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# **N E W S   R E L E A S E**

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## **NHC to host national Prime Time workshop**

LINCOLN—The Nebraska Humanities Council will host a national training workshop for librarians, scholars, storytellers and state project directors involved in *Prime Time Family Reading Time* Jan. 12-15 in the Capital City. The workshop will be held at the Nebraska Library Commission and the Cornhusker Hotel and will include welcoming remarks by Nebraska's First Lady Sally Ganem.

The national training workshop is offered annually to libraries and other organizations that have agreed to host the award-winning family literacy program. The training is traditionally held in downtown New Orleans near the home of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH), but the devastation left by Hurricane Katrina forced Louisiana to seek another venue.

“The Nebraska Humanities Council had originally planned to bring the LEH training team to Nebraska in October to offer their workshop to Nebraska libraries and our scholar-storyteller teams for our own bilingual version of *Prime Time* for Hispanic families,” said Nebraska Humanities Council Executive Director Jane Renner Hood. “When we learned how hard the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities had been hit by Katrina, we offered to help in any way that we could to keep this wonderful program going. So we shifted our training to January to coincide with the national workshop and are delighted to be able to host the national training seminar here in Lincoln. We are looking forward to introducing our bilingual program to other national partners while we train our own new teams to extend *Prime Time* statewide.”

Based on award-winning children's books, *Prime Time Family Reading Time* is designed to help low-income, low-literacy families bond around the act of reading and discussing books. It models read-aloud techniques for parents and helps families learn how to select books and become active users of their libraries. *Prime Time* fosters high academic expectations and achievement for children and encourages parents to continue their own education.

Each series meets once a week for six weeks at participating libraries. Through a discussion leader and a storyteller, children ages 6 to 10 and their parents hear classic children's stories; watch read-aloud demonstrations; discuss humanities themes such as fairness, greed, courage, and determination; and learn about library resources and services. Younger siblings, ages 3 to 5, participate in separate pre-reading activities.

*Prime Time* was created in 1991 by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and was piloted at the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. Funding from the National Endowment for

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the Humanities and co-sponsorship with the American Library Association have allowed *Prime Time* to spread nationally. Some 525 programs have been conducted in 37 states and the Virgin Islands. Since 2002, the Nebraska Humanities Council has sponsored eight programs in five Nebraska libraries.

For the January workshop, three-person teams representing new *Prime Time* sites in Nebraska, Kansas, South Dakota, Ohio, Georgia, and Florida will converge to discuss plans and strategies for implementing the reading, discussion and storytelling aspects of *Prime Time*. Each team will consist of a site coordinator, a discussion leader, and a storyteller.

In Nebraska, an appropriation from the Nebraska State Legislature will allow the Nebraska Humanities Council to expand its bilingual *Prime Time* to eight libraries statewide in communities with increased numbers of Spanish-speaking families. Teams will be trained to offer *Prime Time* in Columbus, Crete, Gibbon, Grand Island, Hastings, Lexington, Lincoln, Omaha, Scottsbluff, and South Sioux City.

The *Prime Time Family Reading Time* national training workshop in Lincoln is sponsored by the Nebraska Humanities Council, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Nebraska Library Commission, the State of Louisiana, and the State of Nebraska.

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