



FLORIDA ATLANTIC

Festival for America's 250th Department of History and FAU Libraries

The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters and the FAU Libraries already provide immersive learning experiences in our performance and exhibition spaces. We also have strong relations with thousands of Boca residents who attend scores of public-oriented lectures, concerts, performances, and exhibits each year. **With your support, we will use these strengths—and leveraging student and public interest in this milestone moment—to focus sustained attention on the meaning and legacies of the American Revolution and to reflect on its call to civic engagement.**

We will accomplish this with a focused multi-week “Festival for America’s 250th” (February–March 2026), which will be the centerpiece of our 15-month Celebration of America at 250. Near the end of the Celebration, at a symposium called “American Revolutions: The Reverberations of Rebellion Across the Americas and the Caribbean,” FAU faculty and students will present research and creative activity that results from our sustained attention to the nation’s founding.

The natural rallying point is Florida Atlantic’s 13,000-item Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection of 18th-century materials. It was first modeled on the libraries of Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin, but it grew to be so much more. It includes literature, philosophy, sermons, and essays; one-of-a-kind handwritten artifacts such as a diary describing the Battle of Yorktown, Continental officers’ letters, and organizing notes kept by the Sons of Liberty; and inspiring “firsts” such as first printings of the Declaration of Independence and the Federalist Papers. The Daughters of the American Revolution have recognized its value by awarding an America 250 Patriots Marker, to be dedicated during the festival.

The hub of the Festival will be a multi-week exhibition of the Spirit of America Collection by the FAU Libraries. The exhibit of Collection items will engage visitors with a replica of George Washington’s Battle Tent, panels from the American Battlefield Trust, an opportunity to sign a large-format Declaration of Independence, and playing stations for an American Revolution video game. Visitors, including K–12, will write Post-it Note reflections and social media posts that reflect on their patriotism, what liberty means to them, and what they will do to remain civically engaged.

Each week’s special event during the Festival will generate buzz, casting several stones for many ripples. We use “hooks” to draw the public and students to presentations by speakers that we have chosen for their expertise and charisma. Some hooks come from **pop culture**: SNL, Drunk History, and Broadway’s Hamilton. Other hooks are **fresh angles on familiar events**, such as a “family history” of the Boston Massacre or the role of international art in the Revolutionary cause. Others make the Revolution relevant to us in our time and place: **our location in Florida**, and **our modern inheritance of the Revolution**. Finally, although not a public event, we are proud to offer students an unforgettable night with “George Washington’s Ball”—**a period dance workshop with live music and costumes.**

With your help, a range of students and visitors will find inspiration in America’s 250th!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We invite you to be part of this exciting festival by becoming a sponsor. Your support will help fund an exciting array of activities designed to engage students and the community in celebrating this special time in our country's history.

Presenting Sponsor: \$40,000

- Prominent recognition in all print, broadcast, and online advertisement
- Name/logo on all festival promotional materials and sponsor board
- Reception invitations for up to twenty (25) guests for all six (6) event receptions
- Customizable added benefits, as agreed upon

Receptions Sponsor: \$10,000

- Recognition in all print and online advertisement
- Name/logo listed on all festival promotional materials and sponsor board
- Reception invitations for up to ten (10) guests for all six (6) event receptions
- Other benefits, as agreed upon

Week Sponsor: \$5,000

- Sponsorships available for featured events
- Name/logo listed on festival promotional materials and sponsor board
- Reception invitations for up to six (6) guests for all six (6) event receptions

Promotion Sponsor: \$2,500

- Name/logo listed on all festival promotional materials and sponsor board
- Reception invitations for up to four (4) guests for all six (6) event receptions

Friends of the Festival: \$1,000

- Name/logo listed on all festival promotional materials and sponsor board
- Reception invitations for up to two (2) guests for all six (6) event receptions

Festival Patron: \$100 - \$999

- Name listed on festival sponsor board

How to Donate

1. Online: Visit <https://fauf.fau.edu/events/ffa250/>
2. By Check: Payable to "FAU Foundation, Inc.;" memo Festival for America's 250 and mail to:
FAU/Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters
Development Office / Festival for America's 250th
777 Glades Road, Boca Raton, FL 33431

Your contribution may be tax-deductible based on IRS regulations regarding goods or services received in exchange for your donation.

For more information please contact:

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Weekly Events Available for Sponsorship

Drunk History, SNL, and the American Revolution

Day One

Screening and Panel Discussion

Enjoy clips from Comedy Central's *Drunk History* and *Saturday Night Live* with a panel discussion that examines comedians' takes on the American Revolution. Presented on the big screen at our on-campus movie theater. 7 pm, Tuesday, February 10.

Day Two

Dr. Richard Bell (University of Maryland)

Lecture, Q&A, and reception

What is the history behind the comedy? Renowned speaker Dr. Richard Bell gives an award-winning historian's view on iconic sketches from *SNL* and Comedy Central's *Drunk History*. Winner of the NEH Public Scholar Award, finalist for the George Washington Prize, and recipient of Maryland's highest accolade for teaching. 4 pm, Wednesday, February 11.

George Washington's Ball (for students)

Period dancing (with lessons), modern dancing, refreshments, mini-lectures, led by Jeanette Watts, Historian and Dance Instructor

An unforgettable night for our students. Students will come in costumes (optional) that they make in advance with our guidance. They will learn the period's dance steps, try their new moves accompanied by FAU student musicians, and occasionally pick up the tempo with a DJ's modern beats. Along the way, the dance instructor will share miniature lessons about social graces, polite conversation, marriage matching, and other Revolutionary-era history connected to dance. Refreshments will be served throughout the three-hour event. Evening of Friday, February 13.

Florida in the American Revolution

Dr. Judith Bense (University of West Florida)

Lecture, Q&A, and reception

Florida was a battlefield in the American Revolutionary War when Spain, a U.S. ally, invaded Britain's loyal "fourteenth colony." Dr. Judith Bense shares this forgotten story with historical and archaeological expertise. Recipient of multiple lifetime achievement awards. 4 pm, Thursday, February 19.

Alexander Hamilton: Blood, Honor, and Politics in Early America

Dr. Adrian Finucane (Florida Atlantic)

Lecture, Q&A, and reception

Explore the scandal, turmoil, and violence that characterized political culture in the first decades of American government. What drove U.S. Vice President Aaron Burr to fatally shoot his fellow revolutionary, Alexander Hamilton, on the banks of the Hudson River in 1804? You'll have to come to find out. 4 pm, Tuesday, February 24.

The Boston Massacre: A Family Story

Dr. Serena Zabin (Carleton College)
Lecture, Q&A, and reception

SPONSORED

On the late winter evening of March 5, 1770, British soldiers shot five local men to death. Discover how the Boston Massacre arose from conflicts that were as personal as they were political, and how the tragedy fueled what quickly became the American Revolution. Dr. Serena Zabin is a celebrated historian and acclaimed teacher with a prize-winning book. 4 pm, Thursday, March 5 (anniversary).

This event has been fully sponsored by Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida.

The Painter's Fire: The Artists Who Championed the American Revolution

Dr. Zara Anishanslin (University of Delaware)
Lecture, Q&A, and reception

Paint, canvas, wax; not muskets or bayonets. These were the weapons that artists used to inspire rebellion and define American patriotism. Dr. Zara Anishanslin is a public-facing, prize-winning historian with expertise in art and material culture—the “things” of the past. 4pm, Tuesday, March 10.

Inheriting the Revolution: The Modern Legacy of 1776

Dr. Lindsay Chervinsky (George Washington Presidential Library)
Lecture, book signing, and reception

SPONSORED

Americans revere the Constitution and the Founding generation that forged the nation, but what would the Founders think about the United States today? We will consider how the Founders conceptualized politics, government institutions, and political culture and their expectations for the nation. Dr. Chervinsky will then explore how society has evolved or remained the same. 4pm, Thursday, March 19.

*This lecture has been sponsored by the John O'Sullivan Memorial Lectureship and the FAU Libraries. **Reception (only) available for sponsorship.***

Additional events in development—watch this space!