A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green
Kulturno naslijede: Bosanci u Bowling Green-u
COMING
Fall 2017

KENTUCKY FOLKLIFE PROGRAM
at a glance
The Kentucky Folklife Program was founded in 1989 as an interagency partnership between the Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Arts Council. In 2012, KFP moved to the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology at Western Kentucky University.

Celebrating 30 Years
focused on our mission to document, present, and conserve the diverse traditional culture and heritage of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
The Folklife Archives at WKU's Library Special Collections

WKU's Library Special Collections has been collecting material related to the history and culture of Kentucky since the late-1920s. In 2012, the Folklife Program's archives were transferred from the Kentucky Historical Society and merged with WKU's Folklife Collection already housed in the Kentucky Library. The Kentucky Folklife Program Archive consists of over 150 collections spanning across the Commonwealth of Kentucky and covering over 20 years of research by Kentucky Folklife Program. This new combined Folklife Archives is one of the most extensive and dynamic archives of culture and folklife in Kentucky.

Image from "A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green" (Photo by Virginia Siegel, 2018)

Fieldwork and Oral History

Fieldwork and the oral history interview are the cornerstone of the Kentucky Folklife Program's mission to document, present, and conserve the diverse traditional culture and heritage of the Commonwealth.

Documenting

Through oral history projects, regional surveys, and fieldwork projects, the Kentucky Folklife Program seeks to document the voices, experiences, and traditions of individuals and communities across Kentucky. Whether someone has lived in Kentucky for three years or three generations, their story is a part of Kentucky's story.

Presenting

Not all oral histories and fieldwork conducted by the Kentucky Folklife Program are collected with a presentation in mind, however much of this research is often used in public programming. Public programming produced by KFP includes exhibits (on campus or traveling), performances, food demonstrations, narrative stages, and other community events.

Conserving

Fundamental to KFP's mission is the conservation of the voices and experiences of communities throughout Kentucky. KFP makes ongoing deposits to the publicly accessibly Folklife Archives in WKU's Library Special Collections. Recognizing the importance of training communities to document their own traditions and stories, KFP also hosts community workshops and provides training for new fieldworkers, including a partnership with the Kentucky Arts Council in a program called Community Scholars.

In 2015, staff and faculty from the Kentucky Folklife Program and WKU Folk Studies program formed a committee with members of the Bosnian community to create the Bowling Green Bosnia Oral History Project. The committee's first major product has centered on an exhibit at the Kentucky Museum entitled "A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green," open through May 11, 2019 and funded with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The exhibit is accompanied by on-going programming, including music/dance performances, foodways demonstrations, class tours, and more. Programming centers on the expertise and firsthand experiences of members of Bowling Green's Bosnian community. Bosnian community members share their stories and demonstrate their traditions.

Through approachable topics such as music and food, audiences have the opportunity to learn more about the Bosnian experience today from Bosnian community members themselves. Audiences often reflect that these experiences help them better appreciate the experiences of their neighbors and recognize that historical events such as the Bosnian War has directly affected not just strangers in Bosnia, but their own neighbors, colleagues, and friends living in Bowling Green. To date, attendance figures for the exhibit and programming number over 5,000 students, faculty, and community members.

Visit the online companion to the project and exhibit at: KFPbosniaproject.org
Student Engagement

The Kentucky Folklife Program engages students of all levels in research, programming, workshops, and cultural experiences, whether on WKU’s Campus, in regional schools, or out in the community.

Student-Centered Applied Research
KFP regularly engages graduate students in WKU’s Folk Studies Program in programming and research, providing valuable hands-on training opportunities outside the classroom. Graduate students help produce and present KFP’s signature events. KFP also facilitates internships with students interested in careers in public folklore. In 2018, KFP’s 2016-2018 graduate assistant from the Folk Studies program, Nicole Musgrave, was awarded WKU’s highest honor to a graduate student, the John D. Minton Outstanding Graduate Student Award.

K-12 Programming
From facilitated fieldtrips of KFP’s exhibits at the Kentucky Museum to educational workshops in area schools, KFP develops programming that is engaging for students of all ages.

Adult Learners and the Society for Lifelong Learning
In the Spring of 2018, Virginia Siegel offered KFP’s first course as part of WKU’s Society for Lifelong Learning. The course consisted of lectures, fieldtrips, and cultural experiences with tradition bearers in the region. Due to the popularity of the course, KFP is working to develop future courses for the Society.

Transforming Lives with Oral History in the Classroom: HIST 333 History of Genocide
“... After the exhibit (A Cultured Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green) students discussed how emotionally transformative the experience was. The guided exhibit, followed by an in-depth study of the thoughtfully curated oral interviews, created a direct link with the subject matter. Often topics related to genocide are difficult to internalize but remain, on a certain level, abstract. In this instance, the issue of surviving genocide became much more personal and immediate. In fact, a few students were so inspired by the KFP interviews that they reached out to Bosnian acquaintances and friends to hear their stories. This project opened up a set of doors the students did not even know existed.”

Dr. Marko Dumančić, Associate Professor, WKU Department of History
2018, Excerpt from Letter of Support for Kentucky History Award in Education Category

The Dress to Express Program:
KFP’s Virginia Siegel has partnered with Dr. Tim Evans, Associate Professor of Folk Studies, and Rebecca Smith, Academic Coordinator for TRIO Programs at WKU (and Folk Studies alumnus) to create a workshop for high school and campus students centered on dress, adornment, and personal/cultural expression. To date, the workshop has been taught in Bowling Green High School, WKU’s Intercultural Student Engagement Center, and as part of WKU’s Upward Bound Program. The workshop is funded by WKU Research and Creative Activities Program internal grant.

(Photos: Upward Bound’s 2017 Dress to Express Class, photo composed by class participants)
Community Outreach

The Kentucky Folklife Program is a statewide resource for folklorists, students, community scholars, and cultural workers throughout Kentucky and beyond. We provide training, resources, and programming aimed at audiences of all ages and backgrounds, with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion.

Elevating Diverse Communities
Whether someone has lived in Kentucky for three years or three generations, their story is a part of Kentucky’s story. KFP values diversity and inclusion in both research and public programming. This means programming that is physically and economically accessible for audiences, but also programming that foregrounds diversity by presenting Kentucky stories of individuals from all walks of life.

Breaking Down Barriers with The Bowling Green Bosnia Oral History Project:
“We are mindful everyday of the misconceptions that the greater population have related to our religion, and by extension, our culture. A project like this, with its focus on sharing the life stories, traditions, and history of our people, is a groundbreaking way to engage our neighbors and help to break down barriers.”
Imam Sedin Agic (Islamic Center of Bowling Green) and Imam Muamer Sljivic (Bosnian Islamic Center) 2016, Excerpt from Letter of Support for KFP's 2017 National Endowment for the Arts Grant

Community and Campus Engagement
The Kentucky Folklife Program’s mission is statewide, however as a member of the campus community at Western Kentucky University, we also serve as a campus resource for folklore and traditional culture, with programs and practical hands-on experiences tailored for students and faculty.

The Kentucky Folklife Network and Digital Magazine:
In 2018, KFP was recommended for funding for a National Endowment for the Arts grant to establish the Kentucky Folklife Network. The Network will include folklorists, students, community scholars, and cultural workers throughout Kentucky to create avenues of support for each other. The Network will manage an online magazine offering Network members a platform to share their work. The project, hosted by Western Kentucky University, will also include the organization of a Kentucky Folklife Network conference, which will encourage folklorists and folk arts organizations to come together and discuss their work, generating connections and potential partnerships.

The Oral History Lab at WKU:
With support from members of WKU’s Sisterhood Foundation, KFP is working with the Kentucky Museum to establish a permanent oral history booth in the Kentucky Museum's Community Gallery. This booth will provide a comfortable, accessible location to record archival/radio-quality oral history interviews. The booth will serve as an oral history lab space for students and faculty, as well as KFP staff. The booth will also be available as a resource to campus and community partners. KFP plans to raise additional funds to include a computer and scanner for preserving historic photos and documents alongside interviews.
SELECTED EVENT POSTERS

A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green Kulturno naljede: Bosanci u Bowling Green-u
September 29, 2017 – June 30, 2018 Žilardo Opening Reception September 29, 2017 5-7PM

Walk To Remember Srebrenica Symposium
Wednesday, July 11 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM 1400 Kentucky St Bowling Green, KY

Sam Bush Saturday, September 12, 2015 Van Meter Hall Auditorium, 8:00 PM CT

Standing the Test of Time Kentucky’s White Oak Basket Tradition September 14, 2017
January 31, 2017

Hammer-In Celebrating the Metal Workers’ Trade Saturday, October 6, 2018 11 AM - 2 PM

Bosnian Coffee Demonstration
Sanida Palavora & Senida Husić
October 26, 2017 and 19th Century Kentucky Museum
www.kyhistory.org/2018/bosnian-coffee-demonstration

Kentucky Folk Festival Program and Department of Folk Studies & Anthropology host a KIMCHI DEMONSTRATION presented by KYU FROHMANN Thursday, April 27th 4 pm // Conflacis Institute Kitchen

SELECTED EVENT POSTERS

Selected posters pictured here include partnerships with the Folk Studies Program, WKU Cultural Enhancement Series, the Kentucky Museum, and WKU’s “International Year of” Program.
KFP’s 2017 Homer Ledford Award for Outstanding Kentucky Luthiery Presented to Doug Naselroad
(Photo by Nicole Musgrave, 2017)
Mariana Morales of Hart County, Kentucky demonstrates how to make tamales at the 2013 Horse Cave Heritage Festival.

(Photo by Brent Björkman, 2013)
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Dzenana Kadric, Sanida Palavra, and Senida Husic lead a Bosnian coffee demonstration at the Kentucky Museum

(Photography by Virginia Siegel, 2017)