



NEWS RELEASE

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Humanities Kansas Announces Hosts of National Declaration of Independence Exhibition in 2026

Topeka, Kan. – Humanities Kansas (HK) announces the statewide tour of “Declaration 1776: The Big Bang of Modern Democracy,” a traveling exhibition from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, from January 3-December 31, 2026, at 47 Kansas community cultural organizations. A full schedule with dates can be found at humanitieskansas.org.

The opportunity to host a national exhibition about the Declaration of Independence was extremely popular. HK originally planned for the traveling exhibition to go to 10 locations; however, when more than 50 organizations applied to host the exhibition, HK expanded the tour to include four copies of the exhibition that will travel the state simultaneously and six copies that stay on exhibition for most of the year at universities and statewide institutions. “It’s the movement of ideas,” shared Julie Mulvihill, executive director of Humanities Kansas. “We were amazed by the number of organizations in Kansas interested in learning more about the Declaration of Independence, so we worked to find a way to include as many locations as we could afford to be part of this special exhibition.”

The exhibition will be on display in the following Kansas venues in 2026:

Andover Public Library
Benedictine College, Atchison
Boot Hill Museum, Dodge City
Bowlus Fine Arts Center, Iola
Coffey County Public Library, Burlington
Coldwater-Wilmore Regional Library, Coldwater
Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas, Lawrence
Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum, and Boyhood Home, Abilene
El Dorado Senior Center
Finney County Historical Society, Garden City
Flint Hills Discovery Center, Manhattan
Franklin County Historical Society, Ottawa
Gardner Historical Society
Geary County Historical Society, Junction City
Great Bend Public Library
Harper Public Library
Hays Public Library
Kansas City Kansas Public Library
Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka
Kansas Studies Institute, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park
Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina
Kauffman Museum, North Newton
Kinsley Public Library
Lecompton Historical Society

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Lyon County History Center, Emporia
Mitchell County Historical Society, Beloit
Nicodemus National Historic Site
Olathe Public Library
Old Jefferson Town/Jefferson County Historical Society, Oskaloosa
Onaga Historical Society
Osage Mission-Neosho County Museum, St. Paul
Park City Senior Center
Phillips County Historical Society, Phillipsburg
Pittsburg State University
Pony Express Barn & Museum, Marysville
Pratt County Historical Society, Pratt
Republic County Historical Society, Belleville
Rice County Historical Society, Lyons
Rose Hill City Hall
Seneca Free Library/Seneca Area Chamber and Downtown Impact
Scott County Library, Scott City
Sumner County Historical and Genealogical Society/Wellington Public Library
Tebo Library, Fort Hays State University, Hays
Tonganoxie Community Historical Society
Wamego Public Library
Wellsville City Library

When the Declaration of Independence was issued, the idea that “all men are created equal” was revolutionary. With this seminal document, the Founding Fathers unleashed an open-ended driving force that would shape modern history. Around the world, other countries have declared independence taking the US Declaration of 1776 as a model. “Declaration 1776” uses primary sources to illustrate how Americans and people across the world have been inspired by the Declaration in their pursuit of equality and self-determination. The Kansas “Declaration 1776” traveling exhibition includes a section called “Kansas 1776,” which explores what was happening on the land that would become the state of Kansas 250 years ago.

“‘Declaration 1776’ is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for Kansas communities to participate in the national commemoration of America’s 250th right in their own hometowns,” said Mulvihill. “We look forward to robust community conversations about America’s founding document and its impact on the world.”

The “Declaration 1776: The Big Bang of Modern Democracy” traveling exhibition is sponsored in part by the State of Kansas through the Kansas Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts and the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund.

For more information about “Declaration 1776” in Kansas visit humanitieskansas.org.

ABOUT HUMANITIES KANSAS

Humanities Kansas is an independent nonprofit leading a movement of ideas. Since 1972, HK’s programming, grants, and partnerships have documented and shared stories to spark conversations and invite new insights. Together with statewide partners and supporters, HK encourages Kansans to draw on diverse histories, literatures, and cultures to create connections with one another and strengthen Kansas communities and our democracy.

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