

CELEBRATION & COMMEMORATION PLAN

2025-2037

FEBRUARY 6, 2025
AM250AK TASK FORCE
Alaska Historical Commission

America250Alaska

Per Administrative Order 357, Governor Mike Dunleavy designated the Alaska Historical Commission (AHC), chaired by Lt. Governor Nancy Dahlstrom, as the agency responsible for coordinating the observance, events, and activities statewide and working with the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission at the national level.



"Alaska's rich history, diverse cultures, and unique contributions to the United States will play a vital role in this national celebration. I look forward to engaging Alaskans in this once-in-a-lifetime commemoration."



Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy Administrative Order 357 November 6, 2024

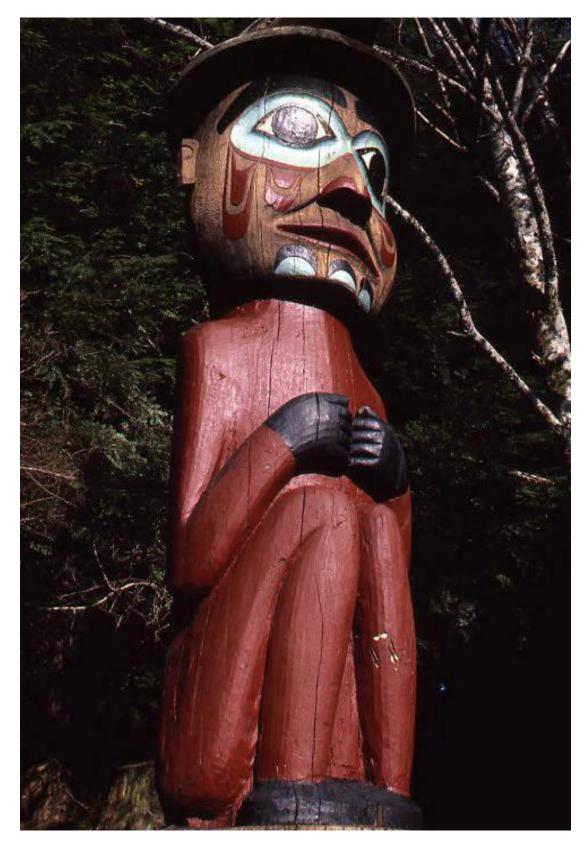
The Governor requested that all State agencies and departments, within available appropriations, provide the Alaska Historical Commission with assistance, information, and resources necessary to coordinate the America250Alaska Celebration and Commemoration.

Ultimately, successful planning, engagement, and execution of America250Alaska activities, projects, programs, and observances will be realized only if Alaskans work together.

The following is Alaska's plan to celebrate and commemorate our American history.



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Totem Bight State Park, Ketchikan, Alaska In addition to conveying extraordinary artistic design, totem poles in Southeast Alaska hold centuries of community history, values, traditions, stories, and family lineage. In 1938, the U.S. Forest Service began a program to salvage and reconstruct large cedar totems, using Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) funds to hire skilled Native carvers. From the elders, young artisans learned the art of carving totem poles, and totems left to rot in the woods were either repaired or duplicated. At statehood in 1959, title to the land passed from the federal government to the State of Alaska. Because of their collective artistry and cultural heritage, Totem Bight was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1970.



"Take Tomorrow and Dream"

On February 5, 1956, at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Alaska Constitution Convention members bequeathed the state constitution they had just forged to Alaska's youth. While the founders recognized the importance of Alaska's past, the framework they crafted looked forward to the future with vision and hope. "You are our future," states the resolution. "We ask you to take tomorrow and dream."

Now, seventy years after the Alaska Constitutional Convention, our Nation will come together on July 4, 2026, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of the United States. The U.S. Semiquincentennial, also called America250 (A250), is the national organizing vehicle for citizens to participate in the national celebration. The historical milestone serves as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reflect upon our nation's past, honor the contributions of individuals and innovators who built our country, and look ahead to the future.

On November 6, 2024, the State of Alaska, rather appropriately, became the 49th state to join America250. In doing so, we established America250Alaska (Am250AK), a framework for Alaskans to spearhead individual commemorative projects, events, activities, and observances. The following framework offers Alaskans a plan to explore our vast history, rich cultures, and natural wonders while injecting enthusiasm, unity, and optimism for the future. There is no better time than the present for Alaskans to seize the promise of tomorrow and dream big!

America250Alaska offers Alaska a unique opportunity to celebrate our past and educate our fellow countrymen about Alaska's significant role in making America. Rather than

following behind the nation, Alaska, in many ways, has been at the forefront of U.S. history. From the Pleistocene to the present, we have done nothing less than people the Americas. We designed watercraft reproduced by modern marine fleets and made Alaska Native people some of the best seafarers in the world. We are home to the world's largest red salmon runs and other sustainable seafood. We gave women the right to vote seven years before the 19th Amendment. We passed anti-discrimination legislation 20 years before Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. We defended the U.S. mainland during WWII and transported planes to Russia, halting the Luftwaffe in the skies above Moscow and helping the Allies secure victory in Europe. We engineered modern marvels, such as the Black troops who built the Alaska Highway in 10 months, prompting President Truman to integrate the U.S. armed forces in 1948, or the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, whose innovative design has helped to fuel the nation for 50 years. We are home to the most economically powerful Indigenous cultures on the planet thanks to the Native Claims Settlement Act, and we hold over 60 percent of the nation's national parklands thanks to the Alaska National Interest Conservation Act, which has made Alaska a world-class visitor destination. Alaska has bridged the rest of America to the Circumpolar North and the Pacific Rim, reflected by over 100 languages spoken in our schools that make several Alaska neighborhoods the most diverse in the nation. The America 250 Alaska presents no better time to learn, preserve, and share Alaska's stories with the nation.

In addition to several national tentpole programs highlighted in the following pages, America250Alaska represents countless ways Alaskans and their respective communities might engage their collective history. America250Alaska could be a platform to spotlight historical achievements, observe tragic events, or encourage more Alaskans to experience our natural wonders. Public programming might include history conferences, museum exhibitions, art displays, documentaries, legislative tours, live performances, or a remembrance walk. Projects could be as simple as organizing a community picnic, a day of service, a salute to the military, festivities at the state fair, or a baseball game. With the World Cup and the Winter Olympics also occurring in 2026, leaning into sports and healthy futures for America250Alaska offers endless opportunities to engage Alaska's next generation.

This is an extraordinary time for Alaskans "to Take Tomorrow and Dream." As the beneficiaries of Alaska's founders' vision, it is our responsibility to study and share our history, honor our elders, and continue their hope for the next generation. If we expect Alaska youth to stay and build a prosperous Alaska, we must show them how they connect to Alaska's past. To succeed in our efforts, America250Alaska must be participatory. We should endeavor for every young Alaskan to be a steward of history. Believing that we are participants rather than observers of history, we all contribute to Alaska's collective story and can make history together.

Katherine J. Ringsmuth, PhD Alaska State Historian

Contemplating Celebrations and Commemorations

As the country and Alaska prepare to unite to celebrate the America250, the milestone invites mindful consideration of commemorations themselves. Historic anniversaries can be poignant reminders of historical events shaping societal, cultural, and political identity and memory.

Whether contemplating the meaning of 1776, 1492, or 1969, historical dates uniquely capture our attention, evoke strong emotions, and spark the collective imagination. Commemorations can cultivate public education, awareness, and a sense of unity. They can catalyze historical scholarship, public debate, and heritage/cultural tourism that can empower local economies and preserve our cherished historic and cultural assets.

The America250 presents Alaskans with the opportunity to inform our fellow Americans about Alaska's significant and surprising history, celebrate our achievements, and give all Alaskans the chance to tell their stories and our collective history. As Governor Dunleavy said, "Alaska's rich history, diverse cultures, and unique contributions to the United States will play a vital role in this national celebration."



Governor Gruening signs the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945. Elizabeth Peratrovich (to the left of Gruening) championed House Bill 14, which passed the Alaska Territorial Legislature on February 16, 1945.

U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

"From our breathtaking landscapes to our unique culture rich in Indigenous heritage, it's important for Alaska to be part of this nationwide effort."

-- U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, America 250 Commissioner



Established by Congress in 2016, the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission is leading the effort to plan and orchestrate the national celebration. The nonpartisan Commission comprises 16 private citizens, 4 U.S. Representatives and 4 Senators, and 12 ex-officio members from all three branches of the federal government and its independent agencies. Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski, who was appointed to the U.S. Commission by Senator Mitch McConnell, is one of four senators on the Commission and co-chairs the Congressional America 250 Caucus.

"America's 250 anniversary is about more than a reflection on our past; it's about honoring the contribution of individuals who built this country, the innovations that put this country on the map and a man on the moon, and imagining what the next 250 years might look like for our children and the generations to come."

--Rosie Rios, Chair U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

President Joe Biden appointed former Secretary of Treasury Rosie Rios as Chair of America250, the United States congressional commission planning the 250th anniversary in 2026. At the Alaska Historical Commission meeting on October 3, Rios shared numerous national tentpole programs representing a variety of ways in which the state of Alaska might participate in the U.S. Semiquincentennial. Rios's and other special presentations marking America250 can be viewed on the Alaska Historical Commission webpage.



National Tentpole Programs

The following list showcases several America 250 programs that Alaskans might choose to participate in starting in 2025. For program details, visit America: 250 Years in the Making.

America's Field Trip is a nationwide scholastic competition designed to engage America's youth.

Our American Story is a nationwide initiative to gather stories from people across the United States of America and create the largest collection of oral histories ahead of the nation's 250th anniversary.

America Gives is focused on reinvigorating a year-round culture of service in the United States through 2026 and beyond.

America's Culture is a national moment to celebrate and uplift American art forms, creative expression, and cultural touchstones.

America Innovates is a nationwide event featuring a traveling tech expo that will visit cities around the country over nearly a year.

America's Time Capsule is a national collection of items that will help tell the story of America at 250 and give future generations a tangible connection to this important milestone.

Cheers250, restaurants, and adult beverage labels.

Hike250 celebrates America's historic trails and natural spaces.

Sharing the Spirt of America: Just as the Declaration of Independence was read for the first time to the people of Philadelphia on July 8, 1776, now, 250 years later, Americans in all 50 States, 16
Territories, and Minor Outlying Islands of the United

AMERICA

States will read it on July 8, 2026.

Our American Story, is an initiative aimed at building the nation's largest-ever storytelling project to collect, share, and preserve stories from across the United States.



Spotlight: Two Lights and Field Trips



A Nationwide Call to Action April 18-19, 2025

Paul Revere's famous ride occurred overnight on April 18 – 19, 1775. **Two Lights for Tomorrow** commemorates that famous ride.

How to Participate:

FOR TOMORROW National organizers invite statehouses to light two lights in windows on April 18 and 19. The event offers the opportunity to raise public awareness of the upcoming 250th. Some states are encouraging schools, public spaces, and even private residences to place two lights in their windows, which engage citizens directly with the history of Revere's ride.

Service 250 Day

Organizers also call for states to promote a day of service on April 19th, following the Two Lights event. Citizens will be called to serve their communities with volunteer projects ranging from park and cemetery clean-ups (especially with the proximity to Earth Day) to community buildings, food drives, card writing to care facility residents, etc. The possibilities for service can be tailored to the needs of our citizens and in partnership with service organizations. Call-to-Action NATIONWIDE.pdf



A Nationwide Student Contest April 16, 2025

This nationwide contest, **America's Field Trips**, invites students in grades 3–12 to share their perspectives on what America means to them and earn the opportunity to travel for field trip experiences at some of the nation's most iconic historic and cultural landmarks.

How to Participate:

Students at each grade level answer, "What does America mean to you?" Students must develop their submissions individually and have a teacher, parent, or legal guardian submit on their behalf. The contest has different submission requirements for each grade, competing against age groups. The contest accepts submissions and will remain open until 5:00 PM on April 16, 2025. Students, families, and teachers can find more information, including resources, contest rules, and toolkit materials to integrate the contest into classroom activities at America's Field Trip - America250

America250Alaska: Mission

To ensure the State's approach to the Semiquincentennial is both comprehensive and inclusive, the Alaska Historical Commission has established an America250Alaska Task Force, which will ultimately be represented by relevant federal, State, and local agencies, as well as public and private organizations, to encourage, organize, and foster America250-Alaska activities statewide. (Administrative Order 357)



Alaska

Guiding Goals: Illuminate, Inform, Involve, Inspire, and Invest

Framing the America250Alaska Celebration & Commemoration Plan are five concepts that 1) guide task force goals and objectives, 2) provide collective purpose for future programs and projects, and 3) serve as criteria for grant deliverables if funding becomes available. Any official project, program, observance, activity, or event recognized by the Am250AK Task Force should strive to meet at least one of the following:

ILLUMINATE: America250Alaska will illuminate Alaska's dynamic history, rich cultural heritage, and extraordinary natural wonders.

INFORM: America 250 Alaska will inform Alaskans and Americans about Alaska's significant yet little-known contributions to United States history.

INVOLVE: America 250 Alaska will involve Alaska's diverse demography, multigenerational cultures, and complex historical perspectives and ensure that all Alaskans feel represented and valued in the statewide commemoration.

INSPIRE: America 250 Alaska will inspire current generations and future leaders through historical understanding, civic engagement, stewardship, service, sports, art, and community gatherings.

INVEST: America250Alaska will invest in legacy programs that encourage economic growth, engage local communities, and preserve our cherished natural, cultural, and heritage assets.









Vision Statement

The Alaska visionaries who built the great state of Alaska were ordinary people who often achieved the extraordinary. The America250Alaska celebration and commemoration is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to **illuminate** Alaska's vast history and cultures, **inform** Americans about Alaska's contribution to the nation's past, **involve** all Alaskans in telling our state's story, **inspire** current Alaskans, especially Alaska youth, by connecting them to our collective history, and **invest** in heritage programs that empower local communities, contemporary generations, and future trailblazers to dream big.



Participatory History: How to Get Involved

If you or your community has a proposed program or project, getting it recognized as an official **America250Alaska Project** is easy!

Step 1: Contact the America250Alaska Task Force at Am250AK.gov. (TENTATIVE)

Step 2: Provide a brief description of the event, including the date and time the event is taking place.

Step 3: State Coordinators will add the event to the America250Alaska Event Calendar, which will be accessible to the public and media.

Step 4: Receive use of the **America250Logo** for all officially recognized projects, press releases, and other content.

Visit the America 250 Alaska webpage at <u>Am 250 AK.gov</u> for more information. (TENTATIVE)





Alaska



America250Alaska: Timeline

As of January 1, 2025, all 50 states and five territories have joined the national commemorative effort. National programs, such as *America's Field Trips* and *Two Lights for Tomorrow*, mark the launch of the America250 celebration in April 2025. Most state entities will use July 4, 2026, the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, as the crescendo for their celebratory plan.

Others, however, are using the America 250 to develop a decade-long heritage tourism campaign (2026-2037) by marking the duration between the signing of the Declaration in 1776 and the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1776. The ebb and flow of planning activities are dictated by the succession of future commemorative dates, which often go unnoticed by the public until it is too late.

The State of Alaska became (rather appropriately) the 49th state to join the national America250 commemoration on November 6, 2024. Because we have less time to plan and prepare, the Task Force may want to consider an America250Alaska Timeline that starts in 2026 and spans to 2037.

This allows participants to develop more substantial legacy programs, curate exhibits or adapt lesson plans, produce documentaries, research and write, and fundraise. Most importantly, additional time allows Alaskans to contemplate the deeper meaning of national commemorations, rethink our historical markers' accuracy and ability to tell the complete story, and tackle difficult histories that national celebrations often overlook.

The following suggests a timeline including national programs and potential commemorative Alaska dates. These dates might illuminate Alaska in the national spotlight, illustrate our importance in making America, involve important yet oftenforgotten groups, inspire new-generation leadership, and invest in compelling, complex, and monumental legacy projects.

2025

January America Gives for MLK Day

February 100th Anniversary of the Nome Serum Run

March 100th Anniversary of William Paul, the first Alaska Native to

serve in the Territorial Legislature

April America Field Trips, Two Lights for Tomorrow, Day of Service

May Alaska's Field of Dreams traveling exhibit and companion booklet

June America's Field Trips Awardees Announced

July Our American Story Launch
September America Gives for 9/11

October 50th Anniversary of the Alaska Haul Road Exhibit

2026

February 70th Anniversary of Alaska's Constitution Convention

February Olympic Winter Games in Mian, Italy

June/July FIFA World Cup

July Alaska's Field of Dreams Game at Growden Memorial Park

October 50th Anniversary of *Tobeluk v. Lind*, ending the Alaska Native Boarding

School System

2027

February 85th Anniversary of Executive Order 9066

April 70th Anniversary of the Distant Early Warning Line marking Alaska's

contribution to national defense during the Cold War

June 50th Anniversary of the first flow of oil from Prudhoe Bay through the

789-mile pipeline to Valdez

October 80th Anniversary of the "Meeting of the Bulldozers," marking the

completion of the Alcan Highway built by nearly 4000 segregated black soldiers. Led to Truman's decision to integrate U.S. Armed

Forces.

2028

May 250th Anniversary of Cap. James Cook entering Titkatnu June 150th Anniversary of the First Salmon Cannery in Alaska

August 40th Anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act signed by President Ronald

Reagan providing a presidential apology and reparation settlement for

Japanese and Unangax interned during World War II.

2029

January 70th Anniversary of Alaska Statehood March 40th Anniversary of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill

June 120th Anniversary of the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition in Seattle
July 60th Anniversary of the first live television broadcast in Alaska –

Alaskans watch Neil Armstrong walk on the moon with the rest of the

world.

2030

February 85th Anniversary of the Alaska Equal Rights Act of 1945

December 50th Anniversary of ANILCA

60th Anniversary of Alaska State Parks

2031

December 60th Anniversary of the ANCSA

2032

November 120th Anniversary of Alaska Native Brotherhood

May 150th Anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882

2033

March 120th Anniversary of law enfranchising Alaska women

July 75th Anniversary of Project Chariot, marking the start of the modern

environmental movement

July 120th Anniversary of the first flight in Alaska

2034

March 70th Anniversary of the Great Alaska Earthquake

2035

May 90th Anniversary of the Battle of the Aleutians

100 Anniversary of the Matanuska Colony

June 170th Anniversary of the Confederate warship Shenandoah's attack on

the Bering Sea's whaling fleet, marking the last shot of the Civil War.

July 120th Anniversary of the Tanana Chief Conference

2036

October 70th Anniversary of AFN

2037

September 250th Anniversary of the US Constitution

October 75th Anniversary of Howard Rock becoming editor of Tundra Times

America250Alaska: Task Force Participants

Alaska Historical Commission

Nancy Dahlstrom, Lieutenant Governor. Alaska Historical Commission Chair.

Katie Ringsmuth, State Historian, Office of History and Archaeology

Judith E. Bittner, State Historic Preservation Officer

Mark Rollins, Archaeologist, DOT, Anchorage

Wayne Jensen: Architect, Juneau Rebecca Poulson: Historian, Sitka

Forgiveness Kochanowski: Public Member, Anchorage

Jonathon S. Ross: Indigenous Ethnic Group Representative Seat, Chugiak

VACANT: Alaska Historical Society Designated Seat.

VACANT: Historian Seat.

State of Alaska Representatives

Department of Education and Early Development

Commissioner Deena Bishop, <u>deena.bishop@alaska.gov</u>

Deputy Director Kelly Manning, kelly.manning@alaska.gov

State Libraries Archives and Museum team:

State Archivist Karen Gray: karen.gray@alaska.gov

Head of Library Information Services Freya Anderson: freya.anderson@alaska.gov

Chief Curator Addison Field: addison.field@alaska.gov
Operations Manager Clint Farr: clint.farr@alaska.gov
Director Amy Phillips-Chan: amy.chan@alaska.gov

Department of Natural Resources

Lorraine Henry, Communications Director, Lorraine. Henry@alaska.gov

Department of Environmental Conservation

Ryan Peterson, ryan.peterson@alaska.gov

Department of Labor and Workforce

Adam Weinert, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, adam.weinert@alaska.gov

Department of Transportation

Winnie Cichosz, winnie.cichosz@alaska.gov

Department of Fish and Game

Shannon Reed Mason, Shannon.mason@alaska.gov

Department of Corrections

Betsy Holley, <u>Betsy.holley@alaska.gov</u>

Department of Revenue

Aimee Bushnell, amie.bushnell@alaska.gov

<u>Department of Family and Community Services</u>

Mariah Seater, mariah.seater@alaska.gov

Department of Law

Patty Sullivan, patty.sullivan@alaska.gov Charlotte Van Zee, charlotte.vanzee@alaska.gov Natalie Wallace-Edison, Natalie.edison@alaska.gov Lisa Wang, lisa.wang@alaska.gov

Department of Administration

Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

Department of Health

<u>Department of Military and Veterans Affairs</u> Samantha Wanner, Samantha.wanner@alaska.gov

Department of Public Safety

Governor's Office

Lt. Governor's Office

Rebecca Clay, Rebecca.clay@alaska.gov

Legislature

Court System

Website designer

Natalie Osborne, natalie@spinupcreative.com

Local Government, Agencies, Societies, and Organizations

Edna DeVries, Mayor, Matanuska-Susitna Borough Jo Antonson, Alaska Historical Society Paul Provencio, ConocoPhillips Ian Hartman, History Department, UAA

Baseball/Sports Facilities Planning Group (TENTATIVE LIST)

Bill Stoltz, Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Jay Ramras, Pikes Landing, Fairbanks
John Lohrke, Alaska Goldpanners, Fairbanks
Jamar Hill, Mountain View, RBI Nike
Curtis Penney, The Dome
John Sims, Enstar, Eagle River
Bill Lierman, Eagle River
Jeff Malloy, Eagle River
Harlow Robinson, Alaska Sports Report & Alaska Sports Hall of Fame
Shelley Romer, Healthy Futures, Alaska
Paul Provencio, ConocoPhillips
Kathie Bethard, Seawolf Hockey Alliance, Inc/The 5th Line
Steve Nerland, Alaska Legion

Appendix

America250Alaska: Task Force

The Am250AK Task Force comprises three separate but interdependent groups that will take on specific tasks to ensure board engagement and successful programming. The three layers include the Alaska Historical Commission, the State of Alaska (SOA) Departments and Divisions, and Local Communities, Organizations, and Businesses.

The Alaska Historical Commission (AHC) will serve as the pinnacle organizing entity for the Am250AK Celebration & Commemoration. Lt. Governor Nancy Dahlstrom chairs the AHC, which consists of nine volunteer board members representing various regions of Alaska and having professional expertise in history, architecture, archaeology, and Alaska Native heritage and culture.

Alaska Historical Commission

State of Alaska Departments and Divisions State of Alaska (SOA)
Departments and Divisions

will serve as the second tier of the Am250AK Task Force. The state representatives will not only serve as ambassadors for their existing programs but should also consider how the Am250AK might enhance them.

Local Communities,
Organizations, and Businesses

Local Communities, Organizations, and

Businesses comprise the foundation and complete the Am250AK Task Force trifecta. From Tribes to nonprofits to schools, churches, sports organizations and private businesses, this broad group brings an array of professional experience, social ties, cultural connections, and geographic diversity to the Task Force.

The Alaska Historical Commission

The Alaska Historical Commission (AHC) advises the Governor and Legislature on matters regarding Alaska's historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources to help preserve and protect the historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources of Alaska from loss, desecration, and destruction for the scientific, historic, and cultural heritage embodied in these resources.

Authorized as a pass-through for grants, AHC can support officially recognized public programs, events, and observances that celebrate the nation's founding, educate the rest of the country as to Alaska's extraordinary contributions to the making of America, and align with the Governor's priority of creating an environment for economic growth, reducing costs to people and businesses, and fostering the quintessential American "can do" spirit in Alaska where people who see opportunity have the confidence to pursue it.

The AHC will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Review Am250AK content designed for state leadership/public
- Coordinate and engage with the US Semiquincentennial Commission
- Coordinate with Am250AK Task Force members
- Encourage public engagement by serving on a subcommittee(s)
- Recognize, compile, track, and publicize Am250AK projects—observances, events, initiatives, and activities
- Launch, review, distribute, and manage America 250 Grants funds, if applicable

State of Alaska (SOA) Departments and Divisions

To ensure comprehensive statewide engagement, representatives from Commerce, Community, and Economic Development; Alaska Court System; Education and Early Development; Fish and Game; Health; Labor and Workforce Development; Law; Military and Veterans Affairs; Natural Resources; Transportation and Public Facilities; State Legislature; State Parks, and the University of Alaska should be invited to participate in the Task Force. In addition to SOA representatives, any employee wanting to get involved is welcome to do so.

The SOA Department and Divisions will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Explore how Am250Ak can enhance existing programs
- Communicate with staff and employees, encourage involvement
- Identify available appropriations for Am250AK events, educational initiatives, and outreach activities
- Engage your professional and social network Get the Message Out!
- Provide technical assistance
- Encourage public engagement and participation by serving on a subcommittee(s)

Local Communities, Organizations, and Businesses

To ensure a successful celebration and commemoration, representatives asked to participate might include but are not limited to the following: Local Governments, Alaska Native Corporations, Alaska Travel Industry Association, Alaska Historical Society, Museums Alaska, Alaska Bar Association, Sports Clubs, Military, Arts Council, Alaska State Fair/Fur Rondy, National Park Service, Alaska Institute of Architects, Chamber of Commerce, Alaska History Day/Youth Court, Alaska Humanities Forum, Rasmuson Foundation, and corporate/private business.

Communities, Organizations, and Business representatives will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Serve as an Am250AK ambassador
- Engage professional and social networks
- Encourage local participation from local governments, villages, churches, schools, sports clubs, businesses, etc.
- Explore the feasibility of forming a 501c3 nonprofit for fundraising purposes
- Serve on a committee(s)

Subcommittees

Task Force members may volunteer to serve on fifteen different subcommittees. Subcommittees are thematic and function to 1) hone specific professional expertise or specialization, 2) encourage teamwork and collaboration, 3) harness broad interests, and 4) serve as categories for grant deliverables if funds are available.

As several themes and projects overlap, task force members are welcome to serve on multiple subcommittees.

Public Participation

Once the Task Force members through the various subcommittees complete the tasks of encouraging public participation, then the public—whether a student, Tribe, nonprofit, or corporation can submit project proposals to the America 250 Alaska Task Force.

If the proposal meets at least one of the guiding goals, then the proposer receives:

- Use of the official America250Alaska logo
- Advertisement of event/project/observance on the official America250Alaska website
- Possible grant funds if applicable

Subcommittees

Alaska Native Heritage	Art, Museums, and Architecture	History, Culture and Historic Preservation	Education and Engagement	Sports and Recreation
1.	1.	1.	1.	1. Katie
2.	2.	2.	2.	Ringsmuth, OHA
3.	3.	3.	3.	2.
				3.
Civics, Civil	Military and Veterans	Engineering and Innovation	Environment and Natural Wonders	Commemorations and Celebrations
Rights, and The Law	Affairs	and innovation	Natural Worlders	and Celebrations
1.	1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.	3.
Municipal	Tourism and	Fundraising	Marketing, Social	Executive
and Village	Travel	and	Media, and	Planning
Outreach		Partnerships	Communications	Committee
1.	1.	1.	1.	1.Lt. Gov
2.	2.	2.	2.	Dahlstrom
3.	3.	3.	3.	2. Rebecca Clay
				3.
				4.

Experience American History, Represent Alaska History

2025 State & Territory Convening SAVE THE DATE: July 28-30

For a fantastic opportunity to immerse yourself in America's historic landscape in Washington while sharing Alaska's A250 projects, events, activities, observances, and commemorations with representatives from other states and territories, consider participating in the America250 State & Territory Commission.

The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission will provide:

\$750 per person travel stipend for two representatives from each state and territory commission, plus rooms at the Hamilton Hotel.

If you can't travel but still want to participate, consider:

- ★ 2025 Monthly State & Territory Virtual Meeting
- Fourth Wednesday of each month, 2 pm Eastern Time.

Email katie.ringsmuth@alaska.gov if interested!

America250Alaska: Marketing Campaign

To ensure broad participation, communications and branding, and interactive public engagement that informs Alaskans about the America250 while serving as a central platform for project submissions, it is highly recommended that the state create an America250AK Interactive Website with the capacity to reach all Alaskans, so that communities can 1) submit their project or program to an official statewide events calendar, 2) receive use of logos, and 3) share their Alaska's story nationwide.

The State should (recommend):

- Develop an America 250 Alaska Website (platform for project submissions, announcing upcoming officially recognized events and observances, a digital store for Am 250 AK swag.)
- Maintain commemoration timeline
- Develop took kits for officially recognized projects
- Oversee social media activities
- Pitch stories to local media

Examples of Other State America 250 Websites:

- <u>Colorado</u>: Home | History Colorado (note the swag for sale)
- <u>Utah</u>: America250 Utah | Utah's Year of Celebration and Service for America's 250th Anniversary
- <u>Washington State</u>: Washington State Historical Society 250 Years of Independence: Connecting Washingtonians to Their Roots
- <u>Idaho</u>: Welcome to America250 in Idaho
- Virginia: Making an Impact
- North Carolina America 250NC

Statewide Projects

So far, Alaska has two officially recognized America250Alaska projects: Exhibition: What Independence Means to You? Art, *Museums, and Architecture (see appendix)* and Alaska's Field of Dreams – *Sports and Recreation* (see Pitch in Appendix)

What Does Independence Mean to You?



For the America 250 the Alaska State Museum will ask Alaskan artists to respond to the question, "What does "independence' mean to you?" The responding artwork will be on view at the Museum in the summer of 2026. The Kent Bicentennial Portfolio prints, a similar project from 1976, will also be displayed.

Field of Dreams Legacy Game



The centerpiece of the America 250 Alaska plan is a proposed Field of Dreams Legacy Game to be played on or near July 4, 2026. To mark the national celebration, the State of Alaska proposed the following:

1. Collaborate with Major League Baseball (MLB), an America250 partner, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and the Alaska Goldpanners of Fairbanks to play a Field of Dreams legacy game with former Alaska Baseball League

players on or near July 4, 2026, in Fairbanks, Alaska.

- 2. Invite players with fond memories of Alaska to return to the roots of their baseball careers, help spotlight Alaska's need for sports and recreational facilities, and enjoy the state's scenic wonders with their families.
- 3. Salute Alaska's significant baseball story and encourage simultaneous Fourth of July games in communities statewide.
- 4. Inform Americans and Alaskans about baseball's little-known yet compelling history in Alaska and how the Last Frontier contributes to the epic saga of America's Game through historic preservation and public education programming.
- 5. Develop legacy programs that stimulate economic growth, engage local communities, and benefit Alaska youth, including setting the foundation for an MLB Field of Dreams Game in the future.

Experience American History, Represent Alaska History

2025 State & Territory Convening SAVE THE DATE: July 28-30

- \$750 per person travel stipend for two representatives from each state and territory commission, plus rooms at the Hamilton Hotel.
- O RSVP portal coming soon!

★ 2025 Monthly State & Territory Virtual Meeting Cadence

- Fourth Wednesday of each month, 2 pm Eastern Time.
- Suggesting agenda items? Email eperez@america250.org & henry@precisionstrategies.com



A Nationwide Call to Action Two Lights for Tomorrow April 18 – 19, 2025

What Is Two Lights for Tomorrow

Two Lights for Tomorrow is a nationwide initiative to commence the celebration of the 250th birthday of the United States of America. The famous ride of Paul Revere occurred on the overnight of April 18 – 19, 1775. Two Lights for Tomorrow commemorates that famous ride and uses the imagery of that shining light today as a uniting call to action for our citizens to celebrate and serve.

How to Participate, Part I

On April 18, 2025, we're calling for two lights to be displayed in every statehouse in the nation. They will be a reminder that the visual of a light shining out in the darkness on Revere's ride is not just something that mattered then; it's something that matters today, and for our collective tomorrow.

Some commissions are planning a public program as two lights are lit at the statehouse. This is an opportunity to not only raise public awareness of the upcoming 250th and how that visibly will be marked, but also to communicate the meaning of Revere's ride as history and remind our citizens of their part in the perpetual building of a "more perfect union."

How to Participate, Part II

The day following, states can promote a day of service on April 19th. At the community level, citizens will be called to serve their communities with volunteer projects ranging from park and cemetery clean-ups (especially with the close proximity to Earth Day) to community builds, food drives, and card writing to residents of care facilities, etc. The possibilies for service can be tailored to the needs of our citizens and in partnership with service organizations.

Projects Are Scalable for Communities and Individuals

From two spotlights at a state capitol building beaming in the darkness to smaller displays at municipal buildings, and lights in individual homes, every citizen can participate.

For state-level displays, there isn't a specific kind of light, duration of display, or location because we want it to be approachable and achievable for everyone given that each state-level commission will need to coordinate the approval processes within their own systems.

Some governor's offices are considering issuing executive orders to encourage government department buildings, municipalities, and every citizen to participate.

We encourage participation at as many locations as possible – community centers, municipal and county administrative buildings, and private residences.

Tool Kit

A toolkit is in development to include:

- · logos for print and digital use
- media alert/press release templates
- proclamation language templates
- public programming suggestions

Website

A website is in development to host:

- toolkit
- · lesson plans
- interactive map of paricipating entities across the nation
- TwoLightsForTomorrow.org and Two-Lights.org

Information Contact

Kevin Hampton, A250WI Program Coordinator Kevin.Hampton@dva.wisconsin.gov wisvetsmuseum.com/america250



America's Field Trip is a nationwide student contest sponsored by America250, the official nonpartisan entity charged by Congress with planning the nation's Semiquincentennial in 2026, also known as the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. America's Field Trip invites students in grades 3–12 to be part of this historic milestone by sharing their perspectives on what America means to them — with the chance to earn a once-in-a-lifetime field trip experience at an iconic American landmark or cultural site, including the Smithsonian's National Zoo, National Archives Museum, Kennedy Space Center, and

Visit <u>America250.org/FieldTrip/Rules</u> for Official Rules.

Submission Deadline: April 16, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Yellowstone National Park — just to name a few.

- **Eligibility:** Any student in grades 3–12 who is a legal resident of any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or the U.S. territories is eligible to enter. First- and second-prize awardees from the 2024 America's Field Trip contest, which ended on May 17, 2024 are not eligible to enter or win.
- **Requirements:** Students at each grade level may create artwork, including physical artwork, that is submitted through a high-res photo, digital drawing, or an essay.
- **Judging Criteria:** A panel of current and former educators will evaluate submissions based on **Clarity of Idea** (25%), **Student Voice** (50%), and **Presentation** (25%).
- **Prizes:** 25 first-place awardees from each grade level category and their designated chaperone will receive travel and lodging accommodations for a three-day, two-night trip to a select historical or cultural site. 25 second-place awardees from each grade level category will each receive a \$500 cash award. Award recipients will be announced in May 2025, and field trips will take place in July and August 2025.

How to Enter the America's Field Trip Contest

Students at each grade level will respond to the prompt, "What does America mean to you?" with artwork or an essay. Students must develop submissions individually.

Students must have a teacher, parent, or legal guardian submit their entry through the application portal at America250.org/FieldTrip/Application. A teacher may only submit an entry on behalf of a student with written permission from that student's parent or legal guardian.

For more information about America's Field Trip, including official contest rules, 2025 field trip locations, judging criteria, submission thought starters, classroom activities, and Spanish-language resources, please visit <u>America250.org/FieldTrip</u> or scan the QR code.



Visit <u>America250.org/FieldTrip</u> or scan the QR code to learn more.



America's Field Trip Communications Toolkit





All Content In This Toolkit Is Confidential & Embargoed Until March 4, 2024

Overview

The Semiquincentennial will have a profound impact on the way that Americans of all ages understand and interpret our national past, present, and future. We believe it is critical for young people to get involved in this historic milestone. That's why we are excited to introduce our first official piece of programming for students and educators with **America's Field Trip**, a nationwide scholastic contest designed to actively engage America's youth. We're proud to launch this endeavor in coordination with BNY Mellon, Discovery Education, Probability Works, and with the support of the National Parks Services (NPS), the Smithsonian Institute, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the American Village and the Federal Bank of New York in hosting field trips.

America's Field Trip is an opportunity for young people to get involved in the 250th anniversary, and starting in 2024 we're inviting students from elementary, middle, and high schools to share what America means to them. Our goal is to solicit submissions from as many young people as possible, but to do that, we need to help reaching educators, parents and students. To assist, America250 put together an easy-to-use Communications Toolkit to provide unified guidance on how to talk about America250 and America's Field Trip; materials to assist with outreach to your key stakeholders; as well as contact information for our communications experts, should you have any questions.

Unless otherwise directed, the information within this toolkit should be considered confidential until March 4th.

Within this toolkit, we've included four communications assets that we believe will be critical in helping to amplify this new programming and solicit submissions to this nationwide contest. These materials are:

- Talking Points. We invite you to use these talking points as a guide in conversations regarding the 250th anniversary and America's Field Trip specifically.
- Q&A. This Q&A provides thoughtful answers to some of the most common questions you might
 encounter about America's Field Trip. We recommend reviewing this section to familiarize yourself
 with America250 and America's Field Trip, especially prior to any media engagements or public
 events.
- **E-Blast.** To help make this the most significant and inclusive commemoration in our history, we need to engage all young Americans. If you would like to support us in that effort, we have developed a templated e-blast to share with your key stakeholders **on March 4th** inviting them to send in submissions to America's Field Trip or encourage the young people in their lives to do the same.
- **Flyer.** In addition to the templated e-blast, we have designed a one-page flyer that distills the information about America's Field Trip and instructions on how to participate. We recommend attaching this flyer to your email or printing it out to share with key stakeholders you interact with in person.

We hope this toolkit is helpful and provides a framework to discuss this exciting announcement. As a reminder, the information in this toolkit is meant to support your planning efforts for the March 4th competition launch this year – the content and information within are embargoed and should not be shared publicly prior to March 4th. All Content In This Toolkit Is Confidential & Embargoed Until March 4, 2024.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our communications team by emailing: communications@america250.org.



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America's Field Trip Talking Points



America's Field Trip Talking Points

- In 2026, the United States will mark a historic milestone the Semiquincentennial: the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
- The Semiquincentennial will have a profound impact on the way that Americans of all ages understand and interpret our national past, present, and future.
- America250, the official entity charged with orchestrating America's 250th anniversary, believes
 that this milestone belongs to all of us and everyone should have an opportunity to help
 commemorate it.
- America250 is excited to introduce America's Field Trip, a nationwide scholastic contest
 designed to actively engage America's youth in commemorating and celebrating the 250th
 anniversary.
- America250 is proud to launch this endeavor in partnership with BNY Mellon, Discovery Education, Probability Works, and with the support of the National Parks Service (NPS), the Smithsonian Institute, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and American Village in hosting field trips.
- Beginning March 4, students grades 3rd to 12th are invited to submit artwork, videos, and essays articulating what America means to them.
- First-place awardees will be provided an unforgettable "field trip" experience to visit some of the nation's most iconic cultural landmarks and institutions. Second-place awardees will receive a cash award.
- The "field trips" include tours at landmarks like Yellowstone National Park or historic sites such as the Library of Congress and will include travel and hotel accommodations for each student and a chaperone.
- These experiences are designed to go beyond textbooks, offering hands-on encounters with iconic landmarks, historical sites, and cultural treasures.
- By witnessing firsthand the places that have helped shape the nation, students can forge a deeper connection to their history, culture, and the collective American experience.
- Students and teachers can find more information, including resources, contest rules, release forms, and toolkit materials to integrate the contest into classroom activities at america250.org/ FieldTrip.
- America's Field Trip will provide a platform for young voices to be heard, ensuring that the perspectives of the future are woven into the fabric of this historic commemoration.







What is America250?

- America250 is a nonpartisan initiative working to engage every American in commemorating the 250th anniversary of our country. It is spearheaded by the congressionally-appointed U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission and its nonprofit supporting organization, America250.org.
- This multi-year effort kicked off with <u>America's Invitation</u> on July 4, 2023: a national public
 engagement campaign inviting all Americans to share their stories and their hopes and dreams
 for the future of this country.
- Building up to July 4, 2026, America250 is working to provide opportunities for all Americans to
 pause and reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look to the
 future we want to create for the next generation and beyond.

What is America's Field Trip?

- America's Field Trip is a nationwide scholastic contest designed to actively engage America's youth in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
- America's Field Trip is an opportunity for young people to get involved and ensure that their
 voices are heard. The goal is to empower young minds to reflect on our past and express their
 visions for the future.
- Elementary, middle, and high school students are invited to submit artwork, videos, or essays on topics relating to American history, civics, and culture.
- First-place awardees will be provided unique "field trips" visiting iconic historical and cultural sites across the country, where they can participate in unforgettable tours.

Why is America250 focusing on students?

- We believe passionately that commemorating the historic milestone of America's 250th anniversary is not just about looking back, but about looking forward.
- Today's young people are our future. They are the leaders, innovators, and thinkers who will guide America for the next 250 years and it's important they are at the heart of this endeavor.

When is America's Field Trip happening?

- America250 will formally launch the pilot program of America's Field Trip with our federal, corporate, and nonprofit partners on March 4.
- Submissions will be accepted from March 4, 2024, until May 17, 2024.
- Award recipients will be announced in early summer, and field trips for award recipients will start
 in mid-July 2024.



How can students take part in America's Field Trip?

- America250 is committed to ensuring as many students as possible have the opportunity to get involved in this competition.
- Whether through a class, extracurricular group, or during homeschooling, students who want to
 participate will need the help of a teacher or parent/guardian to submit an entry, along with the
 approval of a parent or guardian to participate.
- Students will enter the competition by answering the prompt "What does America mean to you?"
- There will be different submission formats for students in each age group:
 - » Elementary school (3rd to 5th grade) will submit artwork or a short essay (up to 100 works)
 - » Middle school (6th to 8th grade) will submit artwork or short videos (up to two minutes), and
 - » High school (9th to 12th grade) will submit essays (up to 1,000 words) or short videos (up to two minutes)

What are the submission guidelines?

- Submission guidelines differ by age group.
- Elementary School (3rd to 5th Grade): Students are asked to create artwork or short essay (up to 100 words). This could include physical artwork that is submitted through a high-res photo or a digital drawing.
- Middle School (6th to 8th Grade): Students are asked to submit artwork or a short video (up to 2 minutes).
- High School (9th to 12th Grade): Students are asked to submit a written essay (up to 1,000 words)
 or a video (up to two minutes).
- Students and teachers can find more information, including resources, contest rules, release forms, and toolkit materials to integrate the contest into classroom activities at america250.org/ FieldTrip.

How will submissions be judged?

- America250 is working with an experienced, third-party contest administrator who will judge submissions before they are reviewed by a diverse panel of current and former teachers: America's Field Trip Educators.
- America's Field Trip Educators will judge the submissions based on the following weighted criteria:
 - » CLARITY OF IDEA [25%] How well does the Entrant use both their personal and academic experiences to clearly address the Question? Does the Entry effectively convey ideas, emotion or a story visually or with words by acknowledging the past or celebrating America's achievements and possibilities for the future? Does the response offer fresh insight and innovative thinking?
 - » STUDENT VOICE [50%] Is there passion in the Entry or a point-of-view that showcases a unique perspective on the diverse range of different experiences that make America unique in an original/authentic way?



» PRESENTATION [25%] – What makes the submission content more compelling, fresh or interesting than other Entrants' content in their grade level category?

How is America's Field Trip funded?

- America250 is funding the program implementation including field trip costs and cash awards
 — in collaboration with BNY Mellon, the 240-year-old global financial services company that
 played a pivotal role in the development, growth, and rise of the United States.
- America250 and its partners will cover the cost of the field trip for each award recipient and their designated chaperone.

Can students bring their families on their Field Trips?

• Students are required to have one chaperone, which must be a parent or a legal guardian.

What will students participating in America's Field Trip receive?

- First- place awardees will receive field trip experiences at select historical, educational, and cultural sites across the country. Second-place recipients will receive a \$500 cash award.
- Field trip experiences include tours at iconic landmarks like Yellowstone National Park or historic sites such as the Library of Congress.
- These experiences are designed to go beyond textbooks, offering students hands-on encounters with some of America's most important landmarks, financial institutions, historical sites, and cultural treasures.
- By witnessing firsthand the places that have shaped the nation, students may forge a deeper connection to their history, culture, and the collective American experience.

How will trips be selected and who will be chaperoning the trips?

- Trips will be organized by America250 and chaperoned by the recipient's parent or guardian along with other field trip recipients.
- First-place awardees will get to express their preference for trips, and final locations will be determined by age group, availability, and recipient preference.

Will America's Field Trip programming continue after 2024?

 Yes, this year is a pilot program that America250 hopes to grow and expand, including with more field trips and award recipients in 2025 and 2026.

How can people interested find out more information on America's Field Trip?

 Students and teachers can find more information, including resources, contest rules, release forms, and toolkit materials to integrate the competition into classroom activities at america250.org/FieldTrip.



Who created the curriculum?

America250 partnered with Discovery Education, the worldwide edtech leader, to develop custom
educational programming that helps students deepen their understanding of America's 250th
anniversary and encourages participation in the America's Field Trip contest with ready-to-use
resources and activities for teachers.

Is America250 worried about running a civic engagement campaign during the politically polarizing debates surrounding public education, and other challenges in our nation's classroom?

- The mission of America250 is to create the largest and most inclusive commemoration in our nation's history — a commemoration that includes all Americans.
- Today's young people are our future. They are the leaders, innovators, and thinkers who will guide America for the next 250 years and it's important they are at the heart of this endeavor.
- America250 has worked closely with educators across the country to design this contest in a way that is appealing to and inclusive of all young Americans.
- We know that the submission prompts will mean different things to different people and we
 encourage that. Our focus is on sharing the diverse experiences of all Americans, and believe
 America's Field Trip affords us the opportunity to showcase what makes our country and our
 communities unique.

Which students can participate in America's Field Trip?

• The contest is open to all students in grades 3–12 that live in any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or the U.S. territories. All students whether homeschooled or enrolled in public, private, independent, charter schools are eligible to participate in America's Field Trip.





America's Field Trip Announcement E-Blast



America's Field Trip Announcement E-Blast

To be sent on March 4

[Hello/Dear Members],

In a little more than two years, the United States will mark a historic milestone: our Semiquincentennial, or 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Efforts to commemorate and celebrate this momentous occasion have already begun in earnest – spearheaded by the official national organization, America250.

Today, I am [excited/pleased] to [share/announce] that [[Name of Organization] is joining America250/America250 has just announced a new program] in this important endeavor. [Together, we have/America250] just launched America's Field Trip, and [we are/I am] hopeful you will help [us/me] spread the word about this opportunity!

America's Field Trip is a nationwide scholastic contest designed to actively engage America's youth in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. From now until May 17, 2024 elementary, middle, and high school students are invited to submit artwork, videos, or essays on topics relating to American history, civics, and culture. The official prompt and submission guidelines can be found at america250.org/FieldTrip.

First-place awardees will be provided the opportunity to visit select historical, educational, and cultural sites across the country where they can participate in special tours at landmarks like Yellowstone National Park or historic sites such as the Library of Congress.

America's Field Trip is an extraordinary opportunity, and we are committed to ensuring as many students as possible have the opportunity to get involved in this contest. To do that, we need your help spreading the word to teachers, students, and families. We encourage you to visit and share america250.org/FieldTrip for more information, including resources, contest rules, release forms, and toolkit materials to integrate the contest into classroom activities.

Thank you for your support in this effort to ensure that young people's voices are included in this historic milestone. Together, we will make the 250th anniversary of America the most significant and inclusive commemoration of all time.

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Contest ends 11:59 p.m. ET on 5/17/24. Open to U.S. students (3rd – 12th grade); student's parent/legal guardian or teacher with parental permission must submit entry on student's behalf (unless student is age of majority). Submission includes grant of license rights to entry's content. First Prize awardees must travel with parent/legal guardian on designated dates. See Official Rules for full details including how to enter, eligibility requirements, prize description/restrictions and judging procedure. Void where prohibited.





Flyer: America's Field Trip





America's Field Trip: Engaging School Communities Around the Nation's Semiquincentennial

New contest will offer students the opportunity to participate in unforgettable field trip experiences to some of the nation's most iconic historical and cultural sites.

America250 is a nonpartisan initiative working to engage every American in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. This multi-year effort is an opportunity to pause and reflect on the nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look ahead toward our future.

Introducing... America's Field Trip

America's Field Trip is a new contest that aims to engage school communities around the commemoration of America's 250th anniversary and provide unique opportunities for students to participate in behind-the-scenes experiences at at some of the nation's most iconic American historical and cultural sites. First-place awardees will be provided with special field trip experiences at select historical, educational, and cultural sites across the country. Second-place recipients will receive cash prizes. Field trip experiences will include tours at landmarks like Yellowstone National Park or historic sites like the Library of Congress.

How to Participate in America's Field Trip

Students should submit entries individually and every student under the age of 18 must have a teacher, parent, or legal guardian upload their submission to the application portal. Students and teachers can find more information, including resources, contest rules, release forms, and toolkit materials to integrate the competition into classroom activities at america250.org/FieldTrip.

America's Field Trip will begin accepting submissions on **March 4, 2024**, and will remain open until **May 17, 2024**. Awardees will be announced in early summer and field trips will start in mid-July.



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Colonel John Nixon Giving the First Public Reading of The Declaration of Independence Outside Pennsylvania State House (now known as Independence Hall) on July 8, 1776 (Constitutional; New York Public Library)

Sharing the Spirit of America

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence inside the Pennsylvania State House (now Independence Hall) in Philadelphia.

Four days later, on July 8, 1776, after the Declaration was printed and distributed, the citizens of Philadelphia were summoned to the State House Yard by the bells of the city. Then, Colonel John Nixon publicly read the Declaration of Independence.

While much of the Declaration deals with grievances against King George III (although his name does not appear in it), the American spirit, principles, and values memorialized in the Declaration of Independence 250-years ago continue to hold true today. The "self evident" "truths", then, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" are valid today, as are the personal and collective responsibilities we share in protecting and perpetuating these values.

Reading the Declaration of Independence Across America, 'Together'

Just as the Declaration of Independence was read to the people on July 8, 1776, now, 250-years later, Americans in all 50 States and 16 Territories of the United States will read the Declaration of Independence 'together'. These readings will occur at State Capitols, City Halls, County and Municipal Buildings, Schools, Libraries, Community Centers, Parks, etc (including individual families sharing the words and vision of the Declaration of Independence in their own homes).

With a start time based on 6 pm (EDT), July 8, 2026 (commemorating the first public reading), people in communities across America will begin reading the Declaration of Independence.

Unlike the extent of the Colonies in 1776, today, America spans about 9,500-miles from one extreme to the other (the Caribbean across North America to the western edge of the Pacific).

Even though the United States is spread across thousands of miles and nine different time zones, all of us in America may read the Declaration of Independence 'together', at the 'same' time.

The following schedule correlates the relative time in each portion of America, based on its own timekeeping. The time conversions note the corresponding local time commensurate with 6 pm (EDT). Given the nature of time and varying time zones, at these times, we would all be reading the Declaration of Independence 'together', despite our differing and widely separated locations.

For instance, 6 pm (EDT), July 8, 2026 in Philadelphia is the same moment as 8 am, July 9, 2026 in Guam. (Guam and two other US Territories are west of the International Date Line.)

The following lists the corresponding locations/time zones, local start times, and timekeeping of the US States and Territories (East to West) for reading the Declaration of Independence in their respective communities, consistent with 6 pm (EDT) on Wednesday, July 8, 2026:

US Virgin Islands	6 pm	Atlantic Standard – no Daylight Saving
Puerto Rico	6 pm	Atlantic Standard – no Daylight Saving
Eastern Time Zone	6 pm	Eastern Daylight
Navassa Island	5 pm	Eastern Standard – no Daylight Saving
Central Time Zone	5 pm	Central Daylight
Mountain Time Zone	4 pm	Mountain Daylight
Arizona (most)	3 pm	Mountain Standard- no Daylight Saving
Pacific Time Zone	3 pm	Pacific Daylight
Alaska	2 pm	Alaska Daylight
Hawai'i	12 pm	Hawai'i Standard – no Daylight Saving
Kure Atoll	12 pm	Hawai'i Standard – no Daylight Saving
Palmyra Atoll	12 pm	US Minor Outlying Islands
Johnston Atoll	12 pm	US Minor Outlying Islands
American Samoa	11 am	Samoa Standard Time – no Daylight Saving
Midway Atoll	11 am	Samoa Standard Time – no Daylight Saving
Kingman Reef	11 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Jarvis Island	11 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Howland Island	10 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Baker Island	10 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Wake	10 am (July 9)	Wake Island Time Zone
Northern Mariana Islands	8 am (July 9)	Chamorro Standard Time – no Daylight Saving
Guam	8 am (July 9)	Chamorro Standard Time – no Daylight Saving

At the time the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776, Britain and the Thirteen Colonies (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia) had already been at war for more than a year. The American Revolutionary War lasted from April 19, 1775 (with the Battles of Lexington and Concord) to September 3, 1783 (with the Treaty of Paris). The United States was recognized roughly by what is now Canada to the north, Florida to the south, the Mississippi River to the west and the Atlantic to the east.

For Information: Peter T. Young, Chair Hawai'i America250 Commission

Contact@HawaiiAmerica250.org



State, Tribal, Local, Plans & Grants Historic Preservation Fund



Semiquincentennial Grant Program



Viets' Tavern, in East Granby, Connecticut, part of Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine and the first state prison in North America
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Semiquincentennial Grant Program supports the preservation of a broad variety of cultural resources associated with the founding of America as a nation in commemoration of the country's Semiquincentennial (250th anniversary) in 2026. For the purposes of this grant program, the "founding of the nation" is defined as the period ending December 31, 1800. This date corresponds to the election of 1800, as the peaceful transfer of power following the contested election between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson represents a hallmark of democracy and a pivotal moment in American history. The founding of the nation does not have a defined starting period.

Who May Apply

- States governments and Territories
- Local governments including Certified Local Governments (list provided at go.nps.gov/clglist)
- Federally-recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Villages/Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations, as defined by 54 USC 300309, 54 USC 300313 and 54 USC 300314
- Nonprofit organizations
- Institutions of higher education

Eligible Resources

- Resources must be listed in, or be determined eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places or designated as a National Historic Landmark either individually or as part of a district at the time of application.
- Buildings, structures, sites, districts, and objects considered significant for their association with or commemoration of people, places, or events between the earliest known resources and December 31, 1800, may be considered as associated with the "founding of the nation."

What Is Funded

Pre-preservation Projects

- Pre-preservation projects may include the development of resource-specific architectural plans and specifications, historic structure reports, studies, and related surveys. Archaeological and architectural surveys that seek only to identify sites associated with this period are not eligible.
- Amendments or updates to the National Register nomination for the resource are eligible as grant supported activities if the document is out of date or does not adequately reflect all areas of significance.

Preservation Projects

• Preservation projects fund physical preservation of a historic site to include historic districts, buildings, sites, structures, and objects. Projects must comply with all applicable laws such as Section 106 and NEPA, and execute a preservation covenant/easement.

- The repair and rehabilitation of historic properties must be conducted according to the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards & Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*.
- Amendments or updates to the National Register nomination for the resource are eligible as grant supported activities if the document is out of date or does not adequately reflect all areas of significance.

What Is Not Funded

- Construction of new buildings, reconstructing historic properties (recreating all or a significant portion that no longer exists), or acquisition of collections or historic sites
- Long-term maintenance or work outside the grant period, work performed prior to announcement of award, lobbying, or advocacy activities
- Moving or work on moved historic properties that are no longer eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- Cash reserves, endowments, revolving funds, fund-raising costs, miscellaneous costs, contingencies, reserves, overhead costs, or costs for work already completed or funded through other federal programs
- Costs to manage the grant may not exceed 25% of the total budget per statute
- Sites or collections owned or leased by the NPS, or in which the NPS holds a property interest

Grant Amount

- Pre-preservation projects Minimum of \$15,000 and maximum \$75,000 federal share.
- Preservation projects Minimum of \$75,000 and maximum \$750,000 federal share.
- 20% of preservation projects may go towards pre-preservation costs such as architectural or engineering services.
- Matching funds are not required but may be considered as part of the evaluation process.

Selection Process

NPS personnel and qualified Federal employees will review all complete proposals using the criteria outlined below. Reviewers' evaluations are based solely on the material provided in the application. Additional materials not specifically required by the application, and materials sent separately from the application, will not be considered. A summary of the review panel comments may be provided to the applicant if requested after the grant process is complete. All funded grantees will undergo a risk assessment as part of the award process.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Project descriptions must address, and applications will be rated on, each of the criteria listed below. NPS will evaluate and consider only complete applications that separately address each of the four criteria. You are required to provide a detailed narrative of these elements using the project description and budget justification worksheets. These items along with other required application documents are only available through Grants.gov.

- 1. **Significance:** Describe the association of the historic resource(s) in the proposed project to the founding of the nation and identify whether they are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and/or designated at the state, Tribal, or local level.
- 2. Need/Urgency/Threat: Describe the need, urgency, and threat the project addresses and how the activities are necessary and will mitigate that threat. Discuss how the project is the next logical step toward the resource's preservation.
- 3. Feasibility: Describe all tasks and their results. Discuss your timeline and budget justification to show that costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable. Demonstrate how you will successfully complete the project within the given time frame (2-3 years) and with the given resources while meeting all federal requirements and guidelines. Briefly describe who will be involved in carrying out the project and their qualifications, attach resumes/CVs as applicable.
- 4. Sustainability: Describe the impacts of the project after completion, including long lasting effects. Describe the public private partnerships and community engagement involved in the project and how these partnerships will sustain and continue to support the resources after the grant project is complete. For preservation projects, describe the plan for continued maintenance. If previously funded, please describe the progress made to date.

Process and Deadlines

Applications are anticipated to open in fall of 2024 and are due in winter of 2025. Congress has appropriated \$7 million for this program in fiscal year 2024. All applications must be made through Grants.gov. No paper applications will be accepted. Registration in Grants.gov, SAM.gov, and other federal systems can take up to four weeks, so please start early. Extensions will not be granted due to incomplete registrations in these systems. To be notified when the grant opportunity opens, please visit Grants. gov and subscribe to a saved search for CFDA number 15.966. You can create a saved search on Grants.gov under the "Connect" menu "Manage Subscriptions."

Additional Information

Visit **go.nps.gov/semiquin** for more information about this grant program.

For more information on our other programs, please visit go.nps.gov/grants.

For application assistance: National Park Service STLPG@nps.gov 202-354-2020

Grants.gov assistance: support@grants.gov 1-800-518-4726





Department of Natural Resources initial communications plan

Background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is part of the State of Alaska government, located within the Executive Branch. DNR, as home to the Office of History & Archaeology, is delighted to participate in the America250-Alaska efforts to commemorate the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. A representative has been identified within the Office of the Commissioner to coordinate with the Lt. Governor's Office and the America250 – Alaska Task Force, plan DNR communications, and organize department volunteers for Semiquincentennial activities.

What we do: The Department of Natural Resources manages all state-owned land, water and natural resources, except for fish and game, on behalf of the people of Alaska. The state owns approximately 60 million acres of tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands and manages 40,000 miles of coastline. Our mission is to develop, conserve and maximize the use of Alaska's natural resources consistent with the public interest.

How we do it: The department is currently organized into seven divisions that reflect its major programs: Agriculture, Forestry, Geological & Geophysical Surveys, Mining, Land & Water, Oil & Gas, Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and Support Services.

The **Division of Agriculture** offers land for agricultural development and works with local producers to promote and support Alaska's agricultural industry through financing for farmers and processors, plant material development, conservation education, marketing assistance, inspection and farm product certification.

The **Division of Forestry and Fire Protection** manages over 2 million acres of dedicated State Forests in the Tanana Valley and near Haines for multiple use and sustained yield; protects 134 million acres over twice the size of Washington State - with its highly trained wildfire suppression organization; and administers Forest Health, Forest Stewardship, Community Forestry and Conservation Education programs.



The **Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys** generates, analyzes and interprets data on geologic resources and natural conditions; maps and inventories mineral and energy resources on state land for use by government, private industry, scientists, educators and the public.

The **Division of Mining, Land & Water** is the primary manager of Alaska's land holdings. Responsibilities include ensuring the state's title; preparing land-use plans and easement atlases; classifying land; leasing and permitting state land for recreation, commercial and industrial uses and coordinating and overseeing the needed authorizations for major development on the North Slope. It also manages 2.5 million acres in Public Use and Recreational River Systems and is responsible for land sales and conveyances to municipalities. The division also manages mineral (excluding oil & gas, coalbed methane and geothermal energy) and water resources. It manages state mineral exploration, development and leasing programs on the 96 million acres of state lands available for mineral exploration and mining and administers state's Surface Coal Mining control and Reclamation Program. The division allocates and manages the state's water resources on all lands in Alaska, adjudicates water rights, provides technical hydrologic support, and assures dam safety.

The **Division of Oil and Gas** develops and manages the state's oil and gas leasing programs. The Oil & Gas division staff identifies prospective lease areas; performs geologic, economic, environmental and social analyses, develops a five-year leasing schedule, and conducts public review of proposed sales. The division conducts competitive oil and gas lease sales and monitors collection of all funds resulting from its programs. It is also responsible for the development of the state's geothermal and coalbed methane resources. The **State Pipeline Coordinator Section** is located within the division.

The **Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation** provides outdoor recreation opportunities, protects and interprets areas of natural and cultural significance, and supports the state's tourism industry. Park units range in size and character from the half-acre Potter Section House State Historic Site to the 1.6 million wild acres of Wood-Tikchik State Park. The **Office of History and Archaeology**, the **State Historical Preservation Office**, **the Office of Boating Safety** and the Alaska Trails Program are within this division.

The **Support Services Division** provides administrative, financial, human resources and computer support for department personnel and facilities throughout the state. Its Land Administration System, status plats, and award-winning Geographic Information Systems mapping are the mainstay of both public and private managers and users of state land and resources. It also serves the public and private sectors through the Recorder's Office, which administers the statewide recording system and the Uniform Commercial Code Central File.

The **Commissioner's Office** oversees DNR divisions and a number of offices, including the **Mental Health Trust Land Office**, which manages the Mental Health Trust's land and resources assets; the **Office of Project Management & Permitting**, which coordinates the review of larger scale projects in the state; and the **Public Information Center**, which offers "one-stop shopping" for the department's programs and services.

DNR's participation in America250-Alaska

Communications strategy: Leverage the wealth of information, documents, photos etc. housed within the department to highlight Alaska's proud history as a state. Activate communications specialists throughout DNR to support broader America250-Alaska marketing in the state.

Tactics: Utilize established DNR communications channels to promote SOA activities, spotlight employees preserving history, showcase photos of historical sites and records, share communications expertise with America250-Alaska task force, and give employees the opportunity to volunteer - or organize - department activities around the semiquincentennial.

Option 1: DNR communications opportunities (current staff and no additional funding):

- Help America250Alaska Task Force with communication strategy, messaging, identifying advertising agency partners
- Support Alaska's Field of Dreams activities
- Coordinate with Governor's communications team for expertise
- Press releases about State of Alaska America250-Alaska events
- Media outreach to targeted reporters
- DNR social media
 - Channels: Facebook and Twitter
 - Weekly posts with content from
 - Office of History & Archaeology (Alaska listings on the National Historic Register, Upper Sun River national historic monument, other historic sites)
 - Recorder's Office (ANSCA documents, Wyatt Earp gold claim, Iditarod, Soapy Smith)
 - Division of Mining, Land & Water mining images and records
 - Alaskans Preserving History campaign (DNR only)
 - Judy Bittner
 - Katie Ringsmuth
 - Recorder Paula Bradley

Organize DNR employees

- Invite all DNR employees to participate
- Identify a volunteer coordinator
- Stand up DNR Alaska America250-Alaska committee
- Brainstorm and plan additional DNR activities
- Volunteer support needed
 - Provide info and photos for social media posts
 - Prepare posts for social media campaign
 - Plan activities for April 19 National Day of Service
 - Plan activities July 5 Neighborhood Unity Day (Picnics and Potlucks across the country)



Option 2: Task Force opportunities with additional funding or staffing, contracting with advertising agencies, etc.

(Ideally, additional funding or staffing will be identified for America 250-Alaska efforts. With more bandwidth and budget, a robust marketing plan can be developed.)

Social Media

- Sign up new social media handles
 - o Facebook (largest social media audience in Alaska)
 - Twitter (best for breaking news)
 - Bluesky (Twitter alternative)
 - Instagram (target youth)
 - YouTube (longer-form videos)
- Create social media strategy
 - Promote America250Alaska events
 - o Reshare partner content
 - Highlight Alaska history
- · Paid posts and advertising
- People Preserving the Past campaign, options:
 - o Ellen (conservationist at Alaska State Museum in Juneau)
 - State Archivist
 - o Freya, State Librarian
 - Museum directors
 - Addison, Alaska State Museum
 - o Judy Bittner, State Historic Preservation Officer
 - Katie Ringsmuth, State Historian
 - Paula Bradley, State Recorder
- · Museum of the Week campaign
- Museum Object of the Day campaign: Partner with some of the 128 museums statewide (80 active). AK State Museum has Listserv to contact
- Alaska Native historical object of the week/month
 - AK Native Heritage Center
 - Alaska Federation of Natives

Traditional media

- Develop strategy
- Press releases
 - Create letterhead with America250Alaska logo
 - Build distribution list from State departments
 - Distribute press releases about America250-Alaska activities, regular reminders about website, people available for interviews etc.
- Targeted outreach to specific reporters
- Paid advertising
- Marketing partnerships/sponsorships



Option 2 continued:

Newsletter to America250Alaska participating agencies

Website

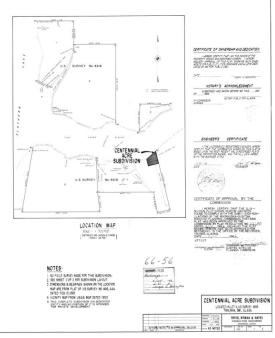
- Build out website further
- Key moments in Alaska history
- Website resources page
 - o Alaska Historical Society: https://alaskahistoricalsociety.org/
 - o Alaska State Archives: https://archives.alaska.gov/
 - o Alaska Digital Archives (photos): https://vilda.alaska.edu/
 - o UAF Alaska Native Language Archive: https://www.uaf.edu/anla/

Materials

- Develop calendar of key moments in State of Alaska history, for example
 - Statehood
 - o ANSCA
 - o ANILCA
 - o Japanese invasion during WW2

Examples of DNR photos, documents, records etc.







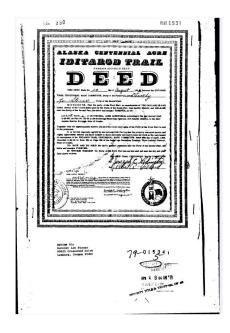
Examples of DNR photos, documents, records etc.





Wyatt Ear	o, c. 1886
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	105
	for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.
	. Witness my hand and seal this thirtieth day of August, 1900.
	H.L.Atkinson, Sotary Public in and for the
	(Notarial seal). District of Alaska.
	F11ed, 3455 P.M.August 30,1960.
	I. R. S. SO. R. H. Stevens, Recorder.
	Shank the Bernaten
	No. 1859. DEED.
	THIS INTENTURE, made this 29th day of August, 1900, between Wyatt S
	Earp, of Nome, in the District of Alaska, party of the first part, and
	C.E. Hoxie, of same place, party of the second part,
-	WITHKHIGHTH: That the said party of the first part for and in
-	consideration of the sum of Two Thousand and Five hundred dollars,
	lawful morey of the United States of America, to him in hand paid by
	the said party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby ac-
	knowledged, does by these presents grant, bargain, sall, remise, re-
	lesse, and forever guit-claim unto the said party of the second part,
	and to his heirs and analyze, that certain mining property described
	as follows, to-wit:
	That certain piece or parcel of ground now occupied by the
-	building known as the Dexter Salcon; Deginning at a point 6 1/3
-	feet westerly of S.W. cor. of the Hunter Building and running in a
	northerly direction 90 feet more or less to the end of said lot,
-	thence in a westerly direction 30 feet, thence southerly 90 feet more
-	or less to the north line of Front Street, thence easterly along said
	North line of Front street 30 feet to the place of beginning.
	Together with all and singular the tenedents, hereditaments and
	appurtenances thereto belonging, or in anywise appertaining, and the
	rents,issues and profits thereof.
	TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, all and simpular the said presises, together
	with the appurtmentes and privileges thereto incident, unto the said
	The second secon











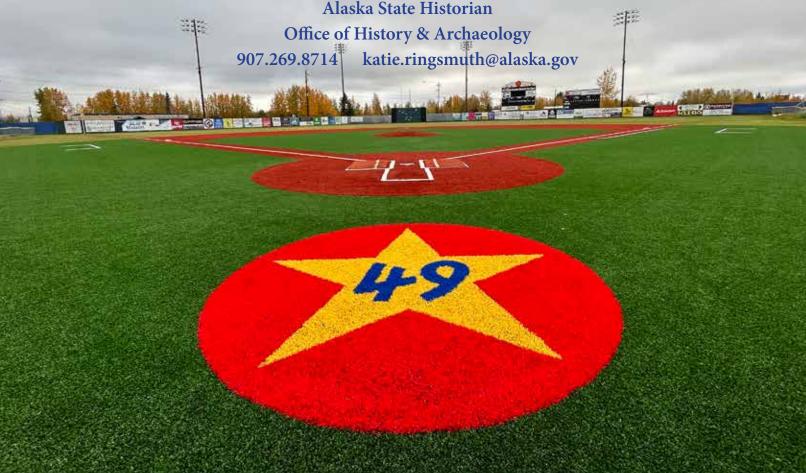


Alaska's Field of Dreams Proposal

America 250 Alaska

The Office of History & Archaeology
Alaska Historical Commission
2024

Contact: Katherine Ringsmuth, PhD Alaska State Historian





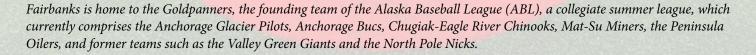
The Pitch: 49th Star's Field of Dreams

In 2026, the nation will come together to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. On November 6, 2024, Governor Mike Dunleavy designated the Alaska Historical Commission (AHC), chaired by Lt. Governor Nancy Dahlstrom, to coordinate the observance, events, and activities statewide and work with the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission at the national level.

The AHC Task Force is planning numerous ways for Alaskans to participate in the national celebration. However, the centerpiece of the America250Alaska plan is a proposed Field of Dreams Legacy Softball Game to be played on or near July 4, 2026.

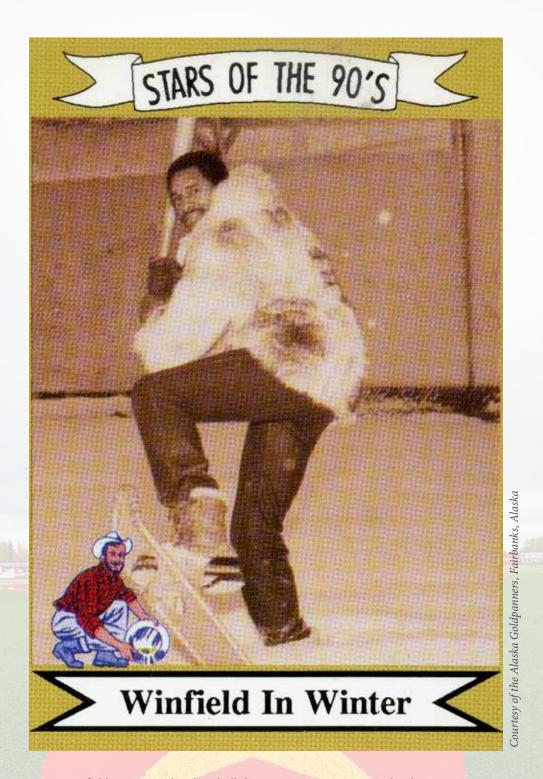
To mark the national celebration, AHC proposes the following:

- 1. Collaborate with Major League Baseball (MLB), an America250 partner, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and the Alaska Goldpanners of Fairbanks to play a Field of Dreams Legacy game with former Alaska Baseball League players on or near July 4, 2026, in Fairbanks, Alaska.
- 2. Invite players with fond memories of Alaska to return to the roots of their baseball careers, help spotlight Alaska's need for sports and recreational facilities, and enjoy the state's scenic wonders with their families.
- 3. Salute Alaska's significant baseball story and encourage simultaneous Fourth of July games in communities statewide.
- 4. Inform Americans and Alaskans about baseball's little-known yet compelling history in Alaska and how the Last Frontier contributes to the epic saga of America's Game through historic preservation and public education programming.
- 5. Develop legacy programs that stimulate economic growth, engage local communities, and benefit Alaska youth, including building the foundation to bring a Field of Dreams MLB Game to Alaska





HISTORY FOR TOMORROW



Dave Winfield tries snowshoe baseball during a return visit to Fairbanks in 1984. Winfield was a 12 time All-Star, received the Golden Glove seven times and Silver Slugger award 6 times. He won the World Series with the New York Yankees in 1992. He was inducted into Baseball Hall of Fame in 2001.



Why Fairbanks, Alaska?

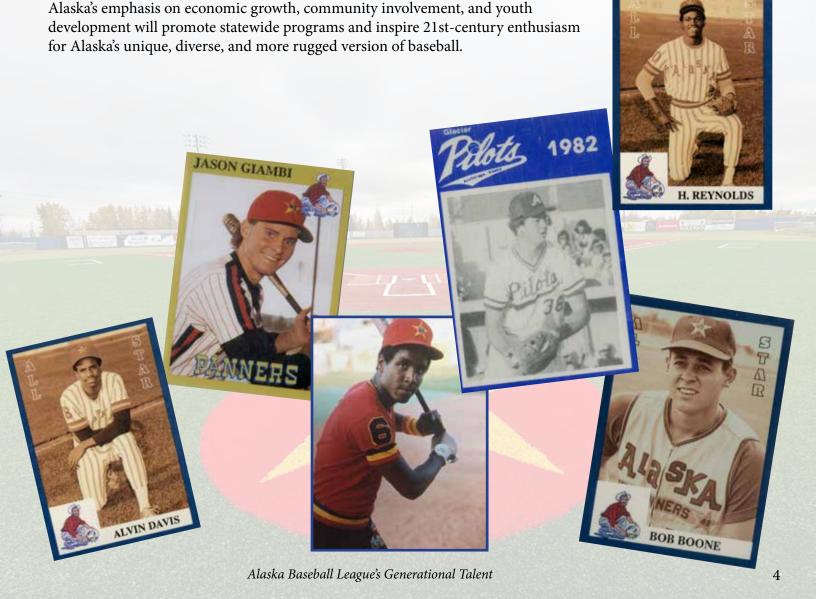
Two beloved American narratives come together in the heart of Alaska and set the stage for powerful storytelling: The American Pastime and The Last Frontier.

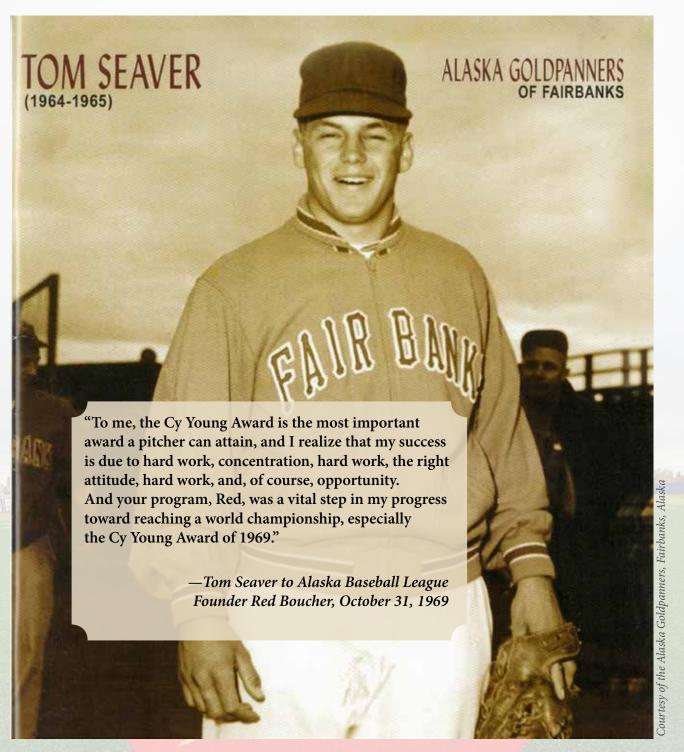
The proposed Field of Dreams Charity Game will be played at Fairbanks's Growden Memorial Field, home of the world-famous Midnight Sun Game and spawning ground for over 500 MLB players, coaches, and umpires.

Built in 1961, the storied ballpark is where generational talents—such as Harold Reynolds, Bill Bean, Jason Giambi, Tony Francona, Alvin Davis, Dave Kingman, Bill "Spaceman" Lee, Barry Bonds, Bob and Brett Boone, and Hall of Famers (Terrific) Tom Seaver and Dave Winfield—donned Alaska Goldpanners jerseys.

Alaska Baseball League competition also cultivated the careers of other MLB icons, including Graig Nettles, Mark McGwire, Jacoby Ellsbury, Hall of Famer Randy Johnson, and future Hall of Famer Aaron Judge.

Alaska Baseball's story offers MLB intriguing and novel origin stories of the game's most beloved and even embattled heroes, which could supply fresh content for documentaries, print media, museum exhibitions, and sports tourism.





Tom Seaver photo in a Goldpanners game program. Receiving Rookie of the Year Award in 1967 with the Mets and three National League Cy young Awards, "Terrific" Tom Seaver was one of the most honored players to play in the Alaska Baseball League.



Preserve It, and They Will Come

Growden Memorial Ballpark is Alaska's most historically valuable sports venue because of its association with numerous MLB all-stars and significant aspects of baseball history.

In support of America250Alaska, the Office of History & Archaeology (OHA) will:

- 1. Produce a pop-up traveling exhibit and companion booklet spotlighting the history of Alaska Baseball in libraries, schools, local businesses, small museums, government offices, and ballparks across the state and nation.
- 2. Nominate Growden Memorial Ballpark to the National Register of Historic Places. Once listed, the ballpark will be eligible for Certified Local Government grants, Historic Preservation Fund grants, Tax Credits, and other funding sources to restore the field to its 1960s-era minor league glory.
- 3. Encourage collaboration with private businesses, local governments, and nonprofit organizations to develop a heritage tourism sports program that will expand the ballpark's use beyond the short summer season and serve as a potential site for local, statewide, national, and international sports tournaments, concerts, and exhibition halls and other venues to immerse heritage-seeking visitors in Alaska's history and culture while benefiting businesses, communities, and youth programs.





Home Field Advantage: A Brief History of Baseball in Alaska

"Baseball served as a beacon, revealing a path through the wilderness."

—John Thorn, Sports Historian

Alaskans have always played a more rugged brand of baseball. Freshly cut evergreen fields and youthful 'boys of summer' rarely spark reminiscences of the national pastime in the polar region. Few Alaskans wax nostalgic for a bygone age. We carved diamonds from the wilderness. We play ball at midnight and transform fields from ice and snow.

But they encountered a unique northern landscape within those familiar diamonds, changing the game into something distinctively Alaskan. These stories tell us that Americans might have introduced the national pastime to Alaska, but we Alaskans, as Walt Whitman wrote, made it our game.



Rolling the Anchorage ballfield Alaska style, ca. 1920



Chitina Baseball Park, ca. 1914



Indigenous Baseball

Before Americans brought baseball north, Alaska Natives played Anauligatuk or Anau, described as a mix of cricket, dodgeball, and baseball. Alaska Natives from the southern areas of the state call the game Laptuuk. The game is generally known as "Eskimo Ball" and "Aleut Ball."

The Indigenous version of baseball likely came to Alaska through two different routes: The Russians introduced to the Unangan and Alutiiq people of coastal Alaska an ancient batting game called "Lapta," which dates to the 14th century. By the late 19th century, Sami reindeer herders from northern Scandinavia introduced to Inupiat, Inuit, and Yupik people a game they call "Lapp Ball." The two versions likely came from the same Siberian source.

Historically, indigenous baseball is tied to colonization, but generations of Alaskans passed down this game and shaped it into a cultural expression of their own. The game continues to have a presence in rural Alaska. Indigenous Baseball instills among residents what one observer described as "a feeling of togetherness, which participants—players and spectators alike—share."



Simeon Tulik watches Sam Anthony play "Lappball," a game introduced by Sami herders from Scandinavia in 1976.

A Whale of a Game

The first known competition comes from Hershel Island, on the Arctic Ocean, where Icebound whalers spread ashes on the sea ice to form a baseball diamond, where they played at 40 below to pass the time. Seven clubs were organized and formed into a league called the "Arctic Whalemen's Pennant. "These games continued all winter until the ships left for summer whaling in July.



Albert G. Spalding, the founder of the sporting goods and manufacturing company, reproduced Funston's Harper's article in his game-changing 1911 classic, Base Ball: America's National Game. Funston highlighted the spectators — those he called "typical Base Ball cranks."

Eyewitness to the games was Brig Gen. Frederick Funston, who arrived at Hershel Island after a snowshoeing trip across northern Alaska in 1894. In 1899, Gen. Funston penned an article about the Whaler's Baseball League for Harper's Round Table.

"I saw [a] crowd of several hundred people watching our national sport, at this far away corner of the earth, only twenty degrees from the pole, and thousands of miles from railroads or steamship lines...And this crowd was more widely cosmopolitan than could have been found at any other place on the globe."

Whale Pennant illustration, "Spalding's Baseball in Alaska," American Sports Publishing Co., 1911



Americanization

Baseball accompanied settlers who came to Alaska to explore, mine, fish, or work on the railroad. In turn, baseball helped transform isolated work camps into integrated American towns. Residents turned out for games with enthusiasm—particularly the 4th of July tournament, the celebration's centerpiece. As town identities emerged, rivalries formed among communities, linking Alaskans across the Territory.

From Nome to Anchorage, baseball helped to "Americanize" Alaska. During the Gold Rush, Nome miners scraped away soggy vegetation from the surface of the ancient beach ridges, placed hundreds of burlap bags atop the permafrost, and then piled dirt atop the bags to craft a playable ball field that overlooked Dry Creek. Historian Terrence Cole described the Nome field as "one of the most unique parks in the world."

Likewise, in Anchorage, renowned Artist Sydney Lawrence photographed a baseball game on July 4,



sydney Laurence, courtesy of the Anchorage Museun



1915, the railroad town's founding. Over one hundred spectators lined up from first base to third. Behind the perfect diamond and the spacious outfield stood a tent city, and behind that, the seemly impenetrable Alaska wil-

Home Fields

derness.

While baseball helped to Americanize Alaska, the extreme northern environment set Alaska baseball apart from America's Game. In Ketchikan, teams competed on tidal flats until the rising Pacific Ocean ended the game.

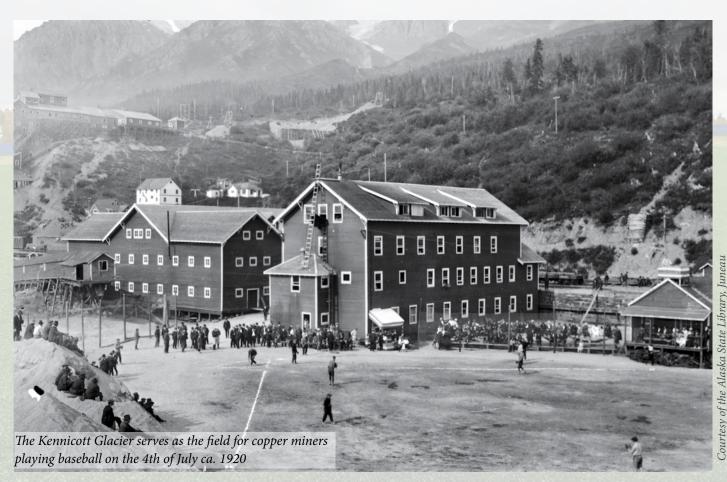
Though fans were accustomed to the game's unhurried rhythms and timeless pace, the mighty Pacific Ocean was not. Matches that went too long were often called on account of the rising tide rather than nine innings, and each time, the baseball field was made new. At Kennecott, copper miners played atop a glacier. In Fairbanks, teams played under the midnight sun. Writers trumpeted Alaska baseball's uniqueness to promote the territory in the Lower 48.

Witnessing the unusual, late-evening start time was considered an Alaskan rite of passage, as journalist H.C. Jackson explained in a 1913 article for Sunset Magazine:

"Here in this camp, we hold that besides seeing a freeze-up and watching the ice go out in the spring, a cheechako must sit through a midnight ball game before he can class as a sourdough."



Game on St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea, 1953





World Wars

The U.S. military transported baseball to the farthest reaches of Alaska. Forts and bases often built fields and supported teams. During World War I, The Anchorage Daily Times asked readers to send baseball paraphernalia to troops in France. Baseball, according to the paper, gave idle soldiers a modicum of amusement and kept them out of trouble. More importantly, baseball ensured the American soldier did not forget his country's customs and traditions. The 1917 article went so far as to predict that "sports will win the war."

During World War II, baseball brought a modicum of normalcy to soldiers on the Aleutian Islands, stationed far from familiar hometowns. Along with weapons, artillery, and other necessary armaments for battle, enlisted men considered baseball gear a priority. Playing baseball helped soldiers cope with the pressure of war.



"The Ingredients are Just Right," Attu, Alaska Sept. 9, 1943

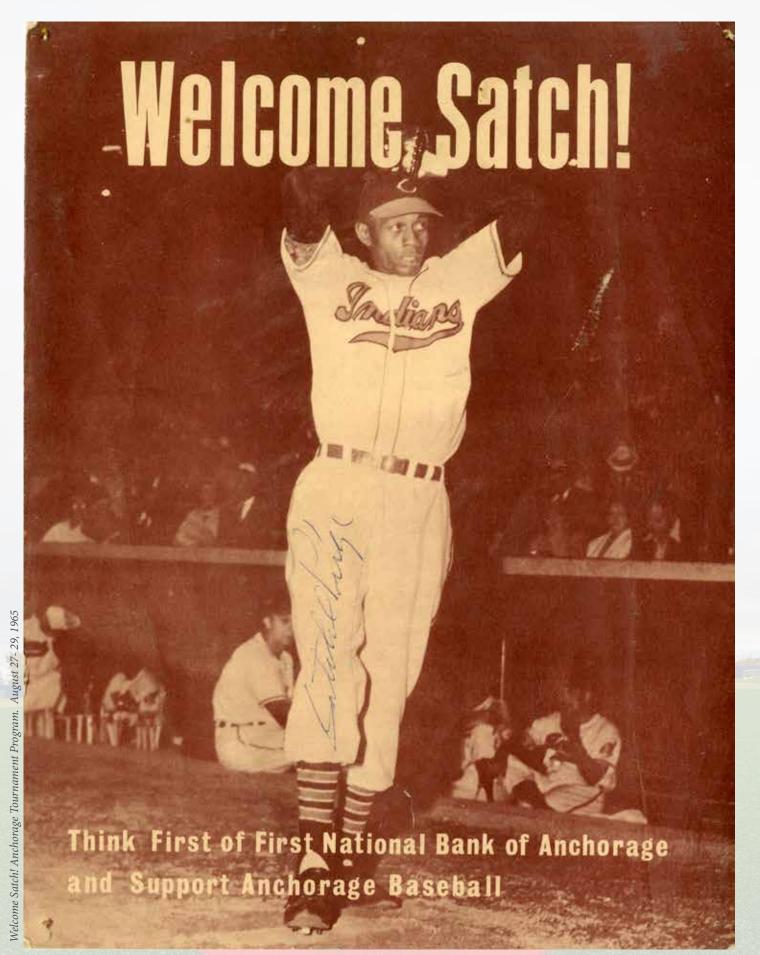
U.S. Navy photo from ACME

Welcome Satch!

As Alaska's residents took to baseball, they rejected social and racial barriers that permeated parts of America in the first part of the 20th century. The Alaska Railroad, mining camps, and salmon canneries gave women, African Americans, Asians, and Alaska Natives opportunities to work and play. Alaska baseball afforded Emmett Ashford, the first Black umpire in MLB, a stage to hone his famous style.



Men and women's Railroad Teams. When they competed, the men batted left-handed.



"I watched from the third base fence. Batter after batter went down swinging. After the game we paid our respects.

He stood in the infield signing autographs. He smiled when he autographed my ball and program.

An Anchorage boy's dream fulfilled." —Pat Osborne, on how he met Satchel Paige in 1965



HISTORY FOR TOMORROW

Race and baseball also combined to create one of the great moments in Alaska sports—when Anchorage welcomed the legendary pitcher Satchel Paige to play in a four-game exhibition in 1965, just one year after the great Alaska earthquake. Rumor had it that the legendary pitcher might manage a team named for the natural disaster.

"I loved Anchorage at first sight," Paige told the Daily News-Miner, "and I'm the man who can build this team up. I'm the man who knows the baseball players and can get them to come up here to play."

Paige's promise to start building the new Anchorage Earthquakers "the minute he left Alaska" never panned out. Still, his presence in Alaska helped to draw interest in the new Alaska Baseball League.



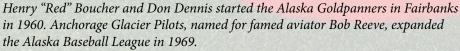
A League of Our Own

A formal Alaska Baseball League started with the Alaska Goldpanners, founded in Fairbanks by Henry Aristide "Red" Boucher and Don Dennis in 1960. After adding the Anchorage Glacier Pilots in 1969, the league expanded to include the Peninsula Oilers, the Mat-Su Miners, the Anchorage Bucs, and, most recently, the Chugiak Chinooks.

The Alaska teams assembled some of the best collegiate talent in the country. Alaska teams competed for numerous National Baseball Congress World Series titles at Wichita, Kansas, with the first championship won by the Anchorage Glacier Pilots in 1969. Since then, many players and coaches have gone on to successful careers in the Major League. Those who found fame playing baseball under the midnight sun include Hall of Famer Randy Johnson and 2024 MLB MVP Aaron Judge.









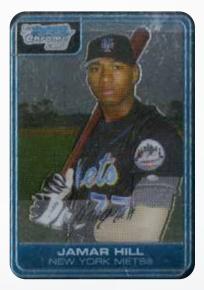


Surprising Demographics

Today, Alaska boasts some of the most diverse areas in the country, with over 100 languages spoken in several Anchorage neighborhoods. In addition to Yupik, Dena'ina, Unangax, and Inupiat, languages in Alaska classrooms include Spanish, Korean, Tagalog, and Hmong. Notably, Alaska's diversity and the origins of our immigrant population are often represented on our playing fields.

Sports and recreation like baseball cultivate unity. Former player Bob Feller once described baseball as a new opportunity: "You can build on yesterday's success or put its failure behind you and start over again." Such optimism also underlies the story of Alaska: a place where disconnected people sought second chances and found in common the ability to overcome barriers and dream big. Perhaps the game is beloved by Alaskans because baseball, like the Last Frontier itself, is about heroes, renewal, and second chances. While surprising to some, Alaska has always been a gathering place for diverse individuals filled with similar hopes and dreams.

Drafted by the New York Mets, Anchorage resident Jamar Hill spearheads a project to build a \$1.5 million community center in the Mountain View neighborhood of Anchorage, Alaska, to give local kids the opportunity to practice baseball year-round. Mountain View is considered the most diverse neighborhood in the United States. Hill runs Nike RBI Alaska, which promotes youth baseball and softball.





From an early age, baseball shows there is hope right up to the last pitch and reminds the young and the young at heart to believe in miracles.



History for Tomorrow

Today, young people make up 25 percent of Alaska's population and 100 percent of our future. We believe that teaching young people to see themselves in Alaska's history will make them more inclined to help build a prosperous Alaska future.

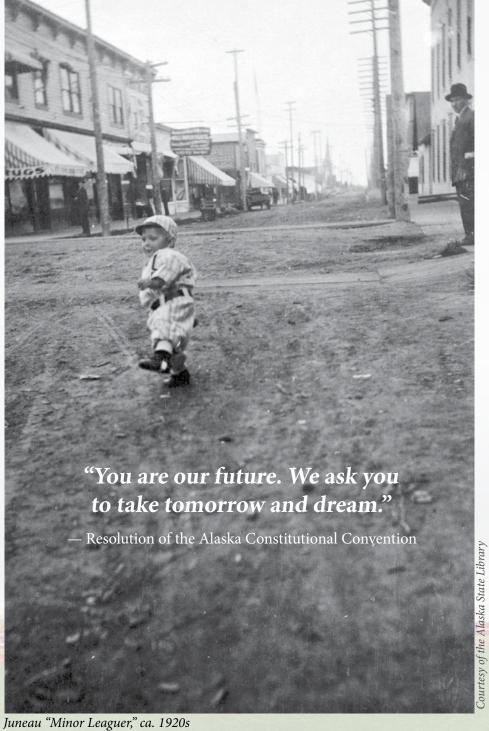
Thus, America250Alaska's guiding theme is History for Tomorrow, which underpins the value of Alaska's next generation. The theme was inspired by the Alaska Constitution Convention members, who, in a resolution passed on February 5, 1956, bequeathed the state constitution they had just forged to Alaska's youth. "You are our future," states the resolution. "We ask you to take tomorrow and dream."

Pageantry and public interest in a Field of Dreams Legacy Softball Game will elevate the history of Alaska base-ball and allow for ancillary programming that will meet the America250Alaska criteria by establishing the following goals:

- 1. Educate visitors about Alaska's rich heritage and unite experts in the tourism industry, historic and cultural preservation, and economic development with a common purpose.
- 2. Bring awareness of Alaska's need for recreational and sports facilities while generating local investment in historic, cultural, and educational resources.
- 3. Leverage national studies demonstrating links between sports participation, academic achievement, leadership and teamwork, and healthy living that improve quality of life and spark community vitality and pride.
- 4. Consider heritage preservation, management, and tourism planning to achieve long-term results.
- 5. Enliven historical and cultural places with authentic stories that engage and empower Alaska youth.



By the 1960s, baseball allowed Alaska's youth to live up to their promise of statehood and make history. The Babe Ruth program for boys sent a little league squad to the Northwest Regional Tournament in 1968. Coach Lee Jordan led the first sports team to represent the state of Alaska on the national stage to the championship game.



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ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

What does "independence" mean to you? This was the question posed to 12 American artists for the Kent Bicentennial Project in 1976 to commemorate the United States bicentennial. The participating artists are Alex Katz, Audrey Flack, Colleen Browning, Edward Ruscha, Fritz Scholder, Jacob Lawrence, Joseph Hirsch, Larry Rivers, Marisol Escobar, Red Grooms, Robert Indiana and Will Barnet. Their artworks reflect on social issues of the 1970s that, in many ways, continue to challenge us today.

2026 will mark the <u>United States' 250th anniversary</u>, the semiquincentennial. To reflect on this date, the Alaska State Museum will ask Alaskan artists working today to respond to the same question, "What does 'independence' mean to you?" The responding artworks will be on view at the museum in the summer of 2026. The Kent Bicentennial Portfolio prints will be displayed in an adjacent gallery.

The Kent Bicentennial Portfolio was printed in an edition of 125 and given to museums across the United States including the Alaska State Museum.

Complete list of works: Will Barnet, Waiting; Colleen Browning, Union Mixer; Audrey Flack, Fourth of July Still Life; Red Grooms, Bicentennial Bandwagon; Joseph Hirsch, The Boston Tea Party; Robert Indiana, Liberty '76; Alex Katz, Washington; Jacob Lawrence, The 1920's... The Migrants Arrive and Cast their Ballots; Marisol (Escobar), Woman's Equality; Larry Rivers, An Outline of History; Ed Ruscha, America, Her Best Product; and Fritz Scholder, Bicentennial Indian.

Banner image: Jacob Lawrence. *The '20's...The Migrants Cast Their Ballots* (crop), 1974.

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Department of Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: November 25, 2024

Alaska Joins Effort to Commemorate 250th Anniversary of the U.S.

(Juneau, AK) – Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy recently appointed the <u>Alaska Historical</u> <u>Commission</u> to serve as Alaska's coordinating entity in planning the state's commemorative activities for the Semiquincentennial in 2026. In collaboration with America250 – the official nonpartisan initiative working to engage every American in celebrating and commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence – the <u>America250-Alaska Task Force</u> will work to honor the unique history, traditions, and contributions of the state while embracing the shared values and aspirations of the American people.

"As we near the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, I am honored to announce the establishment of America250-Alaska Task Force to lead our efforts in celebrating this historic milestone," **said Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy.** "Alaska's rich history, diverse cultures, and unique contributions to the United States will play a vital role in this national celebration. I look forward to engaging Alaskans in this once-in-a-lifetime commemoration."

"I'm excited to see my home state join our initiative to plan and celebrate America's Semiquincentennial," **said Senator Lisa Murkowski, an America250 Commissioner.**"From our breathtaking landscapes to our unique culture rich in Indigenous heritage, it's important for Alaska to be part of this nationwide effort. While we were still 183 years from statehood when the Declaration of Independence was signed, our contributions to the union are second to none, and I'm excited to partner with the Alaska Historical Commission to share our story and highlight our people as we approach this historic milestone."

"We're thrilled that the largest state in the nation, with its natural beauty, rich history, and diverse indigenous cultures is now joining our historic effort to plan the largest and inspiring celebration and commemoration in American history," **said Rosie Rios, Chair of America250.** "Alaska is known as the Last Frontier, and this spirit of exploration will help ensure a memorable Semiquincentennial that is truly of, by and for the people. Thanks to Governor Dunleavy's leadership in establishing this commission, Alaska will play a key role in marking this historic milestone and ensuring it is representative of Alaskans and all Americans."

With Alaska now on board as the 49th state, 54 states and territories have announced Semiquincentennial entities as America250 works to establish a Commission in all 50 states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia. The established State and Territorial Commissions include Alabama, Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and the District of Columbia.

In April, Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski was appointed to the United States Semiquincentennial Commission by U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. As a Commissioner, Senator

Murkowski assists the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission and America250.org, together known as America250, in orchestrating the largest and inspiring commemoration and celebration in American history. The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission was established by Congress in 2016 to plan and orchestrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The Commission is comprised of 16 private citizens, four members of the U.S. Senate, four members of the U.S. House of Representatives, all of whom were appointed by House and Senate leadership of both parties. Congress also designated the inclusion of 12 Ex Officio federal partners, including several independent agencies.

About America 250

America250 is a nonpartisan initiative working to engage every American in celebrating and commemorating the Semiquincentennial, the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It is spearheaded by the congressionally-appointed U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission and its sole-supporting nonprofit organization, America250.org, Inc., together known as America250. This multi-year effort kicked off with America's Invitation on July 4, 2023: a national public engagement campaign inviting all Americans to share their stories and their hopes and dreams for the future of this country. Leading up to July 4, 2026, America250 is working to provide opportunities for all Americans to pause and reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look to the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond. To learn more, visit America250.org, and follow us on X, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

The Department of Natural Resources' mission is to develop, conserve, and maximize the use of Alaska's natural resources consistent with the public interest.

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Administrative Order No. 357

I, Mike Dunleavy, Governor of the State of Alaska, under the authority of Article III, Secs. 1, 23, and 24 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska, hereby establish the America250-Alaska Task Force to commemorate the United States Semiguincentennial.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The United States of America declared its independence from Great Britain on July 4, 1776. In 2016, Congress established the United States Semiquincentennial Commission, which encourages state and local governments to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Nation's independence. The purpose of this Administrative Order is to designate the Alaska Historical Commission as the agency responsible for coordinating the observance, events and activities in the State of Alaska commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

FINDINGS

- 1. The 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States is a historic occasion that requires appropriate recognition and participation by the State of Alaska.
- 2. The Alaska Historical Commission, a nine-member citizen forum chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, is the most suitable existing entity to plan and coordinate Alaska's participation in this anniversary due to its statutory mandate and expertise in historical matters.

ORDER

To engage Alaskans and coordinate commemoration activities, I, Mike Dunleavy, Governor of the State of Alaska, hereby authorize the Alaska Historical Commission to serve as Alaska's official America250 State entity. The Commission will be responsible for encouraging, organizing, and fostering America250-Alaska activities statewide and working with the United States Semiquincentennial Commission at the national level.

The Alaska Historical Commission shall:

- Develop a strategic plan for the State's participation in the semiquincentennial celebration, including events, educational initiatives, and outreach activities.
- Coordinate with relevant federal, State, and local agencies, as well as
 public and private organizations, to ensure the State's approach to the
 semiquincentennial is both comprehensive and inclusive.
- Submit a preliminary report to the Governor within 90 days of this order that details proposed activities, budget requirements, and potential partnerships.

All State agencies and departments shall, within available appropriations, and as requested by the Alaska Historical Commission, provide assistance, information, and resources necessary to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in this order.

DURATION

This Order takes effect immediately and remains in effect until December 31, 2027.

DATED this 6th day of November 2024.

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