



Mississippi Hills FY2023 Grant Recipients

Alcorn County

- *Corinth CVB / Visit Corinth* has been awarded **\$15,000** for the installation of interactive outdoor musical instruments in newly-refurbished Trailhead Yard in the historic downtown area. There will be a variety of instruments, each shaped to represent those utilized by Mississippi Hills musicians: for example, a percussive acoustic guitar styled after those used by Elvis Presley and Hill Country Blues artists. QR codes will link visitors to interpretive content, including videos of musical performances.
- *Main Street Corinth* has been awarded **\$5,000** for the installation of a series of promotional banners throughout the historic downtown area for a variety of purposes: seasonal promotions, special events, etc. The banners will make downtown more attractive and inviting to residents and visitors alike, positively impacting local commerce and boosting a sense of community. Some will reflect local culture and heritage, and collectively they will aid in promoting downtown Corinth as a destination for shopping, dining and entertainment.
- *Corinth Siege and Battle Commission* has been awarded **\$20,000** to aid with the renovation of the guest house (circa 1906) located on the grounds of the historic Verandah-Curlee House.

Alcorn County Total: \$40,000

DeSoto County

The *City of Hernando* has been awarded:

- **\$5,000** to support cultural and heritage components of its 5th annual “Dickens of a Christmas” Victorian-Era holiday event, and

- **\$5,000** for additions/enhancements to its event mobile app, which highlights local cultural sites and helps promote the Dickens program. Funds will also support the involvement of a Civil War interpreter/reenactor.

DeSoto County Total: \$10,000

Lafayette County

- *Visit Oxford* has been awarded:
 - **\$15,000** for the development of informational kiosks to be placed at strategic locations in the community. Kiosks will provide visitors information about local and area cultural and historic sites, events, lodging-shopping-dining opportunities, etc.
 - **\$5,000** to develop a mobile app the provide visitors and residents information about local cultural heritage sites, events (including the popular Double Decker Arts Festival), merchants, etc. The app would also provide valuable user data that would be used for local/regional marketing efforts.
- *Oxford Lafayette County Heritage Foundation* has been awarded **\$11,475** for an expansion of the Lafayette County Digital Museum, with further community outreach efforts to collect, preserve, analyze and display digital images of historic documents and artifacts tied to Oxford and Lafayette County.
- *Junebug Literary Society* has been awarded **\$1,200** to assist with its annual literary conference, which invites those interested in Southern literature to explore the towns, sites, people and places captured in various works.

Lafayette County Total: \$32,675

Lee County

- *Tupelo CVB* has been awarded **\$6,000** to add another site to the Elvis Presley Driving Trail, increasing the number of stops at iconic Elvis sites in Tupelo to fourteen. Starting with 6 core stops, the trail has developed over the last 15 years and helps to tell a detailed story of Elvis' life in Tupelo. The new site is located on Main Street and will mark the office of the physician who delivered Elvis and a stillborn Jesse Presley.
- The *Dancing with the King* program in Tupelo has been awarded **\$5,000** to help provide participants with scholarships which include a variety of Elvis-legacy immersion activities, such as a full tour of the Elvis Presley Birthplace and Museum. Participants range in age from 6 to 80 and come from a wide variety of backgrounds. For some, a scholarship is the only way they can afford to attend.

Lee County Total: \$11,000

Lowndes County

Columbus CVB has been awarded **\$20,000** to aid with the development of cultural and heritage components of the planned Columbus Children’s Museum, which will be housed in the Elks Building (circa 1902), which is located in the downtown area and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Marshall County

- *Preserve Marshall County and Holly Springs* has been awarded **\$4,699** to support its 2023 Behind the Big House Program, which seeks to interpret the legacy of slavery in the city and county.
- *North Mississippi Roots and Wings* has been awarded **\$19,400** to support activities in conjunction with the 2023 Behind the Big House program: a Hill Crest Cemetery Tour of Enslaved Africans, “How Enslaved Africans Made Bricks”, and an African Ancestors Libation Ceremony.
- *The Rosa Foundation* has been awarded **\$16,950** to support and expand the work of Behind the Big House through its “African American History and Interpretation at the Hugh Craft Property in Holly Springs” program.
- *North Mississippi Hill Country Picnic, Inc.* has been awarded **\$5,000** to support the production of the two-day 2023 picnic, which showcases Hill Country Blues.
- *Holly Springs Tourism and Recreation Bureau* has been awarded **\$20,000** for Downtown & Heritage Tourism Planning, Phase I.
- *Foxfire Ranch* and the *Holly Springs Community Development Corporation* have been awarded **\$20,000** to support “We Are the Promised Land,” a podcast designed to preserve the stories, culture and practices traditionally sustained on African-American-owned land in North Mississippi’s Hill Country. The nine-episode series will combine documentary practice, narrative craft, and oral history with archival sound and traditional music.

Marshall County Total: \$86,049

Noxubee County

Noxubee County Historical Society has been awarded **\$20,000** to support “Visualizing Noxubee History,” a project that will involve the development and installation of interpretive signage/historical markers in ten locations, the creation of three historically-themed murals, and the placement of three directional signs leading to the signing site of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. The project will involve the art departments at Mississippi State University and Mississippi University for Women.

Panola County

The *Mt. Zion Memorial Fund* has been awarded **\$5,000** to support the R.L. Boyce Picnic 2023, a three-day cultural event hosted by 2023 NEA National Heritage Fellow and living blues legend R.L. Boyce.

Pontotoc County

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

- **\$20,000** to relocate and restore a traditional dogtrot-style house, originally built in Pontotoc in the 1860s, for the purpose of transforming it into the anchor exhibit in an outdoor museum located between the courthouse square and Tanglefoot Trail gateway.
- **\$20,000** for enhancements to the historic courthouse square. Created after the Chickasaw cession from land allocated through the state's first land office located only a few blocks away, the site became home to the town's courthouse and was one of only two federal court seats in the state until 1916. It is now home to a Mississippi Blues Trail marker and two Chickasaw Historical Markers, as well as the site of numerous community gatherings and events.
- **\$1,555** to support its "Hill Country Music at the Market", which will showcase Pontotoc's rich musical traditions and inspire the next generation of regional artists through educational workshops and events held on Saturday mornings at the Pontotoc Farmers Market.

Pontotoc County Total: \$41,555

Prentiss County

- *Booneville Main Street Association* has been awarded **\$15,000** to expand their historic downtown district walking tour. The project will place bronze interpretive plaques on an additional 20 historic structures, many of which are on the National Register of Historic Places. An updated brochure guide will also be developed.
- The *City of Booneville* has been awarded **\$15,000** for a downtown alleyway historical- and-cultural mural project. The history-informed murals will be created by local high school and community college students under the guidance of art instructors. The alley will be enhanced with lighting, benches and tables, as well. The mural alley will be incorporated into the existing historic downtown district walking tour.

Prentiss County Total: \$30,000

Tippah County

- *Ripley Main Street Association* has been awarded:
 - **\$5,000** for Phase 3 of the Mississippi Hill Country Blues Alley, which will involve the addition of more artwork and an arched iron entrance sign.

- **\$2,100** to assist with the first annual Burnside Blues Festival, which will be held at the Mississippi Hill Country Blues Alley. Proceeds from the event will go towards the enhancement of blues alley.
- *Tippah County Historical Museum* has been awarded **\$20,000** to help fund planning for a new Tippah County Heritage and Cultural Center. The facility will be housed in a building located on the site of the former residence of William Clark Falkner, William Faulkner’s great grandfather.

Tippah County Total: \$27,100

Union County

- *Union County Historical Society & Heritage Museum* in New Albany has been awarded:
 - **\$12,000** to assist with the development of the Mississippi Hills Arts & Education Institute, which will: educate the public, youth in particular, about area artists and musicians through classroom curriculum and workshops; celebrate the artistic traditions and musical legacy of the hills region and help perpetuate its unique styles; and, host public performances by students of the institute.
 - **\$5,000** to develop a QR-code based Historic Downtown New Albany Walking Tour, which will be ADA compliant and include interpretive signage and historical information for the Historic River District and the African-American schools, businesses and neighborhoods prior to integration. A brochure will also be developed for the tour.
- *New Albany Main Street Association* has been awarded **\$10,000** for a Blues mural in the downtown historic district. The mural will feature three local Blues musicians who are celebrated on Mississippi Blues Trail markers in New Albany.
- The *City of New Albany* has been awarded **\$7,000** to assist its Community Development Department with the creation of a “Reimagine the Park Along the River” Master Plan. This plan will guide improvements to the 35-year-old park, which sits adjacent to the historic downtown area, and will build upon the 2022 Conceptual Plan for the Little Tallahatchie Riverway Conservation & Recreation Area developed by the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program.

Union County Total: \$34,000

Webster County

Southway Foundation has been awarded **\$20,000** fund the development of four Historic Structures Reports for selected properties within MHNHA. These reports document historical significance, existing conditions, as well as phasing and implementation strategies for restoration and/or adaptive reuse efforts.

Yalobusha County

Water Valley Main Street has been awarded **\$2,900** to support its “Rockin’ at Railroad Park Summer Sunset Series.” The series will feature hill country blues and other genres distinctive to the hills region, and will be held downtown next to the historic depot and Casey Jones Railroad Museum.

Total FY23 Grant Funding Awarded: \$380,279