



February 12, 2012

Florida Humanities Council
c/o Patricia Putman
FHC Associate Director

Dear Mini Grant Review Committee:

I write to add my strong support for the *Senior Stories* multimedia project developed by Samiri Hernández, Paul Fortier, and the Wakulla Historical Society. In addition to providing much needed intellectual stimulation and social interaction for the senior participants, this effort will uncover rich stories that need to be told and present these in new and exciting ways to a wide audience.

The arts can become a healing and regenerative activity for many, especially those who find themselves with limited options when it comes to interacting with mainstream society. This program is designed to harvest the intellectual, emotional, and behavioral strengths of those who often find themselves forgotten by our busy world. I look forward seeing this project come to fruition and gain momentum. Based on over 35 years of using and studying the arts in social work practice and education, I can state without hesitation that indeed this project can “make a difference” in the lives of those served.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Nicholas F. Mazza'.

Nicholas F. Mazza, Ph.D.
Dean and Patricia V. Vance Professor of Social Work
Editor, *Journal of Poetry Therapy* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/08893675.asp>)
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February 20, 2012

Florida Humanities Council
Mini Grant Review Committee

Dear Florida Humanities Council Mini Grant Committee,

I write to assure you of my participation as a scholar and consultant in the *Senior Stories Multimedia Project* submitted for your consideration. I am committed to designing and implementing the interview and resource gathering phase of this project and am pleased to provide my expertise in this area of field work methodology.

We will design and conduct all interviews of the senior participants in accordance with the *American Anthropology Association's* fieldwork guidelines. Subjects will sign releases before we proceed with interviews and no last names or identifying information will be used in any published work.

I share the excitement many others in Wakulla County have expressed for this project. We are very confident that once these first ten collaborative portraits are complete, interest will grow and the project will expand quickly. I look forward to continuing my participation in the *Senior Stories* project for many years and being part of its ongoing success.

Thank you for your consideration of our application. I eagerly await your determination regarding funding this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Hiraldo', written in a cursive style.

Samiri Hernández Hiraldo, Ph.D.



Wakulla
County

February 24, 2012

Florida Humanities Council
c/o Patricia Putman
FHC Associate Director

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(850) 224-4070

Dear Review Committee:

I write to you as one of five County Commissioners, a physician, a public health professional, and the Chairperson of the Wakulla Health Care Task Force.

Please give great consideration to the *Senior Stories* Multimedia Project that seeks funding through the Mini-Grant program of the Florida Humanities Council. Numerous individuals and organizations within Wakulla County fully and enthusiastically support this exciting proposal, developed by Samiri Hernández, Paul Fortier, and the Wakulla County Historical Society.

Many of the elderly people now residing at Eden Springs were a stalwart lot who eked out a living in our rugged, often forbidding, rural county in ways that few now could manage. Some were engaged in occupations and crafts no longer practiced and barely remembered. It is essential to record the wisdom and stories of our elders before they are no longer able to share them.

Involving residents of Eden Springs in this project will provide them with much needed activity, interaction, and stimulation. Respecting and valuing their knowledge and experience will further benefit the health and well-being of Wakulla County's oldest citizens.

Capturing the stories of our seniors as interactive, collaborative portraits using a combination of 2D graphic arts, animation, music, spoken word and multimedia software – and posting them to the Web – will greatly expand the reach and the influence of these life stories and acquired wisdom. This project will help to bridge the “digital divide” that separates our youth from their elders and make important stories available to generations that would otherwise overlook them. Connecting the young to the old through this project will yield many benefits for our younger citizens as well.

I know and have great respect for the applicants of this project and am confident that the project's products will be of the highest quality. Please fund this important work and bring this wonderful project to life in Wakulla County!

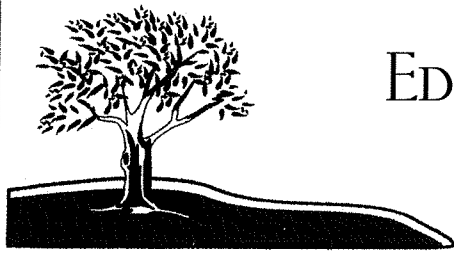
Sincerely,

Lynn Artz, MD, MPH
County Commissioner, District 5

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February 27, 2012

Florida Humanities Council
c/o Patricia Putman
FHC Associate Director

Dear Mini Grant Review Committee,

We are very excited about bringing the Senior Stories Multimedia Project to Eden Springs! This project will have great benefits for our residents and their families and we are sure many others will be interested in what our seniors have to say as well.

Our residents respond well to creative projects like this and many of them have great personal histories to share with the world. When the first seven Senior Stories presentations are done and out there for the public to see, we expect more seniors will step forward to share their life lessons with our community ...and the momentum will build.

Please give this project its start by awarding a Mini Grant. We believe the project will grow quickly and many lives will be enriched in the process. We look forward to participating in the Senior Stories project and sharing these presentations with the entire Eden Springs community!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chuck Cascio".

Chuck Cascio
Administrator



Dear Mini Grant Committee,


The Wakulla County Public Library fully endorses the Wakulla County Historical Society's application for funding of the *Senior Stories Multimedia Project*! This project fits well with our goal to enhance the lives of the people of Wakulla County by providing access to information and materials that meet the educational, informational, and cultural needs of the community. We are very excited about how the *Senior Stories* project dovetails with this mission and we are committed to assisting with the publicizing of the project by hosting a display of artwork and photos when it is complete.

We currently have in our collection at the library, copies of another of Paul Fortier's multimedia projects: *The Cut*. This is a very captivating, 3D, smoking prevention game he produced with funding from Blue Cross Blue Shield and in collaboration with our Wakulla High School Theater Department. We expect that he and his team will work just as diligently to produce the exciting content they are designing for the *Senior Stories* project.

Many of our senior citizens live on the other side of the 'digital divide' and their valuable life lessons and personal histories rarely find their way into our media-saturated world. This project represents a critical bridge between these two worlds. By creating these interactive portraits with new media, Paul Fortier, Samiri Hernández and the Wakulla County Historical Society are, in effect, helping our young people discover their own history.

When young people see life through the eyes of their elders, it has a moderating effect on them. They see that these seniors grew up in a different context and during a different time, but that they encountered the same challenges and struggled with the same limitations that today's youth face. This is, at the same time, reassuring and instructive. We, therefore, see these interactive portraits as having an important educational value for our young people.

The Wakulla County Public Library stands with the Wakulla County Historical Society and highly recommends the *Senior Stories Multimedia Project* for funding! Thank you for your consideration of this application and for your good work furthering humanities projects in our state.



Scott Joyner
Library Director
Wakulla County Public Library

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