

Let's Go!

*Claudia Utley, Communications Director
Economics Arkansas*

This summer, Arkansas teachers may earn professional development credit hours by taking a walk in a park. Literally.

Thanks to funding from the Arkansas Humanities Council, the non-profit educational organization Economics Arkansas will offer one-day teacher trainings at nine Arkansas State Parks this June and July. The workshops are free of charge to any Arkansas educator in grades Pre-K-12.

During the six-hour trainings, participants will study the history and economic impact of each host park. Upon successful completion, they will receive ready-to-use classroom activities and resources, lunch and a \$50 stipend. They will also earn six hours of professional development credit approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, including two hours of Arkansas history, which is mandatory for teachers for the 2020-21 school year.

"This series is an excellent example to illustrate that economics is indeed everywhere," said Marsha Masters, Associate Director of Economics Arkansas. "Economics is literally in every state park and in every neck of the woods. Teachers will learn to make the economic connections between their state park and their local community and share that knowledge in the classroom."

Workshop presentations will focus on the historic and cultural significance of the host site's park and region. These might include a discussion of Native American presence or agricultural value or the significance of a nearby battlefield. Other discussions will investigate the economic impact of each park, along with a team exercise challenging participants to research the human, natural and capital resources required to establish and maintain a new park. Rounding out the training will be conversations about how the history, language, art and culture found in the parks influences Arkansas as a state.



The workshops are expected to inspire participants to plan field trips with their students to the park locations once school is back in session.

Workshops are scheduled at the following locations:

- June 4, Jacksonport State Park, Newport
- June 16, Hobbs State Park, Rogers
- June 18, Lake Dardanelle State Park, Russellville
- June 23, Lake Fort Smith State Park, Fort Smith
- July 21, Pinnacle Mountain State Park, Little Rock
- July 23, Lake Chicot State Park, Lake Village
- July 27, Arkansas Museum of Natural Resources, Smackover
- July 28, Toltec Mounds Archaeological State Park, Scott
- A ninth location and date are still to be determined.

Registration is almost full, with just a few openings available at each park. More information and registration updates may be found at www.economicsarkansas.org, "event calendar." Founded in 1962, Economics Arkansas is a non-profit educational organization that teaches educators in grades Pre-K-12 how to integrate economics and personal finance into the classroom curriculum. The organization trains about 2,800 teachers each year.

The Arkansas Humanities Council, in partnership with Arkansas State Parks, is pleased to offer the Arkansas State Parks Field Trip Grant to teachers. For more info visit arkansashumanitiescouncil.org.

