



Mississippi Hills FY2022 Grant Recipients

Alcorn County

Crossroads Museum has been awarded **\$5,000** for a new Civil War railroad exhibit.

Clay County

The *Prairie Belt Blues Foundation* has been awarded **\$4,650** for its “Praisin’ the Blues” performance series.

DeSoto County

The *City of Hernando* has been awarded:

- \$5,000 to support cultural and heritage components of its “Dickens of a Christmas” Victorian-Era holiday event, and
- \$5,000 for a new mobile app that will highlight local cultural sites and help promote the Dickens event.

DeSoto County Total: \$10,000

Lafayette County

- The *City of Oxford* has been awarded \$20,000 for renovations to Cedar Oaks (1859), a Mississippi Landmark.
- *Yoknapatawpha Arts Council* has been awarded \$15,000 to preserve 130 hours of fragile reel-to-reel field recordings made by folklorist and scholar David Evans from 1969-1983. These recordings chronicle the secular and sacred music of the African American communities of Tate, Panola and Marshall Counties, and the preserved material will be housed at the University of Mississippi Blues Archive when complete.

Lafayette County Total: \$35,000

Lee County

- *Tupelo CVB* has been awarded:
 - \$20,000 for a mural by premier muralist Brian Tull which will be painted on the east side of the historic Tupelo Hardware building and become the 19th mural on Tupelo's Mural Trail. Rendered in Tull's nostalgic and photorealistic painting style, the artwork will celebrate the arts in Tupelo along with its Elvis history, and is being coordinated by the GumTree Museum of Art as part of their 50th-anniversary celebration of the GumTree Art & Wine Festival.
 - \$11,750 to design and produce the Elvis' Tupelo Driving Tour brochure, which will then be translated into German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese, Chinese, and Japanese. The tour takes visitors to 14 locations that were influential in Elvis' life growing up in Tupelo, and currently non-English-speaking international travelers are not able to experience this interpretive journey. The brochure will also include information about the Elvis Guitar Trail, Elvis Murals and Tupelo Elvis Festival, which will encourage extended stays.

- The *Gumtree Museum* has been awarded \$5,000 for its Gumtree Festival Singer Songwriter Musical Showcase, which will highlight the Mississippi Hills' rich musical traditions while encouraging the next generation of regional artists.

- The *Dancing with the King* program in Tupelo has been awarded \$5,000 to provide participants with scholarships and informative tours of local Elvis-related sites.

- *Saltillo Main Street* has been awarded \$5,000 for its "Paint the Town" Historical Mural Project.

- *Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center and Battlefields* has been awarded \$1,300 for the design and printing of an updated visitor's brochure featuring a description of the Interpretive Center and a guide to two battlefields: the 1400-acre Brice's Crossroads Battlefield and the 12-acre Battle of Harrisburg/Tupelo Battlefield.

Lee County Total: \$48,050

Lowndes County

Columbus Cultural Heritage Foundation has been awarded **\$10,000** for its Lighting Downtown Columbus project.

Marshall County

- *North Mississippi Hill Country Picnic, Inc.* has been awarded \$5,000 to support the production of the two-day 2022 picnic, which showcases Hill Country Blues. (This year's spectacular lineup will be posted on nmshillcountrypicnic.com.)

- *Holly Springs Community Development Corporation* has been awarded \$5,000 for the Holly Springs Traditional Music Extravaganza, a three-day music festival celebrating local African-American heritage and traditional styles of music from the

Mississippi Hills, featuring descendants of Cotton Patch Blues legend Junior Kimbrough and Hill Country Blues originator R.L. Burnside, as well as R.L. Boyce, the Holly Springs M.B. Church Gospel Choir, Rust College Drum Line Band and others.

- *Holly Springs Main Street Chamber* has been awarded \$5,000 to support its four-week Blues Alley Music Series, held on the historic Courthouse Square in downtown Holly Springs and featuring Hill Country music.
- *North Mississippi Roots and Wings* has received \$2,500 to support “Faith, Love, Pride,” a nine-day series of workshops, performances and displays that will highlight the rich history and culture of the region’s African-American communities, as well as their contributions to and impact on the broader culture.

Marshall County Total: \$17,500

Monroe County

Aberdeen Visitors Bureau has been awarded **\$4,000** to support its “Paradise Alley Re-imagination Project” in their downtown district. The alley is an official stop on Aberdeen’s Black History Driving Tour and was historically referred to as Paradise Alley by the African-American community during the time when black patrons were only permitted entrance into business establishments through separate entrances. The history and vitality of this space will be captured in a heritage mural as well as a pop-art-style mural, and through these and other enhancements it will once again become a vibrant community gathering spot.

Montgomery County

Action Communication & Education Reform in Duck Hill has been awarded **\$5,000** to assist with the placement of multiple Tourism Trail Markers, an ongoing project which documents and preserves the rich cultural heritage of Duck Hill as well as the African-American experience in Montgomery County. This project will place three historical markers dedicated to the Mule Train, a protest caravan that was part of the Poor People’s Campaign, with the markers being located in Duck Hill, Winona and Kilmichael.

Oktibbeha County

- *Starkville CVB* has been awarded \$20,000 to develop exhibit space in the lobby of the Greater Starkville Development Partnership office building, which is located in downtown Starkville and serves as the city’s welcome and visitor information center. The CVB is partnering with MSU Libraries to feature artifacts from each of the library’s four museums: the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library, the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana, the John Grisham Room, and the Charles H. Templeton, Sr. Music Museum. Information about the museums will be prominently displayed to encourage visitors to explore these attractions.
- *Mississippi Heritage Trust* has been awarded **\$5,000** to provide supervised internships for college-level students in the field of historic preservation, in particular

those undertaking coursework in the Historic Preservation Masters of Fine Arts program in the College of Art, Architecture and Design at Mississippi State University.

Oktibbeha County Total: \$25,000

Panola County

The *Mt. Zion Memorial Fund* has been awarded **\$3,550** to fund the R.L. Boyce Picnic 2022, a three-day workshop hosted by this renowned Hill Country Bluesman and featuring a guitar and fife-and-drum workshop, a cane-fife-making demonstration, free live music (full lineup to be posted on rlboycepicnic.com), a guided tour conducted by R.L., and a photo exhibit reception.

Pontotoc County

Pontotoc County Chamber & Main Street Association and *City of Pontotoc* have been awarded:

- \$14,400 to support the renovation of and improvements to the visual-and-music-arts area of the Pontotoc Town Square Museum (1937). Enhancements will include the addition of a touch-screen display which will allow visitors to learn more about local recording and visual artists and listen to or view their work.
- \$3,250 to fund the restoration of a mural from the Walldog Art Era in downtown Pontotoc. An addition to the mural will honor local Native-American heritage.

Pontotoc County Total: \$17,650

Prentiss County

Booneville Main Street Association has been awarded \$5,000 to place cast-bronze plaques on all historic buildings in the Booneville Downtown Historic District, and to create a companion walking tour brochure featuring these structures.

Tippah County

- *Ripley Main Street Association* has been awarded:
 - \$20,000 to fund the first phase of the conversion of a unique structure in the city's downtown historic district into a multi-use community venue with exterior art that reflects Tippah County's Native-American heritage.
 - \$2,500 to assist with the Alice Mae Blues Festival and the Blue Mountain Bluegrass Festival.
 - \$1,085 to fund the creation of an African-American Public Art Quilt Trail, which will showcase traditional African-American quilt patterns, documenting them both as works of art and an important means of self-expression.
- *Blue Mountain College* has been awarded:
 - \$20,000 to fund immediate repairs to the former Lowrey Memorial Baptist Church building (1908), which was purchased by the college in 2021 and is now a part of the BMC main campus. The structure is listed as one of the contributing

elements in the Blue Mountain College National Historic District and was designed by architect R.H. Hunt of Chattanooga.

- \$20,000 for the creation of an Economic and Community Development Master Plan for Blue Mountain College and the Town of Blue Mountain, a joint planning initiative leading up the observance of BMC's 150th anniversary in 2023.

Tippah County Total: \$63,585

Tishomingo County

- *Tishomingo County Tourism Council* has been awarded \$20,000 for improvements to the lookout area atop Woodall Mountain, the highest point in Mississippi. The first phase will include cleanup, landscaping and new directional signage. Phase two will entail the construction of a lookout tower, the addition of an information center, as well as installation of seating and lighting.
- *Iuka Heritage, Inc.* has been awarded \$5,000 for improvements to site drainage at the former Episcopal Church of Our Savior, a Carpenter-Gothic-style church building owned and maintained by the grantee.

Tishomingo County Total: \$25,000

Union County

Union County Historical Society & Heritage Museum in New Albany has been awarded **\$15,000** for the design-development phase of the Creative Spirit Exhibit, which will feature area writers, artists and musicians such as Nobel Laureate William Faulkner, blues musician/songwriter Sam Mosley, "gospel blues" artists Rev. Leon Pinson and Elder Roma Wilson, a recipient of the NEA's National Heritage Fellowship. The resulting plan will detail exhibit features inclusive of interactive components, specifications required for fabrication and installation, as well as recommendations on funding and fundraising.

Yalobusha County

Water Valley Main Street has been awarded **\$7,500** to assist with enhancements to the Casey Jones Railroad Museum: old crossties will be replaced, new signage and landscaping added, and improvements made to the railcars. Additionally, museum photographs will be digitized and new interactive exhibits developed.

Total FY22 Grant Funding Awarded: \$301,485