

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Keri O'Keefe  
Wisconsin Historical Society  
E-Mail: [keri.okeefe@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:keri.okeefe@wisconsinhistory.org)

**Thursday, March 16, 2017**

# **Wisconsin History Program Awarded \$10,000 from the Wisconsin Humanities Council**

**Milwaukee, WI** – The Wisconsin Historical Society program “Hands-On History” has received a \$10,000 grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council to foster bringing Wisconsin history to Milwaukee’s public schools and libraries. Grant funding brings educators and historic objects from the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison directly to the classroom, providing engaging history and literacy lessons to underserved communities throughout Milwaukee.

Traditionally, students have to travel by bus to visit a museum or historic site to interact with history. Through this grant, the “Hands-On History” program brings that experience directly to the classroom. This allows students to engage with historic objects without additional travel costs. This is particularly impactful in underserved communities in the greater Milwaukee area. “Studies have shown that field trips enhance student learning and engagement, and with the generous support of the Wisconsin Humanities Council, we look forward to providing this exciting opportunity to Milwaukee’s public schools and libraries,” says Kurt Griesemer, coordinator of primary education at the Wisconsin Historical Society. “All students, not just those that can afford to, deserve the opportunity to engage with the objects of the past in the exploration of the story of Wisconsin.”

These lessons help develop critical thinking skills in students in relation to Wisconsin’s past, present, and future. By developing these critical-thinking skills, students learn to go far deeper than rote memorization of names, dates, and locations; they begin to make connections by analyzing primary sources and considering what those sources reveal about the individuals, groups, cultures, and societies that existed in the past. These skills transcend any single history lesson. Through hands-on exploration of the images and artifacts provided by the program, students engage with their own ethnic heritage as they learn the story of Wisconsin’s past.

The grant program, which is part of the Wisconsin Humanities Council, is the only one in the state devoted to public humanities. The Wisconsin Humanities Council provides matching grants to communities, schools, civic groups, historical societies, museums, libraries, and other non-profit groups throughout the state. Ninety percent of WHC’s funding comes from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For more information visit [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org).

**About Wisconsin Historical Society**

The Wisconsin Historical Society, founded in 1846, ranks as one of the largest, most active and most diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, its mission is to help people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Wisconsin Historical Society serves millions of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs and services. For more information, visit [wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org).

###