



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Visit Canton and ArtsinStark Announce Support for Exhibitions and Programs Celebrating America 250

Stark County, Ohio – Visit Canton and ArtsinStark are supporting a wide range of initiatives to commemorate America’s semiquincentennial. Through their Cultural Tourism partnership funded by lodging tax, the organizations have invested in exhibitions, public art installations, digital storytelling projects, and special events designed to elevate Stark County’s heritage and creative assets throughout 2026.

“Stark County is alive with history and creativity, and America 250 is the perfect reason to experience it. We’re inviting everyone to explore, learn, and be inspired by our local stories,” said Allison Gromofsky, Senior Manager of Community & Partner Relations at Visit Canton and Stark County America 250-OH Community Liaison.

Todd Kleismit, Executive Director of the America 250-Ohio Commission that is leading the state's semiquincentennial efforts, shared, "Stark County has shown a lot of leadership in helping prepare Ohio for the nation's 250th. Visit Canton, ArtsInStark, the Canton Museum of Art, the Pro Football Hall of Fame and so many of the museums and organizations in Stark County have been really valuable partners with us, leading into 2026. We're so excited to continue collaborating with these community leaders."

Major Exhibition Support

The Canton Museum of Art’s original exhibition, ***Shattered Glass: The Women Who Elevated Art***, is on view through March 1, 2026. The exhibition highlights female artists whose contributions have often been overlooked, from women who faced racial barriers to those who created under male pseudonyms. It marks the museum’s first original exhibition dedicated entirely to women artists and received a \$150,000 Major Arts Exhibition and Enhancement Grant through the Visit Canton and ArtsinStark Cultural Tourism partnership.

Additional Cultural Tourism funding was awarded for marketing and promotion of:

- ***The Eras Exhibit: 250 Years of First Ladies Progress and Power***
National First Ladies Library & Museum, On view through April 30, 2027
- ***The Woman Behind the Lens: Frances Benjamin Johnston and the American Presidency***
McKinley Presidential Library & Museum, Opening February 12, 2026
- ***Driving Forces: The Lincoln Highway Journey***
Massillon Museum, Opening May 30, 2026

America 250 Cultural Tourism Grants

Visit Canton and ArtsinStark awarded an additional \$206,000.90 in America 250 Cultural Tourism Grants to 12 organizations. Grant recipients include:

Kent State University at Stark – Stark County Historic PastPort

\$50,000 – In collaboration with more than 15 historical societies, Red Point Digital will produce 12 documentary shorts highlighting 250 years of Stark County history. Premieres begin March 2026 with screenings and special events throughout the year.

City of Canton – Re-Imagining Court Avenue Improvements

\$25,000 – Enhancements include shade structures, updated paving, new plantings, and a six-panel mural celebrating Canton's industrial heritage and community identity.

Stark County Park District – Stark County's American History through Park Sites

\$20,262.90 – Interpretive signage will be added across multiple parks to highlight key historical assets, including Lock 4, the Haines and Mabel Hartzell Houses, Quail Hollow, Tam O'Shanter Park, and Fry Family Park.

McKinley Presidential Library & Museum – Legacy Revived: Exploring Stark County's Rich Black History

\$20,000 – On view June 19–November 29, 2026, this project presents more than 200 years of local Black history and includes a companion documentary produced with Malone University.

Pro Football Hall of Fame – Pro Football and the American Spirit

\$17,625 – On view January 9–December 31, 2026, this exhibition examines pro football's role in American history and its connections to national service.

Carnation City Players – "1776"

\$15,000 – Presented June 25–28, 2026, at the Firehouse Theater, this inclusive production reimagines the musical *1776* and integrates America 250 storytelling through video and lobby installations.

Canton Palace Theatre – Stark on Screen

\$15,000 – A multi-month film series featuring Stark County talent through screenings, panel discussions, and collaborations.

Marlboro Township Historical Society – Dr. Kersey G. Thomas Home and Office Restoration

\$14,093 – Restoration and interpretive enhancements will support the site's transition into a public museum featuring educational exhibits and a preserved Civil War-era flag.

Umbrella Alley – America 250 Umbrella Alley: Bennington Flag and American Flag

\$9,900 – Visual installations will feature 120 red, white, and blue umbrellas and flags. The

Bennington Flag will be showcased in Summer 2025, followed by the current U.S. flag in Summer 2026.

Alliance Historical Society – Alliance at 250: Stories in Stone, Flag, and Film

\$9,620 – From June 14–July 31, 2026, 250 American flags will be displayed at Glamorgan Castle. A permanent historical marker will be installed in Fall 2026 alongside a documentary by Alliance native Ben Patterson.

ArtsinStark – America 250 Mural: Downtown Canton

\$7,500 – A large-scale America 250 mural will debut by April 30, 2026 as a downtown landmark celebrating community heritage.

Louisville/Nimishillen Historical Society – Historic Steps and Touring the Town

\$2,000 – Interactive signage and QR-code tours will highlight Louisville and Nimishillen Township history dating back to 1834.

Stark Stories History Trail

Visit Canton is also launching the [Stark Stories History Trail digital passport](#). The interactive experience guides participants to historic landmarks, Ohio History Markers, public art, and lesser-known sites throughout Stark County. Visitors earn points by solving riddles at each stop and can redeem a commemorative Stark Stories America 250 T-shirt.

For more information about America 250 programs, exhibitions, and special events in Stark County, visit: <https://www.visitcanton.com/plan-a-trip/trip-ideas/american-heritage/>.

About Visit Canton

Visit Canton, the Stark County Convention & Visitors' Bureau, supports Stark County's tourism industry and drives \$1.37 Billion in visitor spending across the region.

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About ArtsInStark:

ArtsinStark, Stark County's arts council, is a 50-year-old nonprofit that uses the arts to create smarter kids, new jobs, and healthier communities. The organization represents over 900 cultural organizations, individual artists, and owns and manages the Cultural Center for the Arts.

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