

Governor Quinn Announces Capital Investments in Public Museums across Illinois

Written by Leslie Wertheimer
Friday, 11 January 2013 14:18

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Illinois Jobs Now! Capital Program Investing \$15 Million to Develop New Exhibits, Improve Museum Facilities and Create Jobs

CHICAGO – January 10, 2013. Governor Pat Quinn today announced that public museums across Illinois will receive \$15 million in state capital investments to improve facilities and develop new exhibits while creating more than 370 jobs. Supported by Governor Quinn’s Illinois Jobs Now! capital program, the investments will help give the millions of people who visit Illinois’ public museums each year a better understanding of Illinois’ culture, history and natural heritage.

“Our museums expand educational frontiers by allowing visitors to learn about Illinois’ history and cultural diversity in unique, interactive ways,” Governor Quinn said. “These Illinois Jobs Now! grants will not only help preserve and enhance some of Illinois’ greatest treasures, but also boost the economy by creating jobs and bringing more visitors to our state and its outstanding museums.”

The projects are part of the Illinois Public Museum Capital Grants Program, which is managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR).

“The Museum Capital Grants Program assists local public museums in meeting their

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educational missions by upgrading or expanding museum facilities,” said IDNR Director Marc Miller. “Museums play a vital role in helping students, families, and visitors to Illinois better understand the culture, history and natural heritage of local communities and the state of Illinois.”

Today’s grant recipients represent a wide range of cultural interests from across Illinois. The National Hellenic Museum and National Public Housing Museum in Chicago are expected to attract visitors from across the nation, as will the Lincoln Park Zoo’s state-of-the-art Japanese Macaque exhibit. Glimpses into Illinois’ past will be experienced at the Galena and U.S. Grant Museum’s “Port of Galena” exhibit, Kankakee County Museum’s celebration of “French Heritage” and the 1940s Music Store at the Joliet Area Historical Museum. Illinois children will enjoy the new “My Great Backyard” exhibit at the Children’s Discovery Museum in Normal, the Kohl Children’s Museum’s “Books and Crannies” exhibit and the Chicago Children’s Museum “I-Lab.” A complete list of projects is attached.

Today’s announcement marks the second time Governor Quinn has made a significant investment in public museums throughout Illinois. In 2010, nearly \$15 million in capital dollars funded exhibit expansion and improvements at more than 50 museums, including new garden exhibits at the Botanic Gardens in both Glencoe and the Quad Cities, an interactive exhibit exploring the history of immigration at the Midway Village Museum in Rockford, and a new conservation and outreach center at the Chicago Zoological Society.

Governor Quinn’s \$31 billion Illinois Jobs Now! capital construction program is the largest in Illinois history. The program, which began in 2009, is expected to support an estimated 439,000 construction jobs over six years.

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