

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES AWARDS  
TWO GRANTS TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL  
OF NEGRO WOMEN

Washington, D.C. -- Mary McLeod Bethune, daughter of slave parents who became the first Black and the first woman ever to serve as an advisor to the President of the United States, will be given additional recognition with the help of two grants totaling \$56,669 from the National Endowment for the Humanities\*.

The awards will be used by the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), an organization founded by Mrs. Bethune in 1935, to develop programs to make the public more aware of the achievements of this remarkable lady.

A Humanities Endowment Media grant in the amount of \$35,309 will help the NCNW develop and produce a film for television highlighting the accomplishments of Mrs. Bethune.

After establishing herself as an educator and activist for the rights and welfare of young people, Mrs. Bethune was tapped by President Franklin Roosevelt to advise him of the plight of Blacks in America. Impressed with her work, President Roosevelt, in 1935, appointed her Director of the newly established Office of Minority Affairs. Not only was she the first Black woman to ever hold such a post, she became one of the most influential and powerful Blacks in the country.

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\* The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent agency of the Federal Government. Its mission is to award grants to support education, scholarship, and programs which involve media, libraries, museums, and other national and cultural organizations as a means of reaching a broad, general public. Programs funded through National Endowment for the Humanities grants affect every aspect of the cultural life of America.



During this time, she met and formed a close friendship with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and together they worked unceasingly to insure the human rights of all Americans, regardless of race, color, or creed.

The television dramatization will be researched by Dr. Douglas O'Connor who will utilize various documents and recollections of Mrs. Bethune's friends and business associates. The program will be written by Lonnie Elder, III who penned the Oscar-winning movie, "Sounder." The renowned actor, Brock Peters, will serve as executive producer of the program.

Another grant, in the amount of \$21,360, will be used by the National Council of Negro Women to develop interpretive programs at the Bethune Home and office located in Washington, D.C. Research is currently underway to create an effective presentation of the principles and philosophies that made Mrs. Bethune a major figure in Black history and in the United States.

The home, recently restored and declared in 1976 as a National Historic Landmark, will be used as a museum and education center featuring a repository of tapes, transcripts, photographs and other documents pertinent to the study of Black history.

These two grants awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities demonstrate the agency's continuing interest in research and educational programs dealing with Afro-American studies.

For further information regarding these and other grants funded by the Humanities Endowment, please contact:

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