

Commissioners

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Gerald Savage Chief White Winnebago Ho-Chunk Nation Elder

Christina Shutt Executive Director, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

Dick Simpson Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois, Chicago

Amber Smock Director of Advocacy, Access Living

Andy Van Meter Sangamon County Board Chair, President Design Ideas

Dorene Wiese CEO, American Indian Association of Illinois

Nikki Williams Rucker, M.Ed Sr Director, Professional Learning and Partnerships, Mikva Challenge



Vision

An inclusive statewide
commemoration that uplifts local
stories, places and programs to
build pride and showcase how
Illinois brings the Declaration of
Independence to life.

Themes

Power of PlaceWe the People

Doing History

Adapted from the American Association of State and Local History

Power of Place

 Place is powerful lens through which we can view the past. It challenges us to think beyond modern political boundaries to consider the full history of the what we call the United
 States, and Illinois in particular. This theme encourages us to reexamine ideas about our monuments, natural and built environments, and to find new ways to see connections
 between Illinois and our nation's story.

Doing History

• We invite people of all ages to participate in the process of **doing** history, to learn about Illinois' unique contributions to our Nation's history, and to consider how these things illuminate present-day celebrations and challenges.

We The People

For much of our history, the United States has excluded people—women, free and enslaved African Americans, Indigenous people, immigrants, people with disabilities, the poor, and many others—from full participation in the nation's political, economic, and cultural life. And, as well, this country has incorporated people of widely different backgrounds and perspectives in the effort to become a more equitable nation. This theme allows us to explore ideas about who we are as a country, how far we've come in the pursuit of the ideals described in the Declaration of Independence, and where we'd like to head in the future.

Priorities

- Engaging youth
- Promoting local commemorations
- Uplifting local stories and places
- Recognizing service

Projects

Youth Voices: "What Does the Declaration of Independence Mean to You?"

Illinois Passport

- Illinois Chronicles Publication
- Illinois in Service: Sept. 11, 2025 –
 Juneteenth 2026

2025 Benchmarks

January-June

- Outreach and Engagement
- Toolkits
- Identify local places to highlight

July

• Launch statewide calendar and programs

September

• Launch Illinois in Service

2026 Benchmarks

September 2025 – June 2026

250th Commemoration programs, exhibits, volunteer service period

Summer

• Statewide celebrations and festivals

Fall

- Partner and Community Appreciation
- Establishing Illinois 250 legacy pieces

America250 National Initiatives

- Our American Story nominations
- America Gives
- Event map and toolkit for schools
- America's Field Trip contest AND destinations – *submit IL destinations by end of May 2025
- Activations starting 2026
- www.america250.org

Underway in Illinois

- Educational website one-stop shop for all materials, calendar of events, news, and more
- Partner toolkit and commemorations toolkit
- Info sessions (April, May) for interested organizations + municipalities
- Invitation from IML to sign 250
 Community Resolutions

How to Partner

Create an inclusive statewide commemoration showcasing stories, places and projects that build pride and showcase "unique to Illinois" efforts that have contributed to bringing the ideals of the Declaration of Independence to life



Sign up to become a promotional Partner



250 Communities

 Illinois America250 invites you to take part in the journey to 250 and pledge to become an Illinois America250
 Community. Illinois America250
 Communities will be featured on the IL America 250 website and will receive toolkits to help promote programs and events.

How to Get Involved

COMMUNITIES

Pledge to be an Illinois America 250 Community



How to Get Involved

SUBMIT EVENTS

Submit events that can be shared to the national map and the new educational site

COMING SOON!

How to Get Involved

SUBMIT SITES

- Submit sites in Illinois that can align with at least one of the Commission's themes, or connects directly to the American Revolution
- COMING SOON!

SNEAK PEEK

• New site: showcase for partners, IL Communities, and destinations



Home About Resources News Events

Updates from the Illinois Commission, America 250, Partners, and 250 Communities across Illinois.



In the News



WCIA: Illinois leaders call on residents for ideas on how to celebrate

Illinoisans can now help with preparations.





PRESS RELEASE: Commission Illinois America 250 Commission invites all Illinoisans to celebrate nation's 250th anniversary leading up to July 4, 2026





WATCH: Press Announcement January 17, 2025 news announcement about the Illinois America 250 State Commission, hosted by the Illinois State Library.

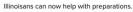




LATEST NEWS: America 250 Check out the latest news, events, and other updates from national commission, America 250 and its partners.



WCIA: Illinois leaders call on residents for ideas on how to celebrate







Home About Resources News Events



Illinois America250 Communities will be featured on the IL America 250 website and will receive toolkits to help promote programs and events.

Become a 250 Community

Illinois America250 invites you to take part in the journey to 250 and pledge to become an Illinois America250 Community. Illinois America250 Communities will be featured on the IL America 250 website and will receive toolkits to help promote programs and events.

Pledge (required)

My community pledges to become an Illinois America 250 Community by:

1) Promoting the 250th in Illinois and sharing information from the IL America 250 Commission; 2) Appointing an Illinois America 250

community contact; and 3) Committing to celebrate and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 2026).

Last Name

Mayor First Name

AMERICA IL

Upcoming Events

Browse upcoming events from individuals and organizations throughout Illinois.

Interested in hosting your own? View <u>available</u> resources and <u>contact us</u> to tell us about your event.

Home	About	Reso	ources	News	Ever	its	Contact
	<	March 2025					>
	SU	МО	TU	WE	тн	FR	SA
							1
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					



ILAmerica 250 Commission Meeting

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

View Event \rightarrow



Home About Resources News Events



Share your ideas.

We want to hear from you. <u>Contact</u> <u>the Commission</u> to share resources and ideas, ask questions, or request more information.

Become a 250 Partner.

Businesses, nonprofits, educational, cultural and civic organizations, and government agencies, are invited to sign up to be promotional partners using our Partner form.

Connect your community.

Submit the form to pledge your municipality to become an official Illinois America 250 Community and join communities around the state.

Submit an event.

Every 250th event and program in Illinois can be represented on the national map. <u>Fill out the form</u> to submit your event.

Learn how to volunteer.

Fill out this brief interest survey to be connected with volunteer opportunities to support activities near you.

Follow and share on social.

Use the social links below to follow, share, and boost all things Illinois America 250.

Resources



• AASLH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION for STATE and LOCAL HISTORY

Youth250 Resource

ILAmerica250.com

Will be updated soon, but this will redirect

IL250@ilhumanities.org

Stay in Touch

Follow on social media

@illinoisamerica250

