

Gov. Rauner and Bicentennial Commission announce signature events and projects for state's 200th year

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CHICAGO — Gov. Bruce Rauner and the Illinois Bicentennial Commission today announced the signature events and projects that are planned to celebrate the state's 200th year. The list of events can be viewed



at: <https://illinois200.com/celebrate/signature-events/>; projects are at <https://illinois200.com/celebrate/signature-projects/>.

Among the most prominent events planned are kick-off and curtain-raising events at Navy Pier and at the matinee performance of “Hamilton” Sunday, Dec. 3. On Monday, Dec. 4, counties and municipalities statewide will host simultaneous flag-raising ceremonies at their primary municipal buildings.

The Illinois Bicentennial Commission will host a ceremony at McCormick Place in Chicago that day as well.

On Aug. 26, 2018, which is the 200th birthday of the Illinois Constitution, the governor will lead an Illinois Bicentennial Route 66 motorcycle ride between Chicago and Edwardsville. In East St. Louis, Jackie Joyner-Kersey Community Center will host an Illinois Bicentennial Celebration to include community vendors, musical entertainment and a focus on St. Clair County's rich history. In Metro East, radio station KSHE95 will sponsor an Illinois Bicentennial rock concert. The Bicentennial Plaza will have its official unveiling in Springfield.

A series of Bicentennial projects also are underway.

#IllinoisProud Awards will be the signature legacy project. It is the commission's goal to fund at least one \$5,000 award in every Illinois county. Money will be raised through a combination of corporate sponsorship, philanthropic donations and crowdfunding campaigns.

In partnership with the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, HONOR 200 will recognize veterans across the state who go above and beyond serving their fellow veterans and their communities. HONOR 200 nominations can be submitted by mail or on-line at www.illinois.gov/veterans. Awardees will be recognized at the Bicentennial Birthday Party.

The BORN, BUILT & GROWN campaign will honor the tremendous people, places, and things that make Illinois so enduringly strong, kind, and beautiful.

The Office of the Secretary of Education and Illinois State Board of Education are partnering with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum to create a K-12 education curriculum to be offered to schools across the state. It features a historical timeline, a teacher's guide, a "wallboard" for display in school and digital learning components.

A "Road Scholars Speakers Bureau" will travel the state in conjunction with the Illinois Humanities Council.

Bicentennial Plaza — A REALTOR® Community Partnership — is a \$2 million investment in downtown Springfield which will help realize a long-held vision of a pedestrian walkway linking the Abraham Lincoln Home Historic Site with the Illinois Executive Mansion and state Capitol.

Finally, as part of the Illinois Bicentennial celebration, First Lady Diana Rauner will unveil the newly renovated Illinois Executive Mansion, which is undergoing an entirely privately funded \$15 million renovation.

ABOUT ILLINOIS BICENTENNIAL

200 years ago, on December 3, 1818, Illinois became the 21st state in the Union. Since then, the people of Illinois have banded together to transform this once-barren and uninviting land into a remarkable place of awe-inspiring beauty, accomplishment, and culture. The Illinois Bicentennial is a year-long celebration of what has been BORN. BUILT. GROWN. in the state and an invitation to fall in love with Illinois all over again. Citizens are encouraged to participate in the celebration by visiting www.illinois200.com and using the hashtag #IllinoisProud.

Partners and event and project managers planning activities between December 3, 2017 and December 3, 2018 can apply for endorsement to become an official part of Illinois Bicentennial by visiting the PARTICIPATE page at www.Illinois200.com for more information.