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Contact: Jill Baker, Executive Director

cell: 406-564-3602; email: jill.baker@humanitiesmontana.org

Humanities Montana Wins Prestigious Schwartz Prize for The Democracy Project

MISSOULA, MT, -- November 25, 2024 – During the National Humanities Conference on November 15th, Humanities Montana was presented with the Schwartz Prize for its innovative *Democracy Project* program, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering young Montanans to discover community needs and learn about the importance of civic engagement. Presented by the Federation of State Humanities Councils, the Schwartz Prize honors outstanding humanities programming across the nation.

"In my many years of being a librarian, working with the Democracy Project and its group of dedicated, caring, teens who have been meeting all year long and using their time to write a House Bill and developing a website dedicated to Teen Mental Health has been the highlight of my career. It has been an honor to work with this group of forward-thinking young people. They give me hope," said Sherry Schlundt, Teen Services Librarian at Lewis and Clark Public Library in Helena, MT.

The Democracy Project is a teen-led, non-partisan initiative supported by local libraries, community partners, and Humanities Montana. This program gives teens the resources to meet community needs while learning their role in an evolving democracy. Through direct civic engagement, participants work for six months on projects they feel are vital to their community, culminating in a public showcase. By fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, the program inspires youth to take action and make a meaningful difference.

"Montana teens and librarians have worked so hard on developing the Democracy Project over the past three years. It has been an honor to support them and guide the growth of this essential program," said Program Manager Jennifer Bevill. "I could not be more thrilled. Huge thanks to the Federation of State Humanities Councils for recognizing our efforts with a 2024 Schwartz Prize!"

The Schwartz Prize, established in 1982, celebrates the best in humanities programming and recognizes state councils for creativity, innovation, and impact. Humanities Montana is honored to share this year's distinction with Louisiana and Wisconsin Humanities Councils. Read the full prize announcement [here](#).

For more information about *The Democracy Project*, visit [Humanities Montana's website](#).

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About Humanities Montana:

Humanities Montana serves Montana's multicultural communities through stories, conversation, programs, and grants. They offer experiences that nurture imagination and ideas by speaking to Montanans' diverse history, literature, and philosophy. If you'd like to support the work of Humanities Montana, please visit the [website](#).