

Indiana Humanities Action Grants—2024

The following projects have received an Indiana Humanities Action Grant in calendar year 2023. For more information about the projects and to discuss ideas for your own programs, contact Indiana Humanities' grants team at grants@indianahumanities.org or 317.638.1500.

2024 Japanese Olympiad of Indiana

Ball State University, Muncie
Congressional District: 5
Awarded: \$2,666

Ball State University hosted the 2024 Japanese Olympiad of Indiana, an academic competition focused on Japanese language, culture, and history for high school students in Indiana. In addition to the competition, participants enjoyed cultural presentations and demonstrations (which were open to the public).

Harry Davis: An Artist Shaped by the Times

Indiana Landmarks, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$2,000

Indiana Landmarks hosted a public talk and exhibition celebrating Indiana artist Harry A. Davis, who is widely recognized for his teaching and artwork, particularly his architectural renderings of historic Hoosier buildings. Grant funds supported a presentation by art historian Rachel B. Perry that explored Davis's artistic journey and examined the influences that shaped his work and affected his world view. Following the talk, attendees viewed an exhibition of Davis's work at Indiana Landmarks' headquarters.

Reading Hemingway's *In Our Time*: A Centenary Celebration

Ernest Hemingway Foundation, Evansville/Boone, N.C.
Congressional District: 8
Awarded: \$3,000

Ernest Hemingway scholar and University of Evansville English professor Mark Cirino produced 18 new episodes for the podcast series *One True Podcast*, which explores Hemingway's life, work and world. The new episodes celebrated the centennial of Hemingway's first collection of short stories, *In Our Time*, and featured analysis of each of the collection's chapters along with discussion of that vignette's historical, biographical, and literary contexts. As part of the project, Cirino presented content and findings from the podcast to a public continuing-education class at the University of Evansville.

Queer Oral History Project Collaboration between Saint Mary's College and LGBTQ Center of South Bend

Saint Mary's College, South Bend
Congressional District: 2
Awarded: \$3,000

Students at Saint Mary's College conducted oral-history interviews with 20 people associated with South Bend's LGBTQ Center in honor of the center's 20th anniversary. They then collaborate with Indiana University South Bend's Civil Rights Heritage Center to create and house the histories in an archival collection. Students also engaged the public with the materials through an exhibition, a multimedia digital storytelling project, and an audio listening session, and they made the materials available to the LGBTQ Center for use at its 20th-anniversary gala in 2025.

Resist

Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$2,400

The Indiana Historical Society developed and hosted an exhibit called *Resist*. The exhibit centered on a 1924 clash between University of Notre Dame students and the Ku Klux Klan in South Bend, utilizing archival materials, virtual reality, and first-person interpretations to tell the story. Themes focused on constructs of race and ethnicity, the history and legacy of the Klan, and resistance to the Klan. The exhibit also elevated other individuals and groups who spoke out against the Klan.

Preserving Community Voices, an Oral History Symposium

Indianapolis Public Library Foundation, Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$2,960

The Indianapolis Public Library hosted an all-day training session to help local residents develop the knowledge and skills they need to capture their own communities' historical and cultural narrative through oral-history projects. Sessions covered technology, copyright, and project planning and implementation. Doug Boyd, director of the Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries, delivered the keynote address.

Heritage Artisans Days

University of Southern Indiana, Evansville

Congressional District: 8

Awarded: \$3,000

Heritage Artisans Days, hosted by the University of Southern Indiana and Historic New Harmony, welcomed an estimated 2,500 elementary school students to experience New Harmony in the early 1800s. More than a dozen artisans and interpreters described their lives, demonstrated their crafts, and explained their roles in the context of New Harmony's beginnings. Students learned about the significance of New Harmony's two utopian communities and the communities' influence on Indiana's development.

Culinary Anthropology

Cedar Lake Historical Association, Cedar Lake

Congressional District: 1

Awarded: \$3,000

The Cedar Lake Historical Association developed an exhibition on the Potawatomi people, with a focus on the moons of the Potawatomi calendar, changes in seasons, and the ways that the Potawatomi hunted and planted and harvested food around the Cedar Lake. As supplementary programming, the CLHA brought in a scholar to present two sessions on the native vegetation of the Calumet Region, the diet of the Potawatomi, and the influence that Europeans had on the foodways of northwest Indiana. In a third program, a local chef who focuses on culinary anthropology prepared a meal inspired by the Potawatomi tradition.

Migration-Immigration: Responding to Demographic Shifts

Indiana Council on World Affairs, Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$3,000

The Indiana Council on World Affairs partnered with the International Center of Indiana, the Global Village Welcome Center, and the Center for Interfaith Cooperation to plan and facilitate a programming series designed to help participants better understand the social, cultural, and economic drivers of immigration and to identify strategies for successful integration of immigrants into the state of Indiana. Programming elements included two workshops, an information tabling event, an international dinner, and a keynote speaker.

The Global Language of Headwear: Cultural Identity, Rites of Passage, and Spirituality
Special Exhibition

Ruthmere Foundation, Elkhart
Congressional District: 2
Awarded: \$3,000

The Ruthmere Foundation hosted a traveling exhibit titled *The Global Language of Headwear* that explored the cultural identity, rites of passage, and spirituality that various headwear represent. The exhibit presented 89 hats and headdresses carefully selected to represent a diverse group of cultures and cultural ideas. Attendees were invited to consider their meaning, symbolism, and importance. Accompanying programming included a scholarly talk on the use of headwear in religious practices as well as free family days and children's activities.

Beyond the Book Festival

Starke County Public Library System, Knox
Congressional District: 2
Awarded: \$3,000

The Starke County Public Library hosted the Beyond the Book Festival, a one-day event that showcased more than 30 local, national, and international authors. The festival connected readers with writers; illustrated the many ways that reading encourages personal and cultural empathy and knowledge; and encouraged the love of reading and creative expression in children and adults. Authors met with patrons, gave presentations, and facilitated workshops as part of the day's programming.

Allyship and Film Series with YWCA Northeast Indiana and Fort Wayne Cinema Center

YWCA Northeast Indiana, Fort Wayne
Congressional District: 3
Awarded: \$3,000

The YWCA of Northeast Indiana's Racial Justice program partnered with the Fort Wayne Cinema Center to host a three-film event series that engaged audiences in building cross-cultural understanding, empathy, and allyship. The series promoted the voices and stories of marginalized groups and educated viewers through specialized scholar facilitation and thought-provoking community discussion.

Making Black History Accessible

Black Legacy Project of Wayne County, Richmond
Congressional District: 6
Awarded: \$2,953

Through a series of public programs, the Black Legacy Project of Wayne County recognized and celebrated Black citizens of Richmond and Wayne County who have made important contributions to the community. Grant funds supported four core activities: providing a day of free admission to the Wayne County Historical Museum to experience the Black Legacy Project's collaborative exhibit *Our Legacy: 1800 and Beyond*; a recorded tour of the *Our Legacy* exhibit for preservation and distribution online; the collection and sharing of oral histories examining Black legacies in the community; and a panel discussion examining the impact of the yearlong *Our Legacy* exhibit and exploring next steps for celebrating and honoring the contributions of Black community members.

History Speaks: Civil War Stories

Crown Point Community Library, Crown Point
Congressional District: 1
Awarded: \$2,000

The Crown Point Community Library partnered with Lake County Parks and Rec and the Northwest Indiana Civil War Roundtable to present a one-day event that educated the public about various aspects of the Civil War. Participants interacted with character performers representing Civil War-era historical personas, watched historical military reenactors, and met authors. Programs helped participants to challenge existing ideas and beliefs about the Civil War and to incorporate new knowledge about it.

Fiber Revival 2024

Friends of Beck's Mill, Salem

Congressional District: 9

Awarded: \$2,850

The Friends of Beck's Mill hosted the third-annual Fiber Revival event, showcasing the historic mill and its 1830s wool-carding equipment. Activities included tours, demonstrations of historic machinery, displays by regional wool and fiber artisans, and conversations that helped place the fiber arts in social and historical contexts.

Indy Water Connection Camp

Friends of the White River, Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$3,000

The Friends of the White River offered a weeklong summer day camp aimed at connecting youth to the White River. In addition to providing water education and safety training, the camp focused on connecting participants to Indiana's water history and geography, particularly from a minority perspective. Activities included reading and discussing relevant articles, poetry, and excerpts from literature.

Polklore Micro-Museum Launch

Harrison Center, Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$3,000

The Harrison Center collaborated with community members to collect artifacts and stories and incorporate them into a micro-museum in the former Polk Dairy stables building in Indianapolis's Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood. The interactive museum tells the story of the dairy, the people who worked there, and the neighbors who lived around it.

2024 Henry County Reads

New Castle–Henry County Public Library, New Castle

Congressional District: 6

Awarded: \$3,000

The New Castle–Henry County Public Library sponsored a community-wide read of the classic gothic novel *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier. The library distributed free copies of the book and offered several related programs, including a book discussion with the Daphne du Maurier Society of North America, a reader's retreat, a lecture on Alfred Hitchcock's 1940 film based on the book, and more.

Summer Fiesta

Church of the Nativity (Episcopal), Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$3,000

The Church of the Nativity used grant funds to support programming at its Summer Fiesta, including a talk by author and historian Nicole Martinez-LeGrand on intersections between Latinos and faith communities in Indianapolis. Martinez-LeGrand provided information based on her research and on storytelling around her own family's migration history and connections to church music and development. Summer Fiesta also featured an all-Latino music group of students, alumni, and faculty of the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music performing salsa music within the aesthetic of 1960s and 1970s salsa movements in New York City.

When Everyone Swims

Diversity in Aquatics, Alexandria, Virginia

Congressional District: 7 (programming took place in Indianapolis)

Awarded: \$3,000

Diversity in Aquatics held public previews of *When Everyone Swims*, a documentary that explores the history of racial disparities in swimming, why drowning has become a public health crisis, and how people of all backgrounds can have a healthy relationship with water. The documentary presents insights from numerous athletes, including several of Indiana's Olympic swimmers, as well as scholars who contextualize the historical subject matter. The screenings took place in June 2024, when Indianapolis hosted the U.S. Olympic Team Trials—Swimming.

Deliber8: An Ethical Training Program for Leaders

Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, Greencastle

Congressional District: 4

Awarded: \$3,000

The Association for Practical and Professional Ethics hosted a one-day ethics training program at the Prindle Institute for Ethics in partnership with the University of Mississippi and DePauw University. The program, designed for leaders in various fields, focused on ethical reasoning and deliberation in order to help leaders make tough ethical decisions, provide them with tools for talking through ethical disagreements, and promote a culture of ethical responsibility within their businesses and organizations.

Frida for ALL/Frida para TODAS

Creative Women of the World, Fort Wayne

Congressional District: 3

Awarded: \$3,000

Creative Women of the World hosted its third-annual Frida for ALL/Frida para TODAS community event, a celebration of Latino culture, arts, and local community; women in the arts; artists with physical disabilities; and artist Frida Kahlo's birthday. The program educated the public about Latino heritage, ancestry, and traditional art forms in addition to featuring storytelling related to Kahlo's life and work.

My Indiana Muse Film Screening

Highland Community Foundation, Highland

Congressional District: 1

Awarded: \$1,140

The Highland Community Foundation, in partnership with the Highland Arts Council, hosted a public screening of *My Indiana Muse*, an award-winning film that explores the journey of visual artist Robert Townsend and his muse Helen, a woman from Highland, Indiana, whose image Townsend found in a collection of Kodachrome slides that he purchased on eBay. Townsend has made Helen a key subject of his art for many years, and in the film, he digs deeper into her life, visiting the places and people that were important to her. The film offers a poignant and insightful look into the creative process and the profound impact that one person can have on another, even if those people have never met. After the screening, a panel of scholars and locals featured in the film discussed the themes, including the sources of artistic inspiration, the importance of local culture in art, and the broader human experiences that connect us all.

Trailblazers: An Evening of Athletic Inspiration—The Anthony J. Bridgeman Lecture on Sports and Society

Indy Criterium, Inc., Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$1,059

Indy Criterium presented its second-annual Trailblazers: An Evening of Athletic Inspiration event featuring former Indianapolis Indians baseball player Razor Shines. Shines recounted his experiences growing up in the projects of Durham, North Carolina, in the 1960s and 1970s and his breakthrough in professional baseball in Indianapolis in the 1980s and 1990s. Continuing the sports theme, Indiana State Museum curator Kisha Tandy dug more deeply into the life of bicycling legend Major Taylor, an Indianapolis native, sharing the story of his father Gilbert's Civil War service.

Amped at IU: The Jim Irsay Guitar Collection

Trustees of Indiana University, Bloomington
Congressional District: 9
Awarded: \$3,000

Indiana University collaborated with the Jim Irsay Collection to create and host a yearlong exhibit exploring Irsay's extensive collection of guitars and music ephemera. IU Jacobs School of Music faculty curated the exhibit and provided tours highlighting the history, social context, and impact of the instruments, the people who played them, and the music they made. A special one-day exhibit showcasing the most famous guitars from the Irsay Collection was held in collaboration with IU Family Weekend in September 2024.

“Overlooked”: Reclaiming the Stories of Remarkable Women, Presented by *New York Times* Reporter Amisha Padnani

Indiana Association of Historians, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$3,000

The Indiana Association of Historians brought *New York Times* reporter Amisha Padnani to Indianapolis as the keynote speaker for the Hoosier Women at Work Conference at the Madam Walker Legacy Center in October. Padnani discussed the *New York Times*'s “Overlooked” series, which she created to tell the stories of remarkable people, many of them women, whose deaths were not originally reported in the newspaper. The presentation, which was open to the public, encouraged attendees to research, explore, and document the lives and stories of Indiana's own remarkable women.

Southern Indiana Winter Read: Kurt Vonnegut

Jefferson Township Public Library, Jeffersonville
Congressional District: 9
Awarded: \$3,000

The Jefferson Township Public Library partnered with the Floyd County Public Library, the Harrison County Public Library, Clark County Reads, the Southern Indiana Arts Alliance, and the Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library to host a series of free public programs, spanning three counties, that explored the topics, themes, history, and legacy of Kurt Vonnegut's first novel, *Player Piano*. Activities included free book distributions, discussion programs, exhibitions, film screenings and more.

Laughter from Page to Screen

Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy, Vincennes
Congressional District: 8
Awarded: \$3,000

The Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy joined the Knox County Public Library to host a monthly series of book and film discussions. Conversations centered on comedic books that have been adapted into films; facilitators helped participants compare and contrast the themes and storytelling through both mediums.

Returning to the Homeland: Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the Feast of the Hunters' Moon 2024

Tippecanoe County Historical Association, Lafayette
Congressional District: 4
Awarded: \$2,793

In October 2024, the Tippecanoe County Historical Association hosted its 57th annual Feast of the Hunters' Moon festival, which explored the region's rich history and heritage. Grant funds assisted with bringing members of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to participate in the festival. Representatives of the tribe took part in historical reenactments and provided education through cultural presentations and storytelling.

Community Conversations on *A More Abundant Life: The Indianapolis Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, 1910–1959*

Trustees of Indiana University/Indiana University Indianapolis, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$2,725

A research team from Indiana University Indianapolis hosted a public screening of a documentary film that it produced titled *A More Abundant Life: The Indianapolis Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, 1910–1959*. Following the screening, the team facilitated a community conversation in an effort to memorialize the history and impact of the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA (which served Indianapolis's Black community), to invite more voices into the telling of its story, and to provide opportunities to reflect on additional silences, cracks, and institutional misrepresentations. The screening-and-discussion program was part of a broader effort to gather the input of community members in guiding the future of the project.

Impacts of the Coming Technology Wave on Society

Purdue University Northwest, Hammond
Congressional District: 1
Awarded: \$2,783

Purdue University Northwest offers an annual "One Book, One University" program to foster a sense of community and shared learning through the collective reading and discussion of a selected book. Grant funds supported 2024's selection, *The Coming Wave: Technology, Power, and the 21st Century's Greatest Dilemma* by Mustafa Suleyman, which delves into the complexities of technological advancements and their ethical and social implications, urging readers to consider the profound impact of these developments on our future. Activities included a panel discussion, a community-wide debate, and a keynote speech (presented by Ohio State University associate professor of history David Staley) to deepen understanding, cultivate diverse perspectives, and raise public awareness.

The Death of Civil Discourse in American Life and Politics: Impacts, Consequences, and Cures

Walk in the Light Christian Church, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$3,000

Walk in the Light Christian Church presented a half-day seminar-style program, hosted at Butler University, that engaged participants in a critical conversation about the decline of respectful dialogue in American society. Through a panel discussion and interactive lunch session, participants explored the causes and consequences of this decline and proposed actionable solutions within their own spheres of influence.

Sarah Thornton Author Talk

Wunderkammer Company, Fort Wayne
Congressional District: 3
Awarded: \$3,000

Wunderkammer Company hosted a panel discussion moderated by cultural sociologist Sarah Thornton, whose recent work explores how women's bodies have become a "billion-dollar business, as well as a stage for debates about race, class, gender, and desire." The discussion examined the topic through the lens of history, language, philosophy, ethics, and culture.

George R. Mather Sunday Lecture Series

Allen County–Fort Wayne Historical Society, Fort Wayne
Congressional District: 3
Awarded: \$3,000

The Allen County–Fort Wayne Historical Society presented its George R. Mather Sunday Lecture Series, a program of free monthly public lectures centered on history, archaeology, religion, visual arts, and topics within the broader field of social studies, including economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, and folklore. The community enjoyed eight scholarly historical presentations and had free access to the museum during lecture hours.

Bloomington Book Festival

Bloomington Book Festival, Bloomington
Congressional District: 9
Awarded: \$3,000

Grant funds supported the inaugural Bloomington Book Festival, a five-day celebration of literature, authors, and independent bookstores. The festival included a roster of readings, conversations, workshops, and other community events (such as a movie screening and bookmaking class), all meant to highlight the idea of the book, from inception to creation to reception.

Bookish Minds

Mental Health America of Northeast Indiana, Fort Wayne
Congressional District: 3
Awarded: \$2,970

Mental Health America of Northeast Indiana used grant funds to support its newly established book club, Bookish Minds. At the monthly book club, which is open to all community members, participants read and discuss literature that deals with mental health themes. Through the program, the club aims to foster understanding, empathy, and personal growth while also working toward dismantling the stigma surrounding mental health and building an inclusive community.

Power of Words: Changing Our World, One Story at a Time

Monroe County Public Library Foundation, Bloomington
Congressional District: 9
Awarded: \$2,625

Power of Words: Changing Our World, One Story at a Time is a biennial program presented by the Monroe County Public Library and its foundation/friends group. In 2024 the program presented award-winning authors Ashley Hope Perez, author of *Out of Darkness*, and Jacinda Townsend, author of *Mother Country*, in conversation with local writer and radio producer Yael Ksander. The program celebrated diversity and provided a platform for genuine narratives that reflect the complexities of real-life experiences. A significant thread between the authors is that they are from rural places, which informs their work.

Song and Science: An Exploration of the Stories, History, and Science of Opera

Swope Art Museum, Terre Haute
Congressional District: 8
Awarded: \$3,000

The Swope Art Museum hosted a program that explored the phenomenon of opera through multiple lenses, including storytelling, historical and political contextualization, and critical analysis. The first part of the program included a lecture and workshop focused on the connections between science and music from a historical perspective. The second part focused on operatic performances and featured contextual discussion surrounding several pieces.

Spirit & Place Festival Public Conversation Featuring Dacher Keltner, Ebony Chappel, and R. Eric Thomas

Trustees of Indiana University/Spirit & Place, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$2,970

The annual Spirit & Place Festival hosted a closing public conversation, bringing together speakers who represent different disciplines to explore the festival's theme of "gratitude." Psychology researcher Dr. Dacher Keltner, best-selling author R. Eric Thomas, and local artist Ebony Chappel discussed what psychology and evolutionary science have to say about our brains and why our emotions—like awe and gratitude—matter. The speakers also examined how the creative arts, including literature, express feelings of gratitude and how faith and spirituality deepen a sense of awe and wonder for some.

The Abolitionist Legacy: Literary Scholars Discuss Olaudah Equiano's Activist Writing

Trustees of Indiana University/Indiana University Indianapolis Center for Africana Studies and Culture, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$3,000

The Abolitionist Legacy project explored literature through the lens of the African Diaspora by engaging scholars in a dialogue that focused on *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* and the power of the written word within the human story. Equiano was a writer and abolitionist who was born in modern-day Nigeria in 1745, enslaved, and transported to the Caribbean and eventually colonial Virginia. A panel of scholars explored his journey to becoming a pioneering abolitionist writer. Central to the discourse was a focus on narratives such as justice and resistance during the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, internal resistance to slavery in Africa, and the ways each has shaped global society.

Raven and the Box of Daylight: A Tlingit Story Brought to Light

Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis
Congressional District: 7
Awarded: \$3,000

The Eiteljorg Museum hosted *Raven and the Box of Daylight*, an immersive traveling exhibition depicting the Tlingit story of Raven and his transformation of the world. The exhibit featured a dynamic blend of original glasswork by Tlingit artist Preston Singletary and multisensory elements that took visitors on an immersive journey through Raven's story of bringing light to people through the stars, moon, and sun. Through storytellers' recordings, coastal sounds of the Pacific Northwest, Tlingit language, and a backdrop of shadows and images, the exhibition engaged visitors with Tlingit cultural elements through sight and sound. Grant funds supported an opening-weekend conversation between artist Singletary and exhibit curator Miranda Belarde-Lewis. The two provided an overview of the exhibition, talked about Raven's role in Northwest Coast cultures, and shared behind-the-scenes highlights about working together to bring this Tlingit story to light.

It's Debatable: Championing Debate Initiative

Morning Bishop Theatre Playhouse, Gary

Congressional District: 1

Awarded: \$2,700

The It's Debatable—Championing Debate initiative familiarized students and adults in the art of Lincoln-Douglas style debating. The program centered on unraveling the essence of debate and its intricate connections to democracy. It posed a fundamental query: How do public debates wield influence and carve the contours of public opinions (especially in today's world, dominated by social media, where the sway of popularity often eclipses rationality and judicious thinking)? The program used the transcript of Malcolm X's Oxford Union debate ("Is Extremism Justified in Defense of Liberty?") as its seminal text. After attending sessions and discussions that helped them examine the text, participants took part in a series of public debates centered on the content of the text.

Exploring New Worlds

Starbase, Inc., Indianapolis

Congressional District: 7

Awarded: \$3,000

Starbase Indy hosts an annual *Star Trek* convention in Indianapolis, examining the intersection of science and the humanities. At the 2024 gathering, grant funds supported free panel sessions centered on the theme of "exploring new worlds." Scholars and experts discussed topics such as "Exploring New Worlds through Science Fiction," "Exploring New Worlds through Language," "Exploring New Worlds through Faith," and "Exploring New Worlds through Law." The conversations were recorded and released as a podcast available for free public listening. Corresponding curriculum was also created for use in educational settings.