse stories through critical thinking and public discussion, to better understand and appreciate one another, so that we can make informed decisions about our collective future.

Founded in 1973, AHC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and the Arizona affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. AHC is not a state agency.

AHC supports public programming in the humanities that promotes understanding of human thoughts, actions, creations, and values. AHC works with museums, libraries, and other cultural and educational organizations to bring humanities programs to residents throughout Arizona. All AHC-supported activities must involve the humanities disciplines-history, literature, philosophy, and other studies that examine the human condition.

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