

National First Ladies Library & Museum Announces 2024-25 Featured Exhibit Focusing on Literacy

“Leaders in Literacy: First Ladies as Teachers, Educators, and Librarians” Exhibit Will Debut on National First Ladies Day, April 27, 2024

CANTON, OHIO, USA, February 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The right to an education is a foundational principle of our nation’s history, and so many of our First Ladies have taken this cause to heart throughout the course of the American journey. From

one-room schoolhouse teachers such as Abigail Fillmore and Lucretia Garfield, to Eleanor Roosevelt’s Arthurdale experiment, to Barbara and Laura Bush’s literacy initiatives, to current First Lady Dr. Jill Biden’s college teaching, these powerful women have provided opportunities for empowering the young minds of our country to learn, grow, and thrive through education.

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Michelle Gullion, Director of Archives & Research



First Ladies Eleanor Roosevelt, Laura Bush, Caroline Harrison and Lady Bird Johnson celebrated the cause of literacy

In this spirit, on April 27, 2024, the National First Ladies Library & Museum at the First Ladies National Historic Site in Canton, Ohio, will celebrate National First Ladies Day by kicking off its 2024-25 featured exhibit titled Leaders in Literacy: First Ladies as Teachers, Educators, and Librarians, presented by Huntington Bank. The exhibit will run through April of 2025 and will feature more than a dozen First Ladies who have advanced the cause of literacy and education. Huntington Bank is the proud presenting sponsor of this extraordinary exhibit.

The exhibit will open to the public during regular historic site hours on Saturday, April 27, and that evening, a VIP “First Look” reception will be held at the museum, where attendees will enjoy a private guided tour of the Leaders in Literacy exhibit.

At that time, the National First Ladies Library & Museum will also announce the winner of the Mary Regula Memorial Scholarship, which will be awarded to a deserving Stark County junior or senior in high school who has written a compelling essay telling the story of significant historical events in American history through the eyes of the First Ladies. Our special guest that evening will be Patricia Taft, the great-granddaughter of First Lady Helen “Nellie” Taft, who will speak about her great grandmother’s time as a schoolteacher as a young lady.

The Leaders in Literacy exhibit will showcase numerous personal artifacts from the National First Ladies Library & Museum collection that showcases the

work of our First Ladies in the areas of education and literacy. The exhibit will also feature an extraordinary loan from the Arthurdale Heritage Museum featuring First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt’s efforts to create a New Deal-era “homestead” that would provide a new chance at life and an education for impoverished residents in this West Virginia community. In addition, the exhibit will include artifacts from the George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush Presidential Museums related to First Ladies Barbara and Laura Bush.

To engage younger audiences, the “Leaders in Literacy” exhibit will also feature programs including “Reading Reimagined” — a replica one-room schoolhouse in our children’s interactive area, as well as the launch of our “Little Leaders” reading and activity program for children ages Pre-K to 4th grade.

“Literacy was such an important cause to so many of our First Ladies,” says Michelle Gullion, the Director of Collections and Research for the National First Ladies Library & Museum. “They were inspired to take on the mantle of education and literacy not only for children but for the betterment of all Americans. I am delighted that we are able to showcase these amazing women for the next year.”

National First Ladies Library & Museum President and CEO Patty Dowd Schmitz said, “We are simply thrilled to present ‘Leaders in Literacy’ to the community and to tourists from across the nation beginning April 27. Our goal is to continue to elevate the stories of the incredible First Ladies and to tell the story of American history through the eyes of the women who helped lead our country alongside their presidential husbands. Education and literacy are at the heart of a



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prospering nation, and our First Ladies have always known this fact. We hope you will join us as we explore their efforts to advance these important causes throughout our nation's history. We are also so proud to launch the Mary Regula Memorial Scholarship for our local high school juniors and seniors — Mrs. Regula was the driving force behind honoring our First Ladies here in Canton, and it is so appropriate to honor her in this way, by presenting a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving high school student.”

Leaders in Literacy: First Ladies as Teachers, Educators, and Librarians will open to the public on Saturday, April 27, 2024 and run through April 19, 2025. Save the date for the exclusive “First Look” VIP Reception on the evening of April 27; tickets will be available soon.

For more information about the scholarship program, email sbohnak@firstladies.org. For general information, visit www.firstladies.org or email pdschmitz@firstladies.org.

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