



Festival for America's 250th
Presented by the Family of Marvin & Sybil Weiner

The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters and the FAU Libraries provide immersive learning experiences for students and have strong relations with thousands of Boca residents who attend scores of public-oriented lectures, concerts, performances, and exhibits each year. **We will use these strengths, and leverage student and public interest in this milestone moment, to celebrate the nation's founding, focus sustained attention on the meaning and legacies of the American Revolution, and reflect on its call to civic engagement.**

We will accomplish this with a focused 7-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 and Continental officers' letters; and inspiring "firsts" such as first printings of the Declaration of Independence and the Federalist Papers. The Seminole Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution has recognized the Collection's value and FAU's long-term commitment to honoring the Revolution by awarding an America 250 Patriots Marker that will be dedicated during the festival.

The hub of the Festival will be a 7-week exhibition of rare gems from FAU's Spirit of America Collection alongside the visiting pop-up "American Revolution Experience." The American Revolution Experience is a collaborative project of the American Battlefield Trust and the Daughters of the American Revolution. It includes display panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling, illustration, technology and unique artifacts and primary accounts to connect modern audiences with the people and places that shaped the birth of our nation. The exhibit will also engage visitors with an opportunity to sign a large-format Declaration of Independence, play an iconic American Revolution video game, and 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 events 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**—AMC's television program *Turn: Washington's Spies*, SNL, *Drunk History*, and Broadway's *Hamilton*. Other hooks are **fresh angles on familiar events**, such as espionage in the Revolution, a "family history" of the Boston Massacre, and 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.**

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 Weeks 1 - 6
- 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.; Festival for America's 250 in the memo 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

Week 1: **Spies! Espionage in the American Revolution**

Dr. Jeffrey Rogg (Global and National Security Institute, University of South Florida)
Lecture, Q&A, and reception; preceded by screening of AMC's *Turn: Washington's Spies*

Even before the “shot heard round the world,” the spy game was afoot. Discover how the British could have ended the American Revolution before it even began and how leading Founders, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay, had to learn the hard lessons of espionage and intelligence to win the shadow war for independence. Dr. Jeffrey Rogg is passionate about educating a more informed citizenry as it makes decisions about how to balance liberty and security. Organized with assistance from FAU's International Espionage Studies Network. **3pm screening, 4pm lecture, Mon, February 2.**

Week 2: **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. Organized with assistance from FAU's School of Communication and Multimedia Studies. **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.**

President's Day Weekend: **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.

Week 3: 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. Organized with assistance from FAU's Study of the Americas Initiative. **4 pm, Thursday, February 19.**

Week 4: 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.**

Week 5: The Boston Massacre: A Family Story

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

SPONSORED

On this day in History, 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).**

Week 5's lecture and reception has been fully sponsored by the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida.

Week 6: 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. Includes art activities provided by FAU's University Galleries. **4pm, Tuesday, March 10.**

Week 7: Inheriting the Revolution: The Modern Legacy of 1776

Dedication of the America 250 Patriots Marker

Seminole Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution

The Daughters of the American Revolution proudly presents this commemorative marker to Florida Atlantic University in recognition of its ongoing commitment to honoring the memory of the men and women who sacrificed to establish the United States as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. This marker honors the courageous Patriots who founded our nation and serves as a reminder to value their sacrifice and to embody their conviction, bravery, and spirit of unity in pursuit of liberty and justice for all. **2pm, Thursday, March 19.**

Lecture: “Inheriting the Revolution: The Modern Legacy of 1776”

Dr. Lindsay Chervinsky (George Washington Presidential Library)



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.**

Week 7’s lecture (only) has been sponsored by the John O’Sullivan Memorial Lectureship and the FAU Libraries.

Reception and Book Signing

Available for sponsorship.

We hope to invite all lecture attendees to a reception in the exhibit space to meet Dr. Lindsay Chervinsky under the newly installed Patriots Marker. **Your sponsorship at the level of Promotion Sponsor would make this reception possible.**