



**TALES FROM THE
CHIHUAHUAN DESERT:**
A NEH Summer Institute

Welcome from Drs. Martínez and Rodríguez, Institute Directors

15 October 2020

El Paso del Norte, Texas
Chihuahuan Desert, USA

Dear Secondary School Educators,

You're invited to apply to our [Summer Institute for School Teachers](#) (grades 6th – 12th) named ***Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert: Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism***. More information will be posted on the application and process in early Jan. 2021. *We are planning for a live, on-site Institute, although remote learning will be considered for the health and safety of everyone during the pandemic.*

The Institute is sponsored by the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) (NEH) and will be held at the campus of [The University of Texas at El Paso \(El Paso, Texas\)](#).

The Institute will be held **July 18th – August 1st, 2021**. A stipend (taxable) will be provided to each Summer Scholar.

We developed ***Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert*** in an effort to reframe our national discourse about the ways in which we see and talk about the U.S.–México borderlands and its binational populations.

[Insert photo on web page.]

Leading experts and award-winning scholars will contribute to our NEH Institute. In conjunction with inquiry-based activities centered in the classroom, invited scholars will also take part in several pre-planned field trips to local archives and repositories, historical sites, and cultural venues.

We believe it is important, especially for young adults, to understand and recognize the role that these marginal spaces and its populations have played in U.S. history and literature.

Three **essential questions** will guide our discussions during our time together:

1. How can the **study of the Chihuahuan Desert**, of its history and its people, help us tell a more complete story of the American experience?
2. What can we learn about the **histories and literatures of border people** by examining their stories?
3. How does **binationalism** inform border people's cultures and literary production?

The **learning outcomes** for our Institute are as follows:

- To explore the range and variety of **literature** created by writers from the Chihuahuan Desert, both classic and contemporary;
- To achieve an understanding of the **histories and cultures** of a region often stereotyped and misunderstood;
- To provide **professional learning opportunities** for teachers so that they can become better educators;
- To encourage teachers, who will be from across the country and from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines, to engage each other in thinking critically about important issues in order to expand the **intellectual depth and experience** of all teachers; and
- To broaden **teachers' experience and understanding of the humanities** as they are challenged through the historical and literary narratives explored in the Institute and through the activities and events experienced during the two-week Institute.

We invite you to submit your complete e-application once the application opens in Jan. 2021 and BEFORE the deadline, which is **March 1st, 2021**. A committee, which includes former teacher participants (Summer Scholars) and professors, will be evaluating each applicant's eligibility and application materials submission.

We look forward to reviewing your complete application before the deadline. The notification letters for all applicants will be sent, via email, by **March 31st, 2021**.

Sincerely,

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