



State of Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Rhonda Olisky, Program Assistant
Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism
One Constitution Plaza, Second Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Ms. Olisky,

We write in support of the application of Richard Harteis, president of the William Meredith Foundation, for the Special Initiative Grant offered by the Commission on Culture and Tourism in the amount of \$22,500.

This application is quite unique. William Meredith spent the last forty years of his life living, teaching and writing his most celebrated works at his home on the banks of the Thames River in Uncasville. His last two books won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award for Poetry, in spite of the near-debilitating stroke he had suffered prior to their creation. In his life, he served as a Navy pilot in World War II and Korea, was awarded numerous awards and honorary degrees from universities worldwide, served as U. S. Poet Laureate, and was widely recognized as an outstanding educator and scholar.

The Special Initiative Grant request is for \$22,500 towards a total budget of \$60,000 to be used to make a half hour documentary film based on the lives of William Meredith and his friend John Kelley. Profits from the film are to be used to create fund-raising projects to finance the William Meredith Center for the Arts on William's property. The Center will ultimately provide an artist retreat to welcome painters and writers to create new works and share their talents with the community. This is the first of several efforts to bring this dream to fruition.

The Foundation has been invited to submit a Special Initiatives Grant to produce a 90-minute film based on Richard Harteis's book Marathon. A third request will be made to the Independent Television Service for funds to be used to match the Special Initiatives Grant. Further interest has been expressed by Senators Dodd and Lieberman and Congressman Courtney.

Thank you very much for all of your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ritter
State Representative

Tom Reynolds
State Representative

Andrea Stillman
State Senator