

Eiteljorg's \$55M fundraising campaign goes public

Museum still seeks \$6M for gallery updates, endowment

IBJ and Inside INdiana Business staff

The Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art in downtown Indianapolis has launched the public phase of its \$55 million capital and endowment campaign.

The museum is looking to raise more than \$6 million by next May for a variety of projects, including the capstone effort of reconstructing and reinstalling the Native American Galleries, which will feature work from the native people of the Great Lakes.

Eiteljorg CEO John Vanausdall said the campaign will secure the long-term future of the museum and its ability to operate.

The private phase of the campaign began in 2016.

"Like all capital campaigns, the first 70% or 80% is usually done in a quiet way, first approaching museum friends, board members, the donor community that would expect us to come to them and then, now that we're near the finish line, we want to go public," Vanausdall told Inside INdiana Business. "And it really doesn't matter what size the gift is; everyone's support means a lot to the success of the campaign."

The goal is to raise an additional \$40 million for the museum's endowment and \$15 million for capital projects. In addition to the Native American Galleries, the capital projects include renovations of the Nina Mason Pulliam Education Center and the Allen Whitehill Clowes Sculpture Court, which is the multi-purpose rental and event space at the museum.

Vanausdall says the endowment provides unrestricted operating support for the museum.

"We started this campaign with \$20 million, ... but we'd like to get our endowment to the point where it provides a third of our annual operating need. That magic number is \$60 million," he said. "So, it was a bold goal that we set back in late 2015 to raise another \$40 million and I'm pleased to say that we're very near that goal at this point."

The museum said it needs another \$3.6 million to hit its endowment goal and another \$2.6 million to hit the capital goal.

Vanausdall said the museum will continue to raise commitments for the endowment through 2022. The May 2022 deadline is for the capital fundraising effort, which will keep the construction timeline on track.

The projects include:

- ▀ A complete reconstruction of the Native American Galleries, which have exhibited work on largely the same floor-plan since the museum opened in 1989. The museum said it will reinstall Native artworks in a "fresh, contextualized space." The museum hired Origin Studios of Ottawa, Canada, and Kubik Maltbie of Boston, along with local construction company F.A. Wilhelm Construction Co. Inc. for the project.

- ▀ Exhibition of works from a large collection the museum acquired in 2019 through a \$2.83 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

- ▀ Renovation of the Nina Mason Pulliam Education Center in the museum's canal level, which is already under way. Indiana firms Shiel Sexton, McGuire Scenic Inc., Dye Woodworks, CSA Graphics, Inc., and Large Ink LLC are working on the project. The renovation will enhance a children's discovery area by adding new educational interactive scenes focusing on five diverse families of the West who are Native American, Latino, African American, Asian American and European American. The education center will reopen by Nov. 20 to coincide with the museum's Jingle Rails holiday train display.

- ▀ Expansion of the Eiteljorg's multi-purpose rental and event space, which hosts wedding receptions, corporate conferences, museum lectures, concerts and presentations throughout the year. Plans designed by Browning Day and the original architect of the museum, Jonathan Hess, call for expanding the facility by moving the current east wall to enclose the entire outdoor OneAmerica Terrace facing West Street. Expanding over the terrace will approximately double the event center's indoor space, increasing the seating capacity to 375. Terre Haute-based Garmong Construction Services will serve as construction manager for the project.



The Eiteljorg Museum is pushing to wrap up its \$55 million fundraising campaign for an expansion of its public event space and the reinstallation of its Native American Galleries, among other things. (Images courtesy of Eiteljorg Museum)