program, initiated in 1983 in response to interest expressed by humanities researchers and scholars, is an inexpensive way to effect significant impact on humanities research. This program offers grants of $500 to enable about 500 humanities scholars engaged in significant projects to travel to humanities research collections which are essential to their work.

5. The State of the Disciplines: Through a special initiative on The State of the Disciplines in the Humanities, begun in 1983 and continued in 1984 and 1985, the Endowment seeks to encourage studies that assess the condition of the humanities disciplines today, their history, and their future. Under this rubric, the Endowment encourages studies that explore such topics as the development of the various disciplines in the humanities; the conditions of their growth; the rise or decline of particular areas and fields; the emergence of new fields and new techniques of scholarly research; the effect of politics and ideology on scholarly fields; and the effect of changes in the arts, sciences, and social sciences on the humanities.

(continued on page 7)
Fourth Annual Incentive Awards Event Honors 57 Employees; Bennett, Marshall Participate

Remarks of deputy chairman Geoffrey Marshall at the employee awards ceremony on January 12, 1984:

In almost every one of Shakespeare's plays one can find him engrossed with the very tough business of trying to determine true merit: what people and actions are really worth, whether they are good or evil, and, if we could perceive which is which, could we make a society based on the truth rather than on lies? (I'm oversimplifying a lot in this brief literary history.)

In The Merchant of Venice, a character talks about the question of how to judge merit and expresses the wish that no one would be given an honor or an office unless he or she deserved it. He says:

Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
Or that estates, degrees, and offices
Were not deriv'd corruptly, and
That clear honor
Were purchas'd by the merit of
The wearer.

(II.i.x.39ff)

We are still struggling with these questions of course, but I draw your attention to the fact that there does not seem to be any significant question about whether those honored today deserve their honors. They certainly do, and we all know it. Moreover, we know that others of us will be honored in the future and that some of you will be honored for a second and a third and a fourth time as the years pass.

That's really not an insignificant fact. About 60 people were recognized today, and that is more than 20 percent of our full-time strength. We know that there are others who are deserving and who will be recognized in their turns.

How is it possible that we are able to acknowledge the merit in these recognitions? They were earned for different reasons, of course, but why are we of one mind about the justice of it? After all, we do not manufacture something, and there are not very many quantitative measures that count for much. For the last fiscal year, for example, one can divide the grant-making budget by the number of people who work here and discover that each of us can be said to be associated with $46,000 in grants. Now, would we give someone special recognition for having awarded four or five times that amount? Maybe, but I can also imagine honor bestowed on someone who awarded only half that amount. The statistics do not mean very much.

I think that the reason we are confident about the justice of today's awards and optimistic about next year's ceremony as well is because we are small, and we know one another's work. At least we know a lot about one another's work.

There is another benefit to size that has occurred to me as well, and that has to do with our reputation as an agency. A reputation, of course, is just as difficult to measure fairly as it is to measure the merit of an individual. Reputations can be deserved and undeserved and they can be almost impossible to change.

I thought of the connection between reputation and this ceremony today earlier this week when I saw the movie, Terms of Endearment. One of the biggest laughs in this movie comes with the following bit of dialogue:

A clerk in a supermarket is being impolite and hostile to a woman in a grocery store checkout line who finds that she does not have enough money to pay for her groceries. A man standing in the same line says to the clerk: "There is no reason to be rude to this woman."

The clerk replies, "I don't think I was being rude."

The man answers, "Then you must be from New York."

New York sales people have a reputation that gets a laugh in every movie theater in the nation.

The NEH has a reputation as well, and it is in good measure a reputation that you have created through your courtesy, your ample resources of human decency in dealing with one another and the public, and your forbearance for the weakness of others.

Why is this a benefit of size? Because for the agency as a whole to have this reputation, a lot of people have to show these characteristics, and the characteristics do not appear in you because of some rules that we have published or memos that we have circulated or even because of the opportunity to be honored in this ceremony. The characteristics are there because you brought them with you and, I think, because you are surrounded by other people who act in the same way. You are models for one another, you reinforce one another, and you support one another. That has given us our reputation and the reason why we can happily conclude this ceremony in recognition that none of you, in Shakespeare's words, presuming to wear an undeserved dignity. Thank you.

Carpool Applications Available

Applications for the Council of Government's (COG) federal ride-sharing program are now available in the Personnel Office, Room 417, according to personnel assistant Sandy Adams.

Called the "Commuter Club," the ten-year-old program helps a current 11,500 commuters find convenient carpools.

Endowment employees interested in being matched with other riders or drivers can pick up an application and fill it out, Adams says.

The form has space for the applicant to indicate which ride-sharing options are preferred and which major intersections are favored locations to meet other commuters.

The application form is an addressed self-mailer to COG. Upon receipt of the form, COG keys the information into a computer from which individual ride-match lists are prepared. The lists are then sent to the applicant.

Odd Absurdum Manager Sought

The NEH softball team is urgently in need of a new organizer, according to Lori Schroeder who resigned recently after four years as team manager.

Schroeder, a full-time staff member in the Grants office who has just taken on a part-time job in the OPO Pavilion, says that she no longer has the time to manage the team.

"Unless someone volunteers, the team is in danger of being disbanded," Schroeder says.

If any member of the Endowment staff is willing to take over the team, please contact Lori Schroeder for further information at 786-0017.