

TALKING POINTS

OVERVIEW LANGUAGE

This is language you can use online and adapt in press releases and other external communications to talk about the statewide commemoration.

On Aug. 26, 1920, Hoosier women won the right to vote.

At first glance, the meaning behind that statement is simple. But the real story goes much deeper.

In Indiana, almost seventy years passed between the first calls for women's voting rights and the passage of the 19th Amendment. And, though momentous, 1920 is just one milestone in a long and ongoing journey, and access to the voting booth is just one part of what it means to be an equal part of the democratic process.

The Indiana Women's Suffrage Centennial, catalyzed by Indiana Humanities, the Indianapolis Propylaeum, the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau, working with many grassroots and local partners, marks the anniversary of the 19th Amendment. We invite Hoosiers to honor the ideas and ideals that fueled the suffrage movement in Indiana, and the people who led the way; to engage in a conversation about inclusion, equity, perseverance and power; to consider what remains to be done to ensure that our democracy truly includes everyone; and to identify and act on the lessons of the women's suffrage movement.

KEY TALKING POINTS

Partners can use these if asked about the main ideas we want Hoosiers to grapple with as we mark the centennial in 2020. The takeaway from programs and communications, for attendees or readers, ideally includes one more of these ideas.

Today, women's suffrage seems like an obvious component of democracy. One hundred years ago, it was a controversial idea that even some women opposed. Championing it required courage, perseverance and organized activism.

- The centennial of women's suffrage is an opportunity to honor the Hoosiers who played a role in the suffrage movement.
- Like all social movements, suffrage was an imperfect process. Activists disagreed over strategy and tactics, and women of color and working-class women didn't always have a seat at the table. One of the lessons is that forming "a more perfect union" is and always has been messy.
- While the 19th Amendment gave women access to the voting booth, the struggle for full equality continues. Today, we all can learn from the women who fought for the vote as we fight to ensure equality for all.
- As we acknowledge the impact suffrage had on women, we also should consider where our laws, culture and institutions might be keeping others from fully engaging in our democracy.
- The role of Hoosiers in the suffrage movement is a story that isn't fully known or told. This is Indiana's opportunity to delve into that history and capture it for future generations.

OBJECTIVES

If anyone asks why you're commemorating this anniversary or what the purpose of the organizers is, you can use one or more of these points.

- To inspire Hoosiers to think, read and talk about the history and significance of women's suffrage
- To drive and discover scholarship about women's suffrage and political participation in Indiana
- To highlight Hoosiers who played a role in the suffrage movement in Indiana and nationally
- To encourage everyone to vote and engage fully in the democratic process
- To inspire civic action and persistence

HOW CAN PEOPLE GET INVOLVED?

Use or adapt this language when you want to invite the public to take specific actions to engage in the centennial commemoration.

Everyone can help to commemorate the centennial of women's suffrage in Indiana. Here are 8 ways Hoosiers can engage:

Read all about it

Delve into the history of the suffrage movement in Indiana. This essay by historian Dr. Anita Morgan is a great place to start.

Advance scholarship

Our understanding of Hoosiers' role in the women's suffrage movement could be so much greater. Click here to learn about grants that are available to fund research about women's political participation, including in the movement for suffrage, in Indiana.

Vote

Claim your rightful place in the voting booth. Check your registration and find your polling place here.

Get active

Attend a rally, join a group advocating for a cause near to your heart, contact your elected officials to make your voice heard. Find out who represents you here.

Ask your elders

Talk with women and men who came of age during the women's equality movement of the 1960s and 1970s about their memories, experiences and lessons. Know a story that others should hear? We're accepting proposals for a new speakers bureau of talks about women's suffrage and political participation in Indiana.

Teach your children

Share what you have learned about women's suffrage with younger generations, and encourage them to carry the legacy forward. Our list of suggested readings includes lots of titles appropriate for kids and teens.

Join the statewide commemoration

Click here to learn about women's suffrage centennial events across Indiana, and click here to learn about organizations that are leading the women's suffrage commemoration effort.

Create a commemoration event

Organize a women's suffrage commemoration event in your community. Click here for resources, information and ideas. Then, add your event to our online calendar.