



# 2025 Annual Report

# From the Chair

## Charlie Bobrinsky



Charlie Bobrinsky

The Board made significant decisions in 2025 to strengthen the Lincoln Presidential Foundation for the future. We are proud of the result: an organization on stronger financial footing, with expanded opportunities to advance its mission and increase its impact. Your support helped make this possible.

The stories in this year's report show an incredible range of activity in support of our mission. In particular, the Foundation's preparations and partnerships for America's 250th demonstrate the unique role the Foundation plays, the strength of its national partnerships, and the public's unflagging interest in Abraham Lincoln and his place in our nation's story.

The Board also launched a new strategic planning process this year to chart the Foundation's next three to five years. As we look toward America's 250th and beyond, we are confident that the Foundation is well positioned to fulfill its mission and build on the progress of recent years. We are excited about what lies ahead.

We are grateful to everyone whose generosity, partnership, and confidence make this work possible.



Board Chair Charles Bobrinsky welcomes guests to the 2025 Lincoln Leadership Prize event in Chicago, the foundation's flagship annual fundraiser, honoring U.S. Senator Dick Durbin and actor Sam Waterston.

# From the President & CEO

## Erin Carlson Mast



Erin Carlson Mast

Some years are remembered for major milestones achieved. Others are remembered for the groundwork that makes future milestones possible. Thanks to your support, 2025 was a year we expanded our capacity to connect people with Lincoln's story.

As America approached its 250th anniversary, interest in President Lincoln's views of the Founding and his role in shaping the nation's future grew. We hosted programs and events, participated in national conversations, developed new educational opportunities, advanced projects with the National Park Service, and created new ways to engage audiences of all ages with Lincoln's life, legacy, and leadership.

Much of that work was preparation for 2026 and beyond. But preparation is itself an important part of impact. It means building the relationships, ideas, partnerships, and capacity needed to meet a moment of national significance. And we did exactly that.

Perhaps nowhere was this more evident than in the growing network of organizations with which we work. We were invited to join national initiatives, contribute our collections and expertise to new platforms, participate in advisory groups and cross-sector conferences, and collaborate on programs reaching different audiences across the country. Our partnerships with the National Park Service, museums, professional associations, corporations, and nonprofits demonstrate a simple truth: history belongs to all of us.

That's not to say 2025 didn't have its exciting milestones, including our first international award for exhibit work and the national expansion of our youth filmmaking program. At the same time, the work we began and advanced this year creates new possibilities for more people to engage with history and civics in the years ahead.

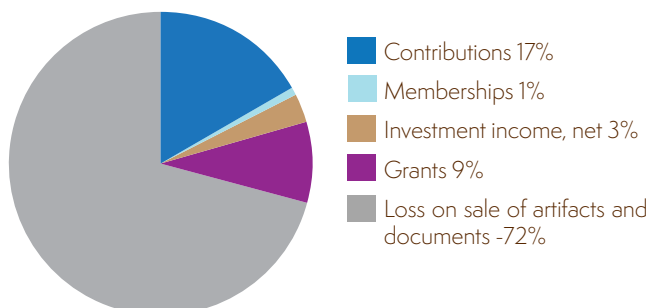
Thank you for your partnership and support.

# FY25 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

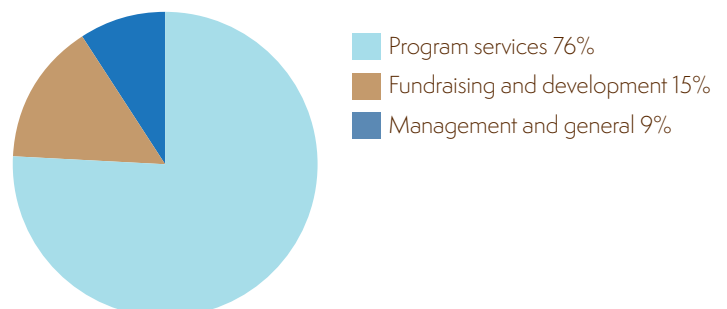
Year Ending June 30, 2025

|                                         | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | Total               |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>REVENUES AND SUPPORT</b>             |                            |                         |                     |
| Contributions                           | \$1,013,884                | \$95,479                | \$1,109,363         |
| Memberships                             | 52,822                     | -                       | 52,822              |
| Grants                                  | 500                        | 575,994                 | 576,494             |
| Investment income, net                  | 219,369                    | -                       | 219,369             |
| Loss on sale of artifacts and documents | (4,692,873)                | -                       | (4,692,873)         |
| Miscellaneous income                    | 475                        | -                       | 475                 |
| Net assets released from restrictions   | 536,840                    | (536,840)               | -                   |
|                                         |                            |                         |                     |
| Total revenue and support               | (2,868,983)                | 134,633                 | (2,734,350)         |
|                                         |                            |                         |                     |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>                         |                            |                         |                     |
| Program services                        | 1,567,737                  | -                       | 1,567,737           |
| Fundraising and development             | 313,829                    | -                       | 313,829             |
| Management & general                    | 175,510                    | -                       | 175,510             |
|                                         |                            |                         |                     |
| Total expense                           | 2,057,076                  | -                       | 2,057,076           |
|                                         |                            |                         |                     |
| INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS       | (4,926,059)                | 134,633                 | (4,791,426)         |
|                                         |                            |                         |                     |
| NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR         | 23,839,384                 | 256,940                 | 24,096,324          |
|                                         |                            |                         |                     |
| <b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>        | <b>\$18,913,325</b>        | <b>\$391,573</b>        | <b>\$19,304,898</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 501(c)(3). 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. We were delighted to honor the renowned actor and philanthropist Sam Waterston with the prize in fiscal year 2025. The Lincoln Leadership Prize event raises essential funds to support our mission-driven programs.

The Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund, in honor of our late Charmain Emeritus's memory, also supports our mission through the "Charity for All" Award and other initiatives. United States Senator Dick Durbin received the award at the Lincoln Leadership Prize event held in Chicago. Other fundraising highlights include funding to support the Four Score Speaker Series, a variety of significant projects, programs, and internships for our NPS partners at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, and our Latest Generation Film Contest for youth.

The Foundation raised \$6.9 million from auction proceeds of items sold from its collection to meet two important goals: a significant reduction in our long-standing obligation to retire the loan on the 2007 purchase of the collection itself, and the continued care and stewardship of the retained items. While the transaction resulted in a book-value loss on assets in fiscal year 2025, this reflects an accounting outcome of fulfilling a longstanding obligation tied directly to the collection's acquisition. We are excited about this significant step forward for our organization and its future philanthropic and educational mission. We appreciate the loyalty, trust, and support from our many members, donors, and supporters at all levels.



From left to right: 2025 Lincoln Leadership Prize recipient Sam Waterston, Master of Ceremonies and board member Chaz Ebert, U.S. Senator Angus King, Foundation President and CEO Erin Mast, and 2025 Wayne Whalen Charity for All recipient U.S. Senator Dick Durbin.

## Actor, Humanitarian Sam Waterston Receives the 2025 Lincoln Leadership Prize

On April 21, 2025, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation was proud to present renowned actor Sam Waterston with its annual Lincoln Leadership Prize. Widely recognized for his portrayal of President Abraham Lincoln in the critically acclaimed play *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, as well as in other productions that have brought Lincoln's legacy to life—Waterston's contributions to the arts are matched by his dedication to humanitarian causes. He has served as Board Chair of Oceana, the world's largest ocean-focused NGO, and has been a member of the Board of Refugees International, advocating for the rights of displaced individuals around the world.

"I'm honored to receive the Lincoln Leadership Prize," said Sam Waterston. "It's uncanny how much Lincoln—his speeches, political ideas, values, and the conflicts of his time—are so relevant to the challenges we face today. This honor could not have come at a more meaningful moment."

During his inspirational acceptance speech, Waterston spoke of Lincoln's 1838 Lyceum Address, warning that the greatest threat to American democracy come from the nation's own insecurities.

The prize, which was formally presented to Waterston by his close friend Senator Angus King, 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.

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.

“I’m honored to receive the Lincoln Leadership Prize. It’s uncanny how much Lincoln—his speeches, political ideas, values, and the conflicts of his time—are so relevant to the challenges we face today. This honor could not have come at a more meaningful moment.”

—2025 Lincoln Leadership Prize Recipient Sam Waterston



Sam Waterston reacts to video tributes.



Sam Waterston with guests of Ameren Illinois: Stephanie Hickman, Kristol Whatley Simms, Suzanne Griffith.



Lincoln Leadership Prize Chair Carrie Hightman with former Prize recipient Jim Reynolds



2025 Foundation Board with Sam Waterston and US Senators Angus King and Dick Durbin.



Historian Harold Holzer with Sam Waterston

The Foundation offers our heartfelt thanks to the following donors for their support in making the 2025 Lincoln Leadership Prize honoring Sam Waterston a huge success.

#### Platinum

Grosvenor Capital Management,  
L.P.  
Charles K. and Maryanne  
Bobrinskoy

#### Gold

Anonymous  
Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan  
Foundation  
Reputation Partners LLC  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher &  
Flom LLP  
Wintrust Financial Corporation  
John Nau III

#### Silver

Ameren Illinois  
The Canning Foundation  
The Cellmer/Neal Foundation  
Henry Crown and Company  
Loop Capital Markets LLC

Minow Family Foundation  
Dr. Scholl Foundation  
Robert Graves  
Chaz Hammel-Smith Ebert  
Michael and Susan Kahn  
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Judy and John McCarter  
J. Christopher & Anne Reyes

#### Bronze

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Ariel Investments  
Brightstar Lottery  
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Pritzker Military Foundation  
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Peoples Gas  
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Lori Lennon and Donald Lynch  
Paul and Victoria Liebensohn  
Sergio 'Satch' Pecori and the  
Pecori Family  
Paula Wolff, The Wayne Whalen  
Family

#### Contributions

Freeman's | Hindman  
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Newsweb Corporation  
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Barry and Linda Hines  
Bridget Lamont  
Michael Silver and Larry Isaacson  
Jeff Papa  
Trisha Rich  
Tom and Lisa Sodeika  
Karen and Randall Witter  
Mitch and Susan Work



Back left to right: Graham Grady, Randy Nornes, Sid Bala, Illinois State Representative Kam Buckner (26th District), Kristen Prinz, Michael Krauss, and JJ Markee.  
Front: Phil Clement, Bridget Coughlin, Steven Chaouki, Jim Hart, Paul Hsu.



BMO guests: Don Dabisch, Francesco Furio, Rachel McKay, Marc McKay, Ellaine Sambo-Reyther, Spencer Klein, and Joshua Hermann.



Left to right: Leonard Robinson, Kim Turner, Claudia Conlon, Kevin Conlon, Linda Diamond Shapiro, Mark Shapiro, Kafi Moragne-Patterson, Christy George, Karla Johnson, and Joel Johnson.



Loop Capital guests Celeste Wright Harris, Emmitt Horne, Jasmine Gibbs, Carla Nguenti, Sidney Dillard, and Clarence Bourne.



Brian Duwe of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.

# Senator Dick Durbin Receives Wayne Whalen "Charity for All" Award

In April 2025, the Foundation presented Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin with the Wayne Whalen "Charity for All" Award, honoring civic leadership, generosity of spirit, and commitment to our nation's ideals. Named for Lincoln's Second Inaugural plea for "malice toward none, with charity for all," the award was renamed in 2022 for the Foundation's late Chair Emeritus, Wayne Whalen. Nell Minow, daughter of past recipients Newton and Josephine Minow, presented the award.

Durbin was recognized for a career of public service, including hundreds of bills on education, health care, voting rights, and veterans' benefits, and for his coalition building as the longest-serving Democratic Whip.

In his remarks, Durbin reflected on how Lincoln's legacy shapes his daily life, from his home in Springfield to his work in the Capitol. He described passing the steps where Lincoln delivered his inaugural addresses and recalled Lin-



Nell Minow presents the Wayne Whalen "Charity for All" Award to Senator Durbin.

coln visiting Union soldiers quartered in the Senate chamber during the Civil War. He asked what his generation is willing to sacrifice to preserve Lincoln's spirit and closed by saying, "That is our hope and our challenge today: to find the Lincoln spirit within us, and to save the new birth of freedom that was purchased with blood and sacrifice for us all."



From left: Wayne Whalen "Charity for All" Award recipient Senator Dick Durbin; Paula Wolff, widow of the late Wayne Whalen; Loretta Durbin; Lincoln Leadership Prize recipient Sam Waterston; and Nathaniel Whalen, son of Paula Wolff and Wayne Whalen.

# Thank you to our Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund Contributors\*



Left: Senator Durbin delivers his acceptance remarks for the Wayne Whalen "Charity for All" award in Chicago, IL. Right: Thomas Mallon and Martha Hodes deliver the Lincoln Presidential Foundation Lecture on opening night of the 30th Annual Lincoln Forum Symposium in Gettysburg, PA. Foundation CEO Erin Carlson Mast introduced their discussion, "Lincoln's Death in Myth and Memory, Fact and Fiction": A 160th Anniversary Conversation. The Foundation's partnership with the Lincoln Forum is possible thanks in part to the Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund.

"I cannot escape the reach of Lincoln's legacy—which is not a burden. It is a gift."

—Senator Richard J. Durbin, 2025 "Charity for All" Recipient

## 100,000 - \$174,999

Fred Eychaner

## \$50,000 - \$99,999

The Cellmer/Neal Foundation  
Hobson Lucas Family Foundation  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom

## \$10,000 - \$24,999

James and Kimberly deBeers  
Charlie and Jill Gross  
Brian Duwe  
Shilpi Gupta  
Seth Jacobson  
Nancy Olson  
John Rayis  
Charles Smith  
Richard Witzel

## \$5,000 - \$9,999

Ariel Investments  
Margee Elias  
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Jameson A. Baxter  
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## \$250 - \$999

Kevin and Lisa Callis  
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Sarah Beth Rizzo  
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## \$100 - \$249

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Judge Michael P. Toomin  
Peter D. Waldstein  
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Randall and Karen Witter

\*Reflects all gifts received since the fund's establishment in 2022.

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

# LEADING INTO AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup>

As the nation entered the one-year countdown to the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation shifted from planning to preparation. Building on our 2024 national planning initiative, which brought together more than 35 leaders from museums, historic sites, and universities across the United States (and one in the United Kingdom!), the Foundation spent 2025 building partnerships, developing new resources, and participating in public conversations that will help bring Lincoln's story to audiences across the country during the Semiquincentennial. Many of these new partnerships will bear fruit in the 250th year and for many years to come.



## Inspiring the Next Generation of Storytellers

Our inaugural Latest Generation Film Contest drew hundreds of student filmmakers to explore the theme "On This Land." In fall 2025, we launched the second year of the program, expanding it nationally with the theme "Think Anew, Act Anew."



## Supporting America's Teachers

Gilder Lehrman Institute invited the Foundation to partner on week-long teacher institutes. The program will provide free professional development and support for educators to bring Lincoln's story into classrooms across the country. The first will be hosted in July 2026 at Lincoln Home National Historic Site.

George Washington's Mount Vernon invited Lincoln Presidential Foundation to serve as its Illinois partner for a nationwide teacher professional development initiative that will take place in summer 2026.



## Engaging Elected Officials

At The Council of State Governments' national conference, our CEO joined historian Kate Masur for a panel exploring Lincoln's ideas about generational leadership and the importance of trust in government institutions for the health of the nation, with state leaders representing all three branches of government nationwide.



## Convening Business and Civic Leaders

Board Member Sid Bala moderated a fireside chat at The Chicago Club featuring Foundation CEO Erin Carlson Mast and Illinois America 250 Commission Chair Gabe Lyon. Their conversation explored how Lincoln's legacy can inspire civic engagement and leadership during the nation's 250th anniversary, bringing together leaders from across the public and private sectors.



## Inviting Americans to Imagine the Future

The Lincoln Presidential Foundation partnered with The New York Historical and Made By Us to bring a "Wish Wall" to Lincoln Home National Historic Site during 2025 Civic Season, inviting visitors to share their hopes for the future of the United States as the nation approached its 250th anniversary. A new Wish Wall is planned for 2026.



## Sharing Our Collection Nationwide

Colonial Williamsburg invited the Lincoln Presidential Foundation to become one of the newest contributors to History.org, a national platform in development that will connect educators with trusted collections and teaching resources from leading history organizations.



From left: 2025 winners Sasha Allen; Jherrisha Barr; Krin Blegen; Rohan Deshpande; Carter Hellwarth

# From Midwest Pilot to National Program for Youth

The Lincoln Presidential Foundation created the Latest Generation Film Contest to help close gaps in history and civics education by meeting young people where they are: as history enthusiasts and content creators who care about true stories about the past, even if they don't yet think of themselves as historians. The inaugural Midwest contest invited youth to create short documentary films on the theme "On This Land."

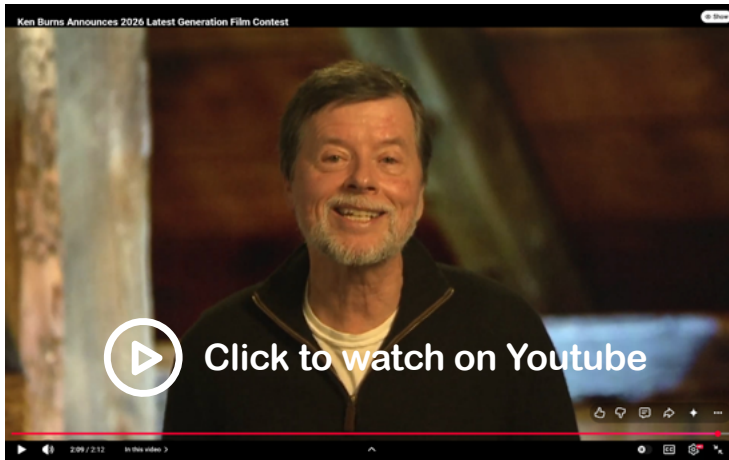
Hundreds of young people participated, with free mentorship sessions offering guidance from professional filmmakers and educators on topics including: archival research, short-form storytelling and production, personal viewpoint, place-based storytelling and more featuring experts from Florentine Films, PBS Twin Cities, PBS Detroit, and acclaimed filmmakers Stacy Robinson and Rita Coburn. The winning filmmakers were celebrated at a red-carpet premiere in Chicago, where their films were screened for an audience of family, friends, mentors, and supporters.

## Inspired by Lincoln

Inspired by Abraham Lincoln's question, "Shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generation?" the Latest Generation Film Contest encourages young filmmakers to explore American history through documentary storytelling. The Lincoln Presidential Foundation first launched this program in 2024 thanks to a generous grant from The Better Angels Society through the Amy Margerum Berg Education Fund.



From left: 2025 winners Jen Omernik; Ryan Schuckman; Mariam Umar, Illiana Ambriz, Karennia Zemek, Bailey Callahan, Dalaysia Dixon, Aniya Dixon, and Garyl Welch, Jackson Mehmen, and Mia Rasmussen



The 2025 program launched with an inspiring message from award-winning filmmaker Ken Burns

Building on the success of the inaugural year, the Foundation expanded Latest Generation nationally in fall 2025, opening the contest to young filmmakers ages 14–22 across the United States. Acclaimed documentary filmmaker Ken Burns returned to help launch the second year, featuring the new theme, “Think Anew, Act Anew,” inspired by Lincoln's 1862 Annual Message to Congress.

We were also able to attend, and bring some of the winners to, the Library of Congress Lavine/Ken Burns Prize for Film in Boston, with support from The Better Angels Society, in the fall of 2025. Some of our Latest Generation winners also had the chance to show their winning films at the Gettysburg Film Festival in PA and the Hindsight Festival in Savannah, GA, and to speak from the stage at these events, a rare opportunity that gave these young storytellers a platform few their age ever get to stand on.

“What I think makes this program especially important is it encourages and also enables young people to make a film with the highest degree of historical accuracy To be as thorough as you can be in the research process. It's helping you develop those skills and become both a more responsible consumer of information and creator in general. Which is very valuable.”

— Sasha Allen, 2025 Latest Generation Film Contest Winner, 2nd Place Ages 17-19

## 2025 WINNERS

### Ages 20-22:

**1st place:** *The Garden of Eden Documentary* – Ryan Schuckman (Hays, Kansas)

**2nd place:** *Hip Hop is a Home* – Jherrisha Barr (Chicago, Illinois)

**3rd place:** *Grandpa Noel's Gift* – Riley Killian (Appleton, Wisconsin)

**Special Recognition: Excellence in Storytelling** – *The Barn is Burning* – Carter J. Hellwarth (Celina, Ohio)

### Ages 17-19:

**1st place:** *Kansas City Jazz: A Frontier for Black Success* – Mia Rasmussen (Lawrence, Kansas)

**2nd place:** *Turning the Tide: Glen Lake Sanatorium's Crusade to Conquer Tuberculosis* – Sasha Allen (Eden Prairie, Minnesota)

**3rd place:** *Board by Board: How the Movement of One Church Constructed a Community's History* – Jennifer Omernik (Custer, Wisconsin)

**Special Recognition: Original Approach to History** – *Extra Ordinary Girls: Stories from the Underground Railroad* – Mariam Umar, Illiana Ambriz, Karennia Zemek, Bailey Callahan, Dalaysia Dixon, Aniya Dixon, Garyl Welch (Moline, Illinois)

**Special Recognition: Depth of Research** – *What They Taught Us: How Grassroots Diplomacy Shaped the Cultivation of Milwaukee Neighborhoods* – Krin Elizabeth Blegen (Oconomowoc, Wisconsin)

### Ages 14-16:

**1st place:** *The Life of Ike* – Isaac Gorges (Wichita, Kansas)

**2nd place:** *Buttons, Baby Teeth, and Bombs: The St. Louis Baby Tooth Project* – Rohan Deshpande (Chesterfield, Missouri)

**3rd place:** *On This Land: Dr. Norman Borlaug's Lasting Legacy* – Jackson Ray Mehmen (Plainfield, Iowa)

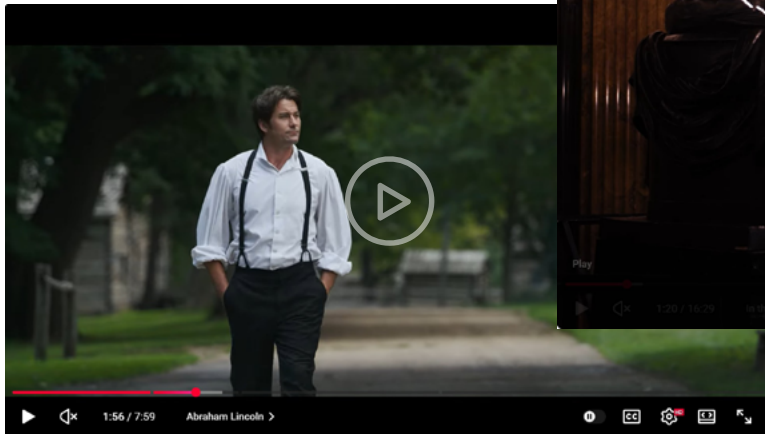
**Special Recognition: Creativity in Storytelling** – *Rock Revolutionaries - The Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band* – Deepti Koduru, Madeleine Kim, Noa Kim-Cohen, Selasi Affram (Chicago, Illinois)

### Beyond the Midwest – Special Recognition:

**Creativity in Storytelling:** *35,567 Yup'ik Stories* – Magnus Shipe (Santa Fe, New Mexico)



Ken Burns with Latest Generation winner Mia Rasmussen at the Library of Congress Lavine/Ken Burns Prize for Film event in Boston.



*Fortifying Our Democracy: Lincoln's Lyceum Address*



*The Legacy of Julius Rosenwald*

# New Recognition, Growing Reach for Original Storytelling

Original documentary films have become an important way for the Foundation to bring history to audiences regardless of geography.

In 2025, two of our documentary projects received new recognition. *Fortifying Our Democracy: Lincoln's Lyceum Address* earned an Award of Excellence from the American Association for State and Local History, bringing its total to five awards. The series explores Lincoln's 1838 warning about threats to America's constitutional order and the responsibilities of citizens and leaders to preserve self-government. It also continued to find new audiences, such as being screened during a panel at the Council of State Governments' national conference in 2025 and being promoted a part of National Civic Learning Week.

*The Legacy of Julius Rosenwald*, created for an upcoming exhibit we are producing with Lincoln Home National Historic Site, won a Mid-America Emmy Award. The film explores the life and legacy of Rosenwald, who grew up across from the Lincoln Home, and the ways Lincoln's example inspired his own life and work.

In addition to growing recognition, the films are reaching an ever-expanding audience online and at venues like conferences, film festivals, and classrooms across the country.



You can view these documentaries and more for free on our YouTube Channel @lincolnpresidentialfoundation

10 

Awards for our original documentary films



23 minutes

Average series runtime



Nationwide Reach

Network television, classrooms, conferences, symposia, museums, and film festivals

# Four Score Brings History's Newest Books to the Public

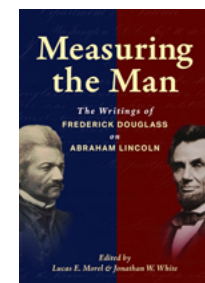
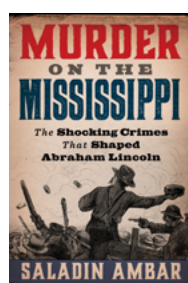
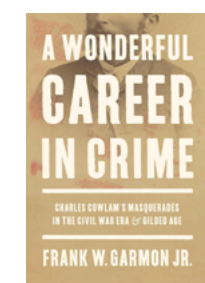
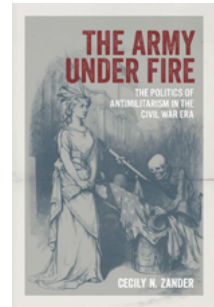
The Four Score Speaker Series continued to bring leading historians and authors directly to the public through free, online conversations about their latest work, supported by the Wayne Whalen Memorial Fund. Many of the 2025 programs featured newly published books, giving audiences an opportunity to hear directly from authors about work that was often hot off the presses.

The eight conversations explored subjects ranging from Civil War politics and military leadership to archives, material culture, biography, and the lives and legacies of figures including Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The 2025 lineup featured Dr. Cecily Zander, Dr. Jonathan W. White, Dr. Yael Sternhell, David B. Wiegiers, Dr. Frank W. Garmon Jr., Dr. George C. Rable, Dr. Saladin Ambar, and Dr. Lucas Morel in conversation with our CEO Erin Carlson Mast and Dr. Christian McWhirter.

Launched in 2020, Four Score has reached more than 28,000 households and produced a growing archive of conversations with leading historians and authors. With each program, the series brings new books, scholarship, and perspectives directly to the public, while recordings remain available online for audiences to discover and revisit long after the original conversation. Together, these programs create an enduring digital resource for anyone interested in Abraham Lincoln, American history, and the people and ideas that have shaped the nation.

By making these conversations free and accessible online, Four Score gives the public an opportunity to encounter new books, perspectives, and scholarship directly from the historians producing it.

From top right: Dr. Cecily N. Zander; Dr. Jonathan W. White; Dr. Yael Sternhell; David B. Wiegiers; Dr. Frank Garmon Jr.; Dr. Lucas Morel. From bottom left: Dr. George C. Rable; Dr. Saladin Ambar





An NPS ranger leads high school students on a tour of Lincoln Home National Historic Site.



A visitor explores the award-winning 'Lincoln's Springfield' interactive exhibit at Corneau House.

## The Power of Partnership: Working Together Through Times of Change

The National Park Service experienced a variety of changes and disruptions in 2025. Leadership transitions, staffing changes, new processes, and a federal government shutdown naturally affected projects and operations across the system, including Lincoln Home National Historic Site and the other units it manages, such as Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument. Notably, we bid farewell to Lincoln Home's longtime Chief of Interpretation Tim Townsend and Superintendent Tim

Good, and welcomed new Superintendent Chris Collins. The year underscored the importance not just of our strong relationship with our federal partners, but of the broader network of park partners who help make things happen for the public across the system.

As the official philanthropic partner of Lincoln Home National Historic Site, the Foundation works alongside the National Park Service to enhance and expand what the site

Below: Visitors and school groups fill Lincoln Home National Historic Site on a fall afternoon.

“The year also reinforced something we already knew: the Foundation is part of a much larger community of organizations supporting national parks and other public lands, and that community is an invaluable resource.”



can accomplish for the public. That partnership became especially valuable during a year when changing circumstances required flexibility, patience, and adaptability.

The year also reinforced something we already knew: the Foundation is part of a much larger community of organizations supporting national parks and other public lands, and that community is an invaluable resource. Through the National Park Friends Alliance and other national networks, we worked alongside organizations of all sizes and from across the country, sharing ideas, advocating for parks, and finding ways to support the places and stories in their care.



Smiling NPS rangers walk the path at Lincoln Home, a welcome green space in the urban Springfield setting.



A young visitor tries on a stovepipe hat in the Lincoln Home gift shop.



An NPS ranger fields questions from a student group during a walking tour of the site.

## All For Parks

The Foundation was featured by the National Park Foundation as part of its All For Parks campaign, a nationwide effort bringing together park supporters and partners around the shared responsibility of caring for America's national parks.

### Pressing Ahead

In public-private partnerships, progress is not always measured in completed projects. It can also mean staying engaged through change, maintaining the relationships that make collaboration possible, and being ready to move when circumstances allow.

The changes of 2025 affected the pace of several initiatives. Some projects that we had expected to advance further, including exhibit projects related to the Rosenwald House and the Lincoln Home–Route 66 history, experienced delays as plans and processes evolved. Rather than putting this work aside, the Foundation and Lincoln Home NHS continued to develop ongoing projects, adapt plans, and prepare for the next stage of implementation. We were also able to plant the seeds of future initiatives, public programs, and capital projects for 2026 and beyond.





The Foundation partners with Union Pacific in Springfield to mark the 163rd anniversary of the Pacific Railway Act, featuring a public viewing of the No. 1616 Lincoln Locomotive

## Marking the Anniversary of Lincoln's Pacific Railway Act

On July 1, 2025, the Lincoln Presidential Foundation joined Union Pacific in Springfield to commemorate the 163rd anniversary of the Pacific Railway Act, which President Abraham Lincoln signed on July 1, 1862. The special event featured Union Pacific's new commemorative Lincoln Locomotive No. 1616, giving hundreds of people the opportunity to see the locomotive up close and meet Mr. Lincoln himself.



Foundation CEO Erin Mast greets the crowd alongside Lincoln interpreter Randy Duncan at the Pacific Railway Act anniversary event.



**BUILDING AMERICA®**

The event built on a longstanding partnership between Union Pacific and the Foundation. Union Pacific has supported the Foundation's work for years, including conservation and landscape efforts at Lincoln Home National Historic Site. Earlier in 2025, Chairman Emeritus Sergio "Satch" Pecori represented the Foundation at the unveiling of No. 1616 in North Little Rock, Arkansas. The Foundation then partnered with Union Pacific, Looking for Lincoln, and Hanson Professional Services to bring the locomotive to Springfield for the anniversary commemoration.

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Through December 2025

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Left: The Foundation received a 2025 Award of Excellence from the American Association for State and Local History for its documentary "Fortifying Our Democracy: Lincoln's Lyceum Address" — the film's 5th award. Right: The Foundation's Lincoln's Springfield exhibit won an International MUSE Award.

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Board Member Sid Bala moderates a fireside chat at The Chicago Club with Foundation CEO Erin Carlson Mast and Illinois America 250 Commission Chair Gabe Lyon on how Lincoln's legacy can inspire civic engagement ahead of the nation's 250th anniversary.

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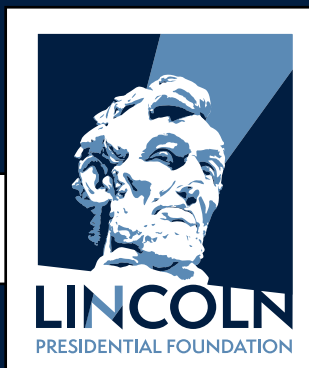
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