



# THE ART OF FORCED GIVING

The West Virginia Humanities Council, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, doles out \$700,000 in taxpayer money for various programs each year. Some of these programs receive upwards of \$20,000 each.

In the fall of 2018 alone, 21 new grants were announced. However, it's safe to say that some West Virginians might have preferred their tax dollars to stay in their pocket than support the endowment and the programs it supports.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to this statewide spending of taxpayer money on the arts, tax records for the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences in Charleston show that it has nearly \$111 million in assets.

Despite this large amount of assets, the center continues to collect hundreds of thousands of dollars in local and state funded grants. Simply put, it's taking taxpayer dollars that the Center doesn't seem to really need. The latest documents filed with the IRS show the nonprofit received about \$460,000 in grant funding. This is about the same amount that was reported in 2015 in a previous report.<sup>2</sup> Those taxpayer dollars help fund the president and CEO's salary, which was \$226,737 in 2017, according to IRS Form 990.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Charleston Gazette-Mail. "WV Humanities Council grant recipients announced." November 3, 2018. Available at [https://www.wvgazette.com/news/wv-humanities-council-grant-recipients-announced/article\\_ed44702e-56d9-5520-bb00-1059caf14a3c.html](https://www.wvgazette.com/news/wv-humanities-council-grant-recipients-announced/article_ed44702e-56d9-5520-bb00-1059caf14a3c.html). Accessed on February 22, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Guidestar. "Form 990 for Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences." Available at <https://pdf.guidestar.org/PDF/Images/2017/550/702/2017-550702401-0edc02b1-9.pdf>. Accessed on February 8, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.