For Immediate Release

**Minnesota Humanities Center Accepting Nominations for 2017 Veterans' Voices Award**

**March 3, 2017—ST. PAUL, Minn.—**The Minnesota Humanities Center is now accepting nominations for its 2017 Veterans' Voices Award, which recognizes, amplifies, and honors Minnesotans who have honorably served and are making extraordinary contributions to their communities. These actively engaged former and current military service members are thriving and go above and beyond to make significant positive contributions that improve the lives of people across Minnesota. Veterans' Voices is a fast growing, statewide program of the Humanities Center that is changing the narrative of Veterans. This program draws on the power of the humanities to explore and share the full life experiences of Veterans. It empowers Minnesota Veterans to speak in their own voices through plays, discussion groups, literature, and the Veterans' Voices Award.

The Humanities Center invites nominations of candidates who fall into one of two categories: On the Rise (40 and under) or Legacy (over 40). The Veterans' Voices Award honors actively engaged former and current military service members who are thriving and making significant, positive contributions that improve the lives of people across Minnesota. Award nominations will be accepted today through May 19, 2017.

The Veterans' Voices Award, now in its fifth year, will be presented to Veterans at the Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony to be held at the Anderson Student Center on the campus of St. Thomas University in St. Paul on September 11, 2017. WCCO-TV reporter and Veteran, Reg Chapman, will again emcee this event. Past award presenters include Governor Mark Dayton and Retired Major General Larry Shellito, Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

According to David O'Fallon, President of the Minnesota Humanities Center, “Now in its fifth year, the Veterans’ Voices Award has been presented to over 100 Minnesota Veterans for their outstanding commitment to their local communities, schools, and workplaces. This award is a chance to recognize men and women Veterans from across Minnesota for their outstanding leadership and contributions.”

Since 9/11/2001 more than 50,000 men and women from Minnesotan have been deployed and returned home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These Veterans are our neighbors; neighbors who defended the freedom of all Americans.

Shelby Hadley, a Veterans' Voices awardee from Rice, Minnesota, found affirmation of her service through this award. “Is my story enough? I, like many Veterans, still weigh my experiences against other Veterans. I was affirmed over and over…by the Humanities Center that my story was enough.”

Veterans’ Voices strives to solidify a network of Veterans and civilians, brings Minnesota Veterans together through the humanities, and forms a public narrative that affirms Veterans as positive leaders in our communities.

“This highly visible Veterans’ Voices Award Ceremony is just one piece of an extensive program that is successfully connecting citizens to the diverse and complex stories of Veterans,” said former Veterans’ Voices awardee Scott Glew. “Our collective understanding of war and peace will become richer as Veterans are empowered to share their experiences, as educators gain access to relevant professional development and resources, and as the general public comes together in dialogue to challenge conventional narratives and perceptions. The Humanities Center, through their Veterans’ Voices program, is making this happen.”
Nominations must include answers to questions detailing a candidate’s contributions and reasons they exemplify the mission and values of the Humanities Center. Information sessions will be hosted for interested nominators, covering eligibility requirements and qualifiers and providing tips for completing the nomination form. **In-person Information Sessions** will be held on Thursday, April 20 at 10:00-11:00 am and at 5:30-6:30 pm at the Humanities Center in St. Paul.

*Ampers* radio is the media sponsor of the 2017 *Veterans’ Voices Award Ceremony*.

For more information about the *Veterans’ Voices Award* nomination process and upcoming information sessions visit [mnhum.org/vets](http://mnhum.org/vets).

Nominations may be submitted online ([mnhum.org/vets](http://mnhum.org/vets)) or by mail to:

**Minnesota Humanities Center**

2017 *Veterans’ Voices Award*

987 Ivy Avenue East

Saint Paul, MN 55106

**All nominations must be received by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 19, 2017.** Nominees selected to receive an award will be notified by Tuesday, July 11, 2017. Details about the nomination and past *Veterans’ Voices* awardees are available at [mnhum.org/vets](http://mnhum.org/vets).

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Download our [Veterans’ Voices Media Kit](http://mnhum.org/vets).