



# 2024 Annual Report

# From the Chair

## Charlie Bobrinsky



Charlie Bobrinsky

After 7 years of service on the Lincoln Presidential Foundation's Board of Directors, I was honored to be elected Board Chair at the 2024 Annual Meeting and Lincoln Leadership Prize event. I want to thank my predecessor, Satch Pecori, for his steady leadership of the Board for the past 4 years and his unwavering commitment to the Foundation's mission.

I've long admired Abraham Lincoln as a historic figure and important example of principled leadership. His ideals and his legacy continue to inspire people around the globe, even as the gap in knowledge and understanding of the past has grown. The Foundation's mission is as important now as it has ever been. I look forward to working closely with the Board and our President & CEO, Erin Carlson Mast, to chart a path for the Foundation's future and build the capacity to deliver on it.

We are fortunate to have a loyal network of partners and supporters who believe in the value of the Foundation's work and impact. Your support is essential, and we don't take it for granted.

As we look ahead, I am proud of all the Foundation has accomplished, confident in the opportunities before us, and enthusiastic about our future.

Thank you for your continued support.



Chair Emeritus Sergio "Satch" Pecori passes the gavel to incoming Board Chair Charlie Bobrinsky at the 2024 Lincoln Leadership Prize event honoring Jon Meacham.

# From the President & CEO

## Erin Carlson Mast



Erin Carlson Mast

In a speech before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society in 1859, Abraham Lincoln noted, “Every blade of grass is a study; and to produce two, where there was but one, is both a profit and a pleasure.” Although Lincoln’s speech was on free labor and education, I cannot help but think of it when I witness how past investments in our mission-driven work results in successful programs and significant growth in our national reach and impact.

For example, we produced *Fortifying Our Democracy: Lincoln’s Lyceum Address* in 2023, but built on that success in 2024 when we rolled out new learning resources. This year the program also won multiple awards for excellence and was broadcast by C-SPAN to their millions of subscribers nationwide. We hosted 27 historians and experts for discussions that reached thousands live and tens of thousands more through recorded programs.

We opened *Lincoln’s Springfield*, the first youth-focused exhibit at Lincoln Home National Historic Site, welcoming tens of thousands of students. The exhibit earned its first national award by the end of the year. And we launched our Latest Generation Film Contest with a special message from Ken Burns, investing in the next generation of historical documentary filmmakers.

We also planted seeds for future growth, by piloting a paid internship program, expanding opportunities for college students and strengthening our capacity to serve the public, leading a multi-site, multi-state 250th planning project, and developing new exhibits.

In the year ahead, we will make important decisions about how we grow—not for the sake of growth itself, but to ensure we are meeting our mission and having the biggest impact we can on the most people.

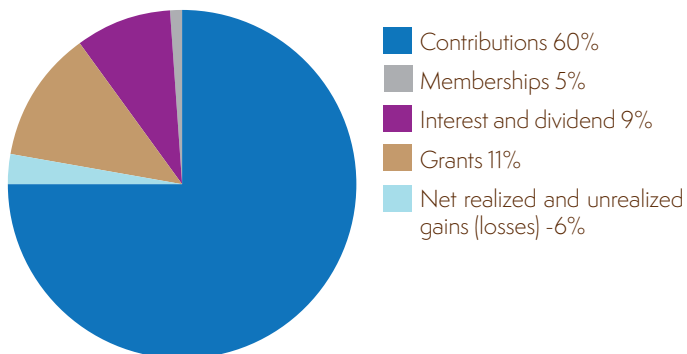
Thank you for your support and for believing, as we do, that we can all benefit from understanding Abraham Lincoln’s example.

# FY24 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

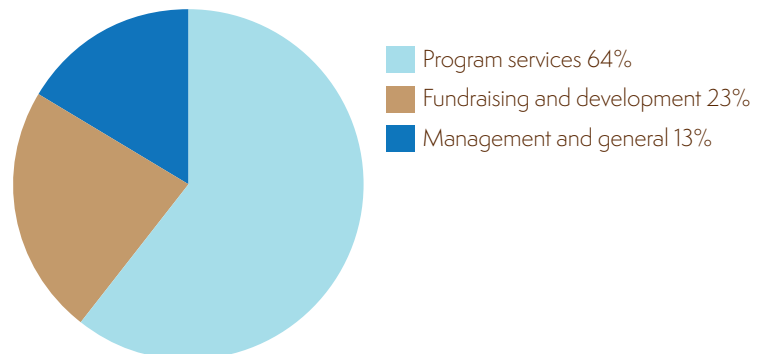
Year Ending June 30, 2024

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
<b>REVENUES AND SUPPORT</b>			
Contributions	\$1,438,743	\$46,433	\$1,485,176
Memberships	55,787	-	55,787
Grants	100,000	138,000	238,000
Miscellaneous revenue	1,063	-	1,063
Interest and dividend	189,893	-	189,893
Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)	14,210	-	14,210
Net assets released from restrictions	299,292	(299,292)	-
Total revenue and support	2,098,988	(114,859)	1,984,129
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Program services	1,224,037	-	1,224,037
Fundraising and development	493,532	-	493,532
Management & general	346,278	-	346,278
Total expense	2,063,847	-	2,063,847
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	35,141	(114,859)	(79,718)
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	23,804,243	371,799	24,176,042
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$23,839,384</b>	<b>\$256,940</b>	<b>\$24,096,324</b>

REVENUE



EXPENSES



# From the Treasurer

Mike Aiello

The Lincoln Presidential Foundation is an independent nonprofit public charity recognized as tax-exempt by the IRS under Section 501c3. As a Foundation, its primary revenue stream is contributions, including but not limited to donations, memberships, grants, and sponsorships from individuals, corporations, and other foundations. The Foundation's primary expenses are program-driven.



Mike Aiello

Our annual Lincoln Leadership Prize event is an occasion to recognize an exemplary leader and our largest annual fundraiser of the year. We were delighted to honor Jon Meacham with the prize in the fiscal year 2024 and raise essential funds to support our mission-driven programs. The Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund, in honor of our late Charmain Emeritus's memory, supports our mission through the "Charity for All" Award and other initiatives. Ed Wehmer received the award at the Lincoln Leadership Prize event held in Chicago. Our organization continues to forge a new path with the help of a Capacity Building Grant and matching funding, which was an investment in our future growth and national network. Other fundraising highlights of fiscal year 2024 include funding to support the expanding inclusion project at the Lincoln's Springfield exhibit, the Latest Generation Film Contest, the Four Score Speaker Series, the Community Spaces beautification project, and the Julius Rosenwald Home historic resource study and exhibit.

The Foundation saw new revenue, relationships, and expenses tied to activities resulting from partnerships such as with the National Park Service at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. Although the fiscal year 2024 presented new and unique challenges, the Foundation mitigated those challenges by maximizing existing fundraising efforts and closely managing expenses, resulting in a minimal decrease in net assets overall.

We appreciate the loyalty, trust, and support from our many members, donors, and supporters at all levels.

# FORTIFYING OUR DEMOCRACY



## *Lincoln's Lyceum Address*



## One Powerful Story, Four Awards, Millions Reached

The Foundation's second original historical documentary series, "Fortifying Our Democracy: Lincoln's Lyceum Address," garnered four national awards in 2024 for excellence in history, education, and visual arts. "Fortifying Our Democracy" explores the alarming events that motivated Lincoln to deliver his address before the Young Men's Lyceum in 1838. The speech is considered by many scholars and advocates to be a timeless argument for the importance of civic education and the dangers of taking our political institutions for granted.

This success builds on that of our first documentary series, "Warning Signs: Lincoln's Response to Rising Tensions in the 1850s," which also received four awards including a MidAmerica Emmy.

### Multiplying Our Impact

Following national acclaim, we were delighted to work with C-SPAN's American History TV to broadcast each series in the summer of 2024 to their 50 million subscribers. We

also granted permission to Lincoln Home National Historic Site to screen "Warning Signs" daily in their theater to their hundreds of thousands of annual visitors. The films have also been screened for multiple conferences, symposia, classrooms, and film festivals around the country.

We are grateful for Iron Mountain's generous support of this film project and our stellar project team including The Storyteller Studios, experts Dr. Saladin Ambar, Dr. Kate Masur, Dr. Angela G. Ray, and Dr. Manisha Sinha, and actor Eric Wolfgang Nelson.

- ▶ Watch the three-part series (total run time under 30 minutes) here: [www.lincolnpresidential.org/lincoln-resources/digital/](http://www.lincolnpresidential.org/lincoln-resources/digital/)





Dr. Angela Ray of Northwestern University was one of four experts featured in our award-winning *Fortifying Our Democracy* series.



The Storyteller Studios and Actor Eric Wolfgang Nelson are among the talented people the Foundation engaged for the filming of *Fortifying Our Democracy*.

## Teaching Lincoln's Lyceum Address: New Civic Learning Resources

To make it easier for educators to incorporate *Fortifying Our Democracy* in their lessons we engaged New American History and Every Museum a Civic Museum to create free, accessible learning resources for middle school, high school, and AP United States History-level students.

The resources help students analyze the context and language of Lincoln's 1838 Address Before the Young Men's Lyceum, which he titled, "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions." Students are invited to explore topics within the address such as the rule of law, mob violence, and the responsibility of perpetuating the nation's experiment in self-governance.

- ▶ View the lesson plans here:  
<https://bit.ly/FODLearningResources>
- ▶ Watch the webinar here:  
<https://bit.ly/FODTeacherWebinar>

The resources also employ inquiry-based methods that pose questions such as, "What might cause people to opt for mob rule over the rule of law?" and "How does Lincoln suggest Americans respond to threats against democratic institutions?"

More than 3,000 educators have accessed the resources so far. Our teacher webinar, which walks educators through the materials, kept viewers engaged for an average of 86 minutes, highlighting the value and relevance of the tools.

**NEW**  
**AMERICAN**  
**HISTORY**

Every Museum  
  
A Civic Museum



Above: Experts and youth advisors from across the country led mentor sessions and helped engage participants.

# Inspiring the Next Generation of Storytellers Through History

Abraham Lincoln understood the essential role that history and education play in preserving democracy. Yet today, only 13% of eighth graders are proficient in U.S. history, and just 22% in civics—figures that highlight the urgent need for new ways to engage students.

To meet this challenge, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation launched the Latest Generation Film Contest in August 2024, an innovative program designed to help close the gap in historical literacy by appealing to students interested in visual media and storytelling and introducing them to the power of historical thinking.

A key feature of the initiative is its Youth Advisory Board, composed of students across the Midwest, who helped shape outreach strategies. Students also participated in free, virtual

mentor sessions led by filmmakers. At the same time, educators were offered professional development workshops to integrate the contest into classroom teaching.

The inaugural theme, “On This Land,” invited young Midwest filmmakers aged 14 to 22 to create 5-8 minute documentary films on the people, places, and events that shaped their environments.

## Contest Overview

- Ages 14–22
- Short documentaries (5–8 minutes)
- Theme: On This Land
- Red-carpet premiere: Chicago, June 2025

“Shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generation?”  
—Abraham Lincoln, 1861

# Contest Launch Gets Big Boost from Ken Burns

The Latest Generation Film Contest opened in August 2024 with a special video message from acclaimed documentarian Ken Burns, who encouraged students to explore the history around them and harness the power of visual storytelling. His announcement helped raise national awareness of the contest. This launch was just the beginning of a robust lineup of virtual mentor sessions. Students learned from respected regional filmmakers and educators who shared skills, advice, and real-world experience in documentary production.

In addition, the first mentor session featured filmmakers from Burns' own Florentine Films: Stephanie Jenkins, Akia Thorpe, and Clark Burnett. They led a virtual webinar, giving students practical guidance on archival research and short-form documentary film production.

These early touchpoints laid the groundwork for a full series of virtual workshops for students featuring experts from across the region such as Rita Coburn and Stacy Robinson of Chicago, Leya Hale and Kevin Dragseth of the Twin Cities, and David Crouse, Robert Huck, and Matt Hamilton of Detroit. The Foundation also collaborated with PBS stations to raise awareness and recruit mentors and panel reviewers in this year's five anchor cities: Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Kansas City, and Minneapolis/St. Paul.



Ken Burns recorded a special announcement for the contest launch.  
(Credit: Evan Barlow)

A promotional poster for a mentor session. The background is dark blue with white and yellow text and graphics. At the top left is a yellow ticket stub graphic with the numbers '742126' and '126'. The main title 'FLORENTINE FILMS MENTOR SESSION: ARCHIVAL RESEARCH &amp; SHORT FORM STORYTELLING' is in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the title are three circular portraits of the speakers: Stephanie Jenkins, Akia Thorpe, and Clark Burnett. To the left of the portraits, the date and time 'September 24 7 PM CST' are listed. To the right, the names 'Stephanie Jenkins', 'Akia Thorpe', and 'Clark Burnett' are listed. At the bottom left is the Lincoln Presidential Foundation logo, which includes a small image of a Lincoln statue. In the center bottom is the 'THE BETTER ANGELS SOCIETY' logo. At the bottom right is the 'LATEST GENERATION FILM CONTEST' logo. There are also some white popcorn graphics scattered around the poster.

The first mentor session featured producers from Florentine Films who gave guidance on archival research and visual storytelling.

► More information:  
[www.lincolnpresidential.org/events/latestgenerationfilmcontest](http://www.lincolnpresidential.org/events/latestgenerationfilmcontest)



The Lincoln Presidential Foundation hosted educators who work with English Language Learners to advise on new resources we're producing to make the exhibit experience more accessible to all students.

# Expanding Access to Nationally Recognized "Lincoln's Springfield" Exhibit

Since the grand opening of "Lincoln's Springfield" last year, the exhibit has welcomed more than 150,000 visitors and received its first honor, an award from the National Association for Interpretation, recognizing excellence in interpretive media.

Located in the historic Corneau House at Lincoln Home National Historic Site, the exhibit was developed to engage the site's largest audience—middle school students—by sharing the stories of six Springfield residents whose intersecting lives illuminate the history of Lincoln's community and broader American experience. It was the site's first new core exhibit in 20 years, and the first exhibit designed for a youth audience since the site became part of the National Park Service over 50 years ago.

The Foundation developed this exhibit with and for the Lincoln Home National Historic Site with support from a generous lead gift from the MG Nelson Family Foundation.

Thanks to the exhibit's strong early reception, we successfully secured a National Park Foundation ParkVentures grant to enhance student access and create additional learning resources. The Foundation has engaged new partners serving a variety of student constituents in this effort, including The Chicago Lighthouse, Hope, the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and

Visually Impaired, and the Beardstown School District's Migrant Education Program.

Our goal is for this exhibit to provide an enriching, memorable experience for all students and families who visit Lincoln Home National Historic Site.



Representatives from The Chicago Lighthouse, which serves the blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veteran communities, served as project advisors.



Our inaugural paid intern program participants included (L-R) Nadia Wilson, Evan Keeney and Alice Abegunde. The program provided training, experience, and mentorship to college students while also enhancing the visitor experience.

## Internship Program Provides Real-World Experience, Lifelong Impact

**L**incoln Presidential Foundation launched a new paid internship program in partnership with our friends at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site and the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS)-Lincoln Studies Center, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior. This program provides college students with personalized mentorship, academic-and-hands-on training, and professional experience at Lincoln Home NHS, while enriching the visitor experience for the public.

As part of the program, interns participated in a three-week intensive training course at UIS. In addition to training in public history, youth engagement, and content specific to Lincoln Home NHS, interns also earned certification in first aid and CPR, in support of their role leading public and school tours as part of their internship.

With school groups arriving every fifteen minutes at Lincoln Home NHS, the interns played a key role in ensuring student groups had meaningful, memorable experiences that will last a lifetime.

"The most rewarding part of this internship was making a direct impact on visitors by telling the story of a pivotal figure in American history."

— Alice Abegunde

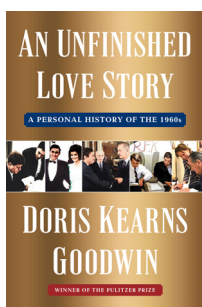


(Above) Event sponsors and Foundation leadership with special guest Doris Kearns Goodwin. Pictured from L-R are Geoff & Jennifer Isringhausen, Julie Cellini, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Bill Cellini, Erin Carlson Mast, Amy Schmidt, Sergio "Satch" Pecori. (Pictured below Left) Mast in conversation with Goodwin about her latest book. (Center) Charter member Paula Shotwell and guests enjoy the VIP reception. (Right) Charter member Suzi Spada and others receive personalized autographs from Goodwin.

## Foundation Hosts Pulitzer Prize Winning Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin

Lincoln Presidential Foundation was honored to host renowned presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin for an evening event in June 2024. It was Goodwin's first time back in Springfield, IL in more than 15 years. Goodwin appeared before a sold-out audience, with nearly 500 guests in attendance.

personal archives compiled by her late husband, presidential advisor Richard Goodwin, offering a deeply human reflection on the unfinished work of democracy. The conversation also delved into Goodwin's role as a powerful advocate for sharing Lincoln's legacy and inspiring civic engagement through history.



The program featured a lively and enlightening conversation between Goodwin and Foundation President and CEO Erin Carlson Mast about Goodwin's most recent book, *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s*. Part memoir, part political history, the book draws on

Goodwin has been an Honorary Life Member of the Foundation since 2002 and was our Lincoln Leadership Prize honoree in 2016.

Our generous event sponsors included Julie and William Cellini, INB Bank, Isringhausen Imports and The Pecori Family. Proceeds from the evening program directly support the Foundation's mission.



# Ed Wehmer receives the 2024 Wayne Whalen Charity for All award

In May 2024 we were proud to present recipient Ed Wehmer, Executive Chairman of the Board and Founder of Wintrust, with the Wayne Whalen “Charity for All” Award. The award is given to those who exemplify civic leadership, generosity of spirit, and a commitment to the ideals of this nation. The occasion marked the third time the Foundation issued the honor. The name of the award comes from President Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address in which he called on citizens to work together to build a future, “with malice toward none; with charity for all.” It was renamed in memory of the Foundation’s late Chair Emeritus, Wayne Whalen, in 2022.

In response to the recognition Wehmer noted, “I am honored to accept the Wayne Whalen ‘Charity for All’ Award from the Lincoln Presidential Foundation. Abraham Lincoln’s leadership and response to the adversities of his time serve as an inspiration and constant reminder to always lead with compassion for others.”

Wehmer was recognized for his dedicated civic leadership and devotion to improving lives and communities throughout the Chicago area through a variety of charitable organizations. Wehmer and Wintrust have also been steadfast partners and supporters of the Foundation’s mission for many years.



(Above) Foundation Chair Charlie Bobrinskoy presents Wayne Whalen 'Charity for All' Award to Ed Wehmer. (Below) Wehmer receives a standing ovation from the more than 300 guests in attendance.



# Thank you to our Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund Contributors

"Abraham Lincoln's leadership and response to the adversities of his time serve as an inspiration and constant reminder to always lead with compassion for others."

—Ed Wehmer, 2024 "Charity for All" Recipient

100,000-\$174,999

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Hobson/ Lucas Family Foundation  
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\$1,000 - \$1,999

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\$250 - \$999

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\$100 - \$249

Shia Kapos



Ed Wehmer, Executive Chairman of the Board and Founder of Wintrust.

► [Click here to learn more and give to the Fund](#)



The Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund supported this year's "Lincoln Presidential Foundation Lecture at the 29th Annual Lincoln Forum Symposium in Gettysburg, PA. featuring Gary W. Gallagher and Joan Waugh on "Lincoln's Generals: A Reassessment." L to R: Lincoln Forum Vice Chair Dr. Jon White, Lincoln Presidential Foundation President & CEO Erin Carlson Mast, Featured Speakers Dr. Joan Waugh and Dr. Gary Gallagher, and Lincoln Forum Chairman Harold Holzer.

(Credit: Henry Ballone)



Experts featured on our Four Score Speaker Series program in 2024 included: (from top row L-R) Ted McClelland, Allen Guelzo, James Read, Jon Grinspan, Kate Masur, Megan Gorman, Manisha Sinha, Saladin Ambar, Angela Ray and Jonathan White.

## Four Speaker Series Engages Thousands with Leading Historians and Experts

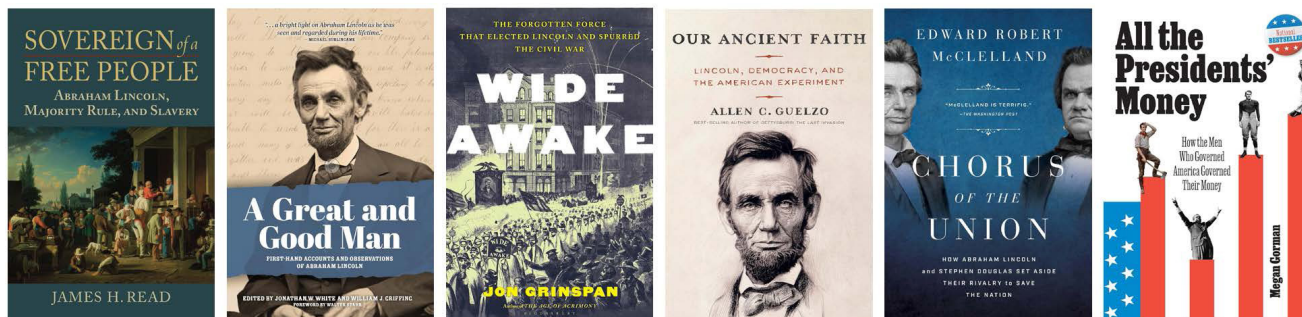
### Programming Reaches Nearly 25,000 Households

Thanks to generous contributions to our Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund, we continued our robust series of webinars and in-person programs featuring the latest thinking and scholarship on Abraham Lincoln and related topics, increasing the public's access to high-quality history and civic knowledge.

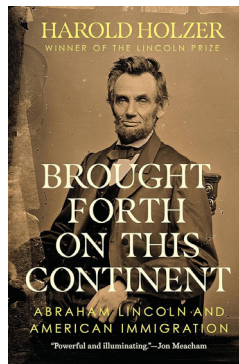
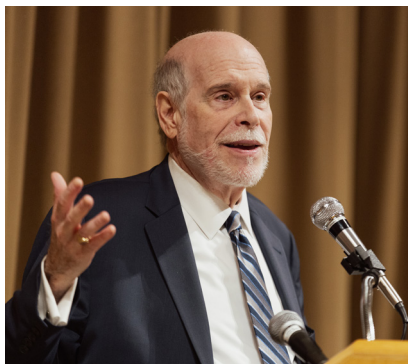
During 2024 our online webinars included a stellar lineup of authors such as Dr. James Read, Dr. Jonathan White, Dr. Jon Grinspan, Dr. Allen Guelzo, Ted McClelland and Megan Gorman.

Complementing our book talks were Four Score programs featuring Dr. Kate Masur, Dr. Saladin Ambar, Dr. Angela Ray, and Dr. Manisha Sinha, the experts in our award-winning documentary *Fortifying Our Democracy: Lincoln's Lyceum Address*, as part of the series' release.

The Foundation capped off its spring programming with a special in-person Four Score Speaker Series program featuring author and historian Harold Holzer. The program was held in partnership with the University of Illinois Springfield's Lincoln Studies Center and Lincoln Home National Historic Site.



Several of the titles featured in our 2024 Four Score Speaker Series.



(Clockwise from top left) Author and Historian Harold Holzer addresses the audience, scenes from the reception and program.

## Author Harold Holzer Featured at Special In-person Four Score Speaker Series Program

The Foundation capped off its spring programming with a special in-person Four Score Speaker Series program featuring author and historian Harold Holzer. The program was held in partnership with the University of Illinois Springfield's Lincoln Studies Center and Lincoln Home National Historic Site and was generously sponsored by Julie and William Cellini.

Holzer spoke about his newest book, *Brought Forth on This Continent: Abraham Lincoln and American Immigration*, to a packed, live audience in Springfield, IL and

to viewers nationwide through a live-streamed broadcast. As Holzer noted, "The Civil War could not have been won without Lincoln's leadership; but it could not have been fought without the immigrant soldiers who served and, by the tens of thousands, died that the 'nation might live.'"

The evening included a special reception with the speaker for Foundation supporters inside the historic Henson Robinson House, which serves as the Foundation's headquarters and is located within the Lincoln Home National Historic Site.

"Holzer's ability to weave Lincoln's way of thinking about the Germans, the Irish, and the Know-Nothings into a complex pattern of political rhetoric and common sense, made the program thoroughly enjoyable!"

—Event Program Attendee



Foundation President and CEO Erin Carlson Mast and National Television Host and News Anchor Stephanie Ruhle present Jon Meacham with the Lincoln Leadership Prize.

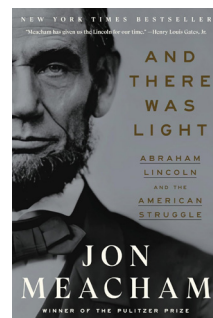
## Historian Jon Meacham Receives the 2024 Lincoln Leadership Prize

On May 21, 2024, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation awarded its annual Lincoln Leadership Prize to Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Jon Meacham, recognizing his extraordinary contributions to the historical canon and his unwavering commitment to helping Americans understand and engage in democracy. The prize recognizes notable individuals for a lifetime of exceptional service in the spirit of our 16th U.S. President. The event, which serves as the Foundation's largest annual fundraiser, was held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago.

Meacham shared, "I am very honored by the Foundation's recognition. At such a critical time for American democracy—a democracy Abraham Lincoln did so much to save and to shape—we can never learn enough from Lincoln's example, and the Foundation is doing important work to keep that example alive and resonant."

The award was formally presented to Meacham by television host Stephanie Ruhle. In his moving acceptance

speech, Meacham drew from his best-selling book *And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Struggle* to reflect on Lincoln's capacity for moral leadership in a divided time. His remarks invited guests to consider how the lessons of the past must inform the responsibilities of the present.



The evening brought together civic, cultural, and philanthropic leaders from across the country to honor a historian whose life's work exemplifies Lincoln's enduring ideals of unity, integrity, and public service.

The Foundation is deeply grateful to the donors and sponsors who made the evening possible. Their generosity supports our mission-drive work.



L-R: Prize recipient Jon Meacham, Erin Carlson Mast, Sergio "Satch" Pecori, Carol Marin, Stephanie Ruhle, Harold Holzer, Carrie Hightman and Tim Good.



Those in attendance at the 2024 Lincoln Leadership Prize include: (Pictured left L-R) Guests of Wilkie, Farr & Gallagher: Kami Adeleye, Olaf Wilson, Ekua Mensah, Tyler Born, Zoe Sellman, Brandt Dietry, Elizabeth Wayne, Alex Owings, John Perales. (Pictured right L-R) Jacob Verhoff, Lauren Verhoff, Paula Skaggs, David Liebensohn.

The Foundation offers our heartfelt thanks to the following donors for their support in making the 2024 Lincoln Leadership Prize honoring Jon Meacham a huge success.

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and Sergio 'Satch' Pecori

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Paul and Victoria Liebensohn  
Richard Mark  
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Terry and Mrs. Jill Isselhard  
John Sassaris  
Marc Schulman  
Dennis Culloton  
Pericles Georgopoulos  
Michael Smith  
David Rapoza



## New Exhibits Will Evoke “Vivid Sense” of Lincoln’s Community and Legacy

Lincoln Presidential Foundation is proud to be developing two new exhibits with and for our partners at Lincoln Home National Historic Site (NHS). These groundbreaking exhibits help advance the site’s goal of creating, “a vivid sense of the relationship of the Lincoln family to their neighbors and the broader Springfield community.” They also demonstrate the generational image of Abraham Lincoln’s legacy on the community.

The “Lincoln’s Springfield” exhibit, completed this past year, marked an important milestone in that direction, highlighting members of the community whose lives intersected with the Lincolns. .

Upon its completion, we successful raised funds to launch two new projects that highlight the impact of President Lincoln’s legacy on his neighbors and the park itself.

The first of these is a new exhibit being developed for the Rosenwald House, located inside the park, diagonally across from the Lincoln Home. The exhibit presents a unique opportunity to explore the ways Abraham Lincoln’s ideals and actions inspired future generations of leaders—including Julius Rosenwald, the philanthropist and businessman who helped fund thousands of schools built for African American children across the segregated South. The exhibit will explore how Rosenwald was inspired by Abraham Lincoln, and emerged as an inspiring leader in his own right. The first phases of the project are complete, including focus groups, workshops, interpretive planning, and the development of exhibit media. The Rosenwald House exhibit opening is currently anticipated to occur in early 2026.

One of Julius Rosenwald’s many philanthropic efforts including financing the construction of the Wabash Avenue YMCA in Chicago’s Black Metropolis. At the 1913

“We should here dedicate more than this building. We should dedicate ourselves to the unfinished work, to the great task before us of removing race hatred of which unfortunately so much exists and of bringing about a universal acceptance that it is the individual and not the race that counts.”  
—Julius Rosenwald, 1913

opening, Rosenwald’s remarks borrowed a phrase from Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address:

“We should here dedicate more than this building. We should dedicate ourselves to the unfinished work, to the great task before us of removing race hatred of which unfortunately so much exists and of bringing about a universal acceptance that it is the individual and not the race that counts.”

The second exhibit project brings another historic structure within Lincoln Home NHS to life—the original wel-

come center located right on Route 66. This exhibit will explore the cultural and historical intersections of Abraham Lincoln’s legacy, the development of the Lincoln Home as a tourist attraction and eventually a unit of the National Park Service, and the rise and decline of Route 66. This exhibit is slated to open prior to the Route 66 Centennial in 2026.

Together, these new exhibits demonstrate how Abraham Lincoln’s life and legacy have had far reaching impacts locally, nationally, and internationally.



Depiction of McCullough Creative's proposed design for the entrance to the Route 66 exhibit at Lincoln Home NHS.



Our Chair Emeritus, Sergio “Satch” Pecori, and President & CEO Erin Carlson Mast were invited to join elected and other leaders at the White House to witness President Joe Biden sign the presidential proclamation creating the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument in August 2024. (Credit: Annabelle Gordon/CNP/Bloomberg via Getty Images)

## Federal Designation of the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument Highlights Ties to Lincoln’s Legacy

### Federal Recognition for a Pivotal Chapter in Lincoln’s Hometown

**O**n August 16, 2024, President Biden designated the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument. The designation was the culmination of a decade-long, bi-partisan, local-and-national research and advocacy effort and strong support from across the surrounding community. The effort to obtain federal recognition and protection for the historic site achieved key milestones across mul-

iple presidential administrations. The site is located mere blocks from Lincoln Home NHS and, as noted in the presidential proclamations, shares deep connections to the Lincoln legacy.

Establishing the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument acknowledged one of the country’s worst examples of mass racial violence, celebrated the resilience of

the community, and lifted up the courage of the Black and white leaders who founded the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on February 12, 1909, the centennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth.

The Foundation was humbled by the opportunity to join the local and national coalition of organizations encouraging federal recognition and protection of the site. Other coalition members included local and national offices of the NAACP, ACLU, and Sierra Club, the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, and HSHS St. John's Hospital, whose Hospital Sisters provided aid to those wounded in the mob violence. Following the designation, the coalition has stayed engaged in supporting the National Park Service's plans to develop the site for public access in future years.

## In Lincoln's Shadow

The fact that the race riot took place in a city so closely associated with Abraham Lincoln's life and legacy drew national attention. Civil rights pioneer Ida B. Wells-Barnett observed that the mob violence in Springfield in 1908 occurred "under the shadow of Abraham Lincoln's tomb." This was not just historical irony. The mob made the connection explicit: as they rioted through the streets, they reportedly chanted, "Abe Lincoln brought them [Black residents] to Springfield and we will drive them out." William Donnegan, one of two Black men lynched during the riot, knew the Lincolns personally and, reportedly, had once made a pair of boots for the future president.

The tragic events in Springfield were not unique in the "Lynching Era," yet they catalyzed a national movement. Thanks to the visionary leadership and collective action of both Black and white reformers—including W.E.B. Du Bois, Mary White Ovington, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary Church Terrell, William Walling, and Oswald Garrison Villard—the NAACP was officially established on February 12, 1909, Abraham Lincoln's 100th birthday.



William Donnegan, who was part of Abraham Lincoln's community and a victim of the Springfield 1908 Race Riot, is one of six neighbors features in the "Lincoln's Springfield" exhibit created by the Foundation with and for Lincoln Home NHS.



Students from Freemont Middle School, Mundeline, IL, participated in the Arbor Day tree planting ceremony along with the Foundation and Springfield Civic Garden Club volunteers. (Bottom right) Garden Club volunteers supported a variety of priority landscape projects throughout Lincoln Home NHS.

## Cultivating Partnerships for Public Lands

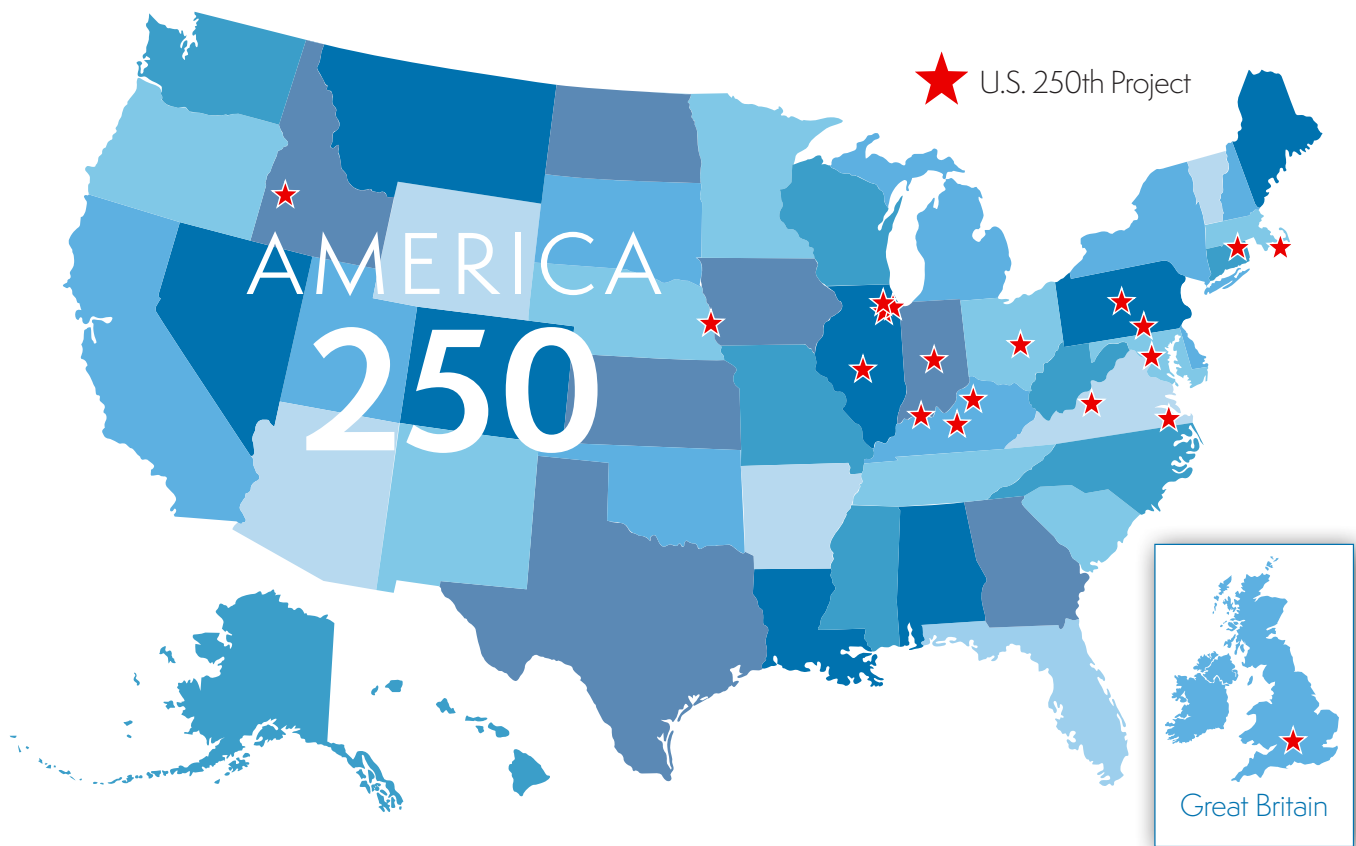
As the official philanthropic partner of Lincoln Home National Historic Site, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation helps plant the seeds of both local and national support for long-term stewardship of the over 12-acre federal historic landscape.

With generous support from the Union Pacific Foundation and support and volunteerism from the Springfield Civic Garden Club, the Foundation helped Lincoln Home NHS address a variety of landscape priorities. Projects included the Legacy Garden, removing invasive plants, restoring historic garden beds, planting native species,

pruning trees to improve climate resiliency and visitor safety, and planting a pollinator and Monarch butterfly garden. Community activities helped raise environmental awareness and public engagement with the historic landscape.



Landscape stewardship has a significant impact on historic preservation and the visitor experience. We are grateful for our donors' and volunteers' generous support of these efforts.



## Power in Partnership: Lincoln Presidential Foundation Leads U.S. 250th Anniversary Planning Project with NPS Partners, Scholars, Museums

In 2024, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation launched a new, multi-site project for the U.S. 250th anniversary that explores topics related to Abraham Lincoln's views on the American Founding, his articulation of each generation's role in maintaining and improving our government, and his role in what some scholars refer to as the nation's "Second Founding." This project had two major goals: first, to create new resources and partnerships with and for NPS units for the public benefit ahead of a major national commemoration, and second, to build a network for fruitful collaboration and collective impact now and into the future.

The planning phase of the project brought together a working group of Lincoln and American history scholars, public history practitioners, and stakeholders to advise the development of an interpretive plan framework. The framework will be used to design and develop various public and youth programs, experiences, and learning resources for the 250th.

Over 35 individuals participated in the planning phase of the project, including but not limited to representatives from NPS-WASO, the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park, the Library of Congress, Idaho State Historical Society, Indiana Historical Society, Kentucky Historical Society, President Lincoln's Cottage, and the Museum of African American History in Boston and Nantucket. The Foundation has also recruited over a dozen scholarly experts representing universities across the United States and in the United Kingdom. Glass Pathways, also based in Illinois, was engaged to help the Foundation facilitate the interpretive planning process.

The first phase of this project was made possible thanks to a grant from the National Park Foundation and contributions from other generous private foundations and individual donors.

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(Photo L-R) Foundation Supporters Mary Beaumont, Doranne Jacobson and Suzie Spada attend the VIP reception for the Doris Kearns Goodwin Event. Members John and Chris Bruell talk with Goodwin while getting a personal autograph of her latest book.

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(Photo L-R) Illinois State Senator Doris Turner and U.S. Senator Dick Durbin congratulate Foundation CEO Erin Carlson Mast on the opening of the "Lincoln's Springfield" exhibit located at Lincoln Home National Historic Site.



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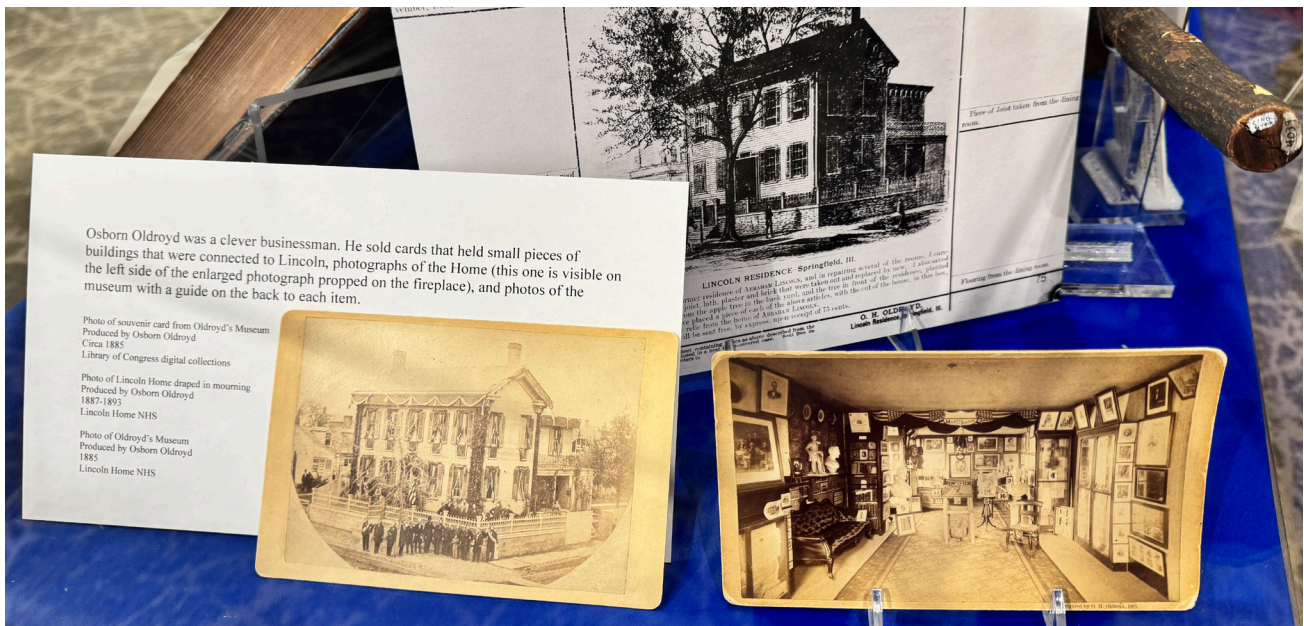
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Our CEO delivered a plenary presentation titled “Investing in the Present and Future: Fundraising for Our Parks and Sites” at the National Park Friends Alliance annual meeting, joined by panelists Jessica Barnes, M.A., Jeremy Sweat, Daniel Blakemore, CFRE, and Amanda Goldsmith at Yosemite National Park.



Foundation Supporters (L–R) Dr. Stephen Stone and Kathryn Harris talk with Edith Holzer at a Four Score Speaker Series event headlined by her husband, author Harold Holzer.



The Foundation Board’s September meeting was held in Louisville, KY to allow for visits to Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park and Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, two important Lincoln sites within the National Park Service.

# Our Lasting Gratitude

## Founding Charter Members

As our year comes to a close, the Foundation would like to once again extend our lasting gratitude to our charter members for their ongoing generosity and support of our vision to sustain, and provide educational and public programming, research, and access to historic places and collections, related to the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln, in cooperation with other entities.

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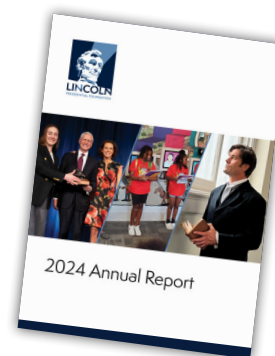
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### On the Cover:

(L-R) L-R Jon Meacham receives Lincoln Leadership Prize; Over 150,000 students have toured the "Lincoln's Springfield exhibit thus far; Film "Fortifying Our Democracy" wins awards.

## A Note of Special Thanks

The Lincoln Presidential Foundation gratefully acknowledges the many individuals and organizations whose profound generosity and partnership helped us achieve ambitious projects and programs in the past year.

Established in 2000, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity headquartered in Illinois. It is the only national foundation focused on increasing access to history, educational programs, exhibits, and sites highlighting the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln. The Foundation does its work in cooperation and partnership with others locally, nationally, and globally. Its vision is a world where freedom and democracy flourish, inspired by the life and work of Abraham Lincoln.

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