

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 24

BY SENATOR STINE

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and to recognize and celebrate the 2026 Bright Lights Awards Honorees for their outstanding contribution to the cultural and educational fabric of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH) has served the people of Louisiana for fifty-five years by promoting education, preserving history, and enriching public life through the humanities; and

WHEREAS, LEH's mission to foster learning, literacy, and a deeper understanding of Louisiana's diverse people and stories has empowered generations of Louisiana families, educators, and lifelong learners; and

WHEREAS, each year, LEH hosts the Bright Lights Awards Dinner to honor individuals and organizations whose work exemplifies the values of the humanities and whose contributions meaningfully preserve and celebrate Louisiana's cultural identity; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 Bright Lights honorees have made significant and lasting impacts on Louisiana's cultural, educational, and historical landscape through their exceptional work and dedication to the humanities; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 honorees include:

- Michael Doucet, recipient of the Humanist of the Year award, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to Cajun music, language, and culture as the founder of the internationally acclaimed band BeauSoleil;
- Pam Atchison, named Champion of Culture, for her remarkable tenure as executive director of the Shreveport Regional Arts Council for thirty-eight years;
- The RosaMary Foundation and the Keller Family Foundation, recipients of the Chair's Award for Institutional Support, for each contributing more than twenty-five years of support for the humanities in Louisiana;

- Kevin Rabalais, named Documentary Photographer of the Year, for his extensive body of work documenting the everyday lives, traditions, and landscapes of Louisiana;

- Don Marshall, recipient of the Lifetime Contributions to the Humanities award, for his career and leadership supporting and uplifting the arts community in New Orleans;

- Debra Jo Hailey, recipient of the Light Up for Literacy award, for her lifelong dedication to improving literacy across Louisiana through family literacy festivals and educational outreach;

- Thomas Patterson, recipient of Humanities Book of the Year for *American Populist: Huey Long of Louisiana*, for his vital contributions to historical scholarship on Louisiana's storied governor;

- Sascha Just, honored for Humanities Documentary Film of the Year for *What We Can Know About Edmond and Basile*, a film exploring the lives and musical legacies of 19th-century Creole composers;

- The Historic New Orleans Collection, honored for Museum Exhibition of the Year for *Captive State, Louisiana and the Making of Mass Incarceration*, an exhibition that brought to life the historical connections between slavery and mass incarceration; and

WHEREAS, these honorees contribute to the illumination of Louisiana's rich heritage, serve as inspiration to future generations, and embody the spirit of excellence in service to the people and the stories of this great state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities for its invaluable contributions to education, culture, and public life and congratulates the 2026 Bright Lights Awards Honorees for their inspiring work, affirming the continued importance of humanities-based learning and cultural preservation in shaping Louisiana's future.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE