

National History Day Announces Rural and Urban Outreach Program Supported by the Bezos Family Foundation

October 23, 2023, College Park, Maryland—[National History Day](#)® (NHD) is proud to announce the first phase of its Inclusive History Initiative (IHI), funded by a grant from the [Bezos Family Foundation](#). This initiative is a series of programs and publications that promote diversity, equity, access, and inclusion within the NHD network and organization. Inclusive history refers not only to a diversity of topics, events, people, and ideas but also to how NHD can make participation more accessible to students and educators from various backgrounds, educational levels, and socioeconomic statuses.

The first phase of this program will involve a program piloting outreach to urban and rural schools in four states. In partnership with NHD affiliate programs in Alabama, Indiana, North Carolina, and Oklahoma, NHD will co-lead a series of professional development workshops to engage teachers and strengthen NHD programs in:

- Jefferson County and Mobile County, Alabama (with the Alabama Humanities Alliance)
- Marion County, Indiana (with the Indiana Historical Society)
- Swain County and neighboring counties of western North Carolina (with the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Office of Archives and History)
- Western Oklahoma (with the Oklahoma Historical Society)

“National History Day is proud to partner with the Bezos Family Foundation on this important initiative,” shares NHD Executive Director Dr. Cathy Gorn. “We are excited to collaborate with schools and teachers in these communities to engage more students in the process of historical research. Quality history education helps young people gain a deeper understanding of our shared history and encourages students to become involved and active citizens. By empowering students to develop historical literacy, critical thinking, and digital literacy, NHD equips them with the tools to engage in their communities and shape the future. They are also empowered to bring missing narratives to light, investigating and sharing the historical experiences and contributions of people whose stories have not often been told.”

“For nearly 50 years, National History Day has bolstered an interest in history and civics education,” said Marilyn López, Program Officer of the Bezos Family Foundation. “We are excited to support their geographic expansion and ensure a more inclusive history is made available for all young people.”

The second phase of the Inclusive History Initiative will include expanding NHD’s *Moving Freedom Forward* series. This series of teacher sourcebooks will include essays from prominent historians, model lesson plans written by NHD master teachers, primary documents, graphic organizers, and other classroom-ready materials. In addition to the printed version, there will be an online video component featuring expert historians who will help place topics into historical context. The first volume (coming soon) focuses on African American history, and the second volume will focus on Jewish and Jewish American history.

About National History Day® (NHD)

NHD is a nonprofit organization based in College Park, Maryland, that seeks to improve the teaching and learning of history. The National History Day Contest was established in 1974 and currently engages more than half a million students annually in conducting original research on historical topics of interest. Students present their research as a documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website. Projects compete first at the local and affiliate levels, where the top entries are invited to the National Contest at the University of Maryland at College Park. NHD is sponsored in part by the 400 Years of African American History Commission, the Bezos Family Foundation, The Better Angels Society, HISTORY®, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Park Service. For more information, visit nhd.org.

About the Alabama Humanities Alliance

Founded in 1974, the nonprofit Alabama Humanities Alliance serves as a state council of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Alabama affiliate of NHD. AHA promotes impactful storytelling, lifelong learning and civic engagement. We provide Alabamians with opportunities to connect with our shared cultures and to see each other as fully human. Through our grantmaking, we help scholars, communities and cultural nonprofits create humanities-rich projects that are accessible to all Alabamians — from literary festivals and documentary films to museum exhibitions and research collections. Learn more at alabamahumanities.org.

About the Indiana Historical Society (IHS)

The Indiana Historical Society collects and preserves Indiana's unique stories; brings Hoosiers together in remembering and sharing the past; and inspires a future grounded in our state's unifying values and principles. IHS is a Smithsonian Affiliate and a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

About the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Office of Archives and History

The N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) manages, promotes, and enhances the things that people love about North Carolina – its diverse arts and culture, rich history, and spectacular natural areas. Through its programs, the department enhances education, stimulates economic development, improves public health, expands accessibility, and strengthens community resiliency. National History Day in North Carolina is administered by the N.C. Department of Natural & Cultural Resources, with major support from the North Carolina Society and the Federation of N.C. Historical Societies. For more information, please visit www.ncdcr.gov.

About the Oklahoma Historical Society

The mission of the Oklahoma Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma and its people. Founded in 1893 by members of the Territorial Press Association, the OHS maintains museums, historic sites and affiliates across the state. Through its research archives, exhibits, educational programs and publications the OHS chronicles the rich history of Oklahoma. For more information about the OHS, please visit www.okhistory.org.

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