

JUNE 1-3, 2026

GRIT & GLORY

Annual State History Conference & Governor's Awards for History

Drifters Event Center | 325 E. Hustan Ave. Pierre, SD

conference schedule *will be finalized by April 15.*

Early bird deadline May 1.

Monday, JUNE 1

4:30 - 5:00 PM **Registration**
(TBA)

5:00 - 7:00 PM **Trivia Night: History Smackdown**
Hosted by the South Dakota Historical Society Museum Staff - TBA
Put your historical know-how to the test! Join history fans and curious minds for an evening of trivia covering South Dakota and American history. Bring a team or come solo, we'll place you with other players. Compete for bragging rights and fabulous prizes!

Tuesday, JUNE 2

7:30 - 8:30 AM **Registration**
Drifters Event Center

8:00 - 8:30 AM **Kickoff & Key Info**
Dr. Benjamin F. Jones, Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society & State Historian

8:30-9:30 AM **Session 1: From Statehood to the Ballot: The Constitutional Story of South Dakota**
Professor Patrick M. Garry, USD School of Law, local resident expert on the South Dakota Constitution.

9:30-9:45 **Morning Mingle** - meet & treat

9:45-10:45 AM **Session 2: Civic Education in our Republic in Grit & Glory**
Dr. Christian D. Pirlet, Assistant Professor of Educational Technology, Northern State University



Tuesday, JUNE 2 cont.

- 10:45-11:45 AM **Session 3: Northwest Ordinance of 1787: Shaping Dakota Territory**
Dr. Benjamin F. Jones and Dr. Jon D. Schaff, Professor of Government/Director of the Center for Public History and Civic Engagement at Northern University
- 11:45 AM-1:00 PM **Lunch**
TBA
- 1:00-2:00 **Session 4: Wintercounts: Recording the Revolution**
Christina Burke, Curator, anthropologist, and independent researcher.
- 2:00-3:00 PM **Session 5: U.S. Constitutional Law & American Indian Rights**
Hon. Frank Pommersheim, Emeritus Professor of Law at the University of South Dakota School with more than forty years of experience in the area of Indian Law and Policy.
- 2:30-3:00 PM **Afternoon Swoon - meet & treat**
- 3:00-4:00 PM **Session 6: Sioux Falls, the Queen City & the Founding Women Who Shaped It**
Podcast host Lori Kent, aka "Local Lou," shares her love for history with South Dakotans and beyond.
- 5:00 - 7:00 PM **History Unwinded Networking Social**
Hosted by the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation at the Cultural Heritage Center, 900 Governors Drive, Pierre.
Enjoy an evening sipping and snacking, connecting with friends, and sharing stories...followed by a sneak peek of one of our new exhibits as you stroll through the gallery led by Francis Whitebird, David Grabitske, and Dan Moeckly. And don't miss the Curator's Nightcap!

Wednesday, JUNE 3

- 7:30 - 8:30 AM **Registration**
Drifters Event Center
- 8:00 - 8:30 AM **Welcome Back & What's Next**
David M. Grabitske, South Dakota State Historical Society Assistant Director & Museum Director
- 8:30-9:30 AM **Session 7: Little Houses of Liberty: Laura Ingalls Wilder, Rose Wilder Lane, and the American Revolution**
Dedra McDonald Birzer, Director and editor-in-chief of the South Dakota Historical Society Press and a lecturer in history at Hillsdale College.

Wednesday, JUNE 3 cont.

- 9:30-9:45 **Morning Mingle - meet & treat**
- 9:45-10:45 AM **Session 8: South Dakota's First 4th & other 4ths**
Dr. Benjamin F. Jones
- 10:45-11:45 AM **Session 9: TBA**
- 11:45 AM-1:30 PM **Awards Luncheon and Keynote Speaker**
1776 and All That: The Road to American Independence
Dr. Bradley J. Birzer, American historian, Russell Amos Kirk Chair in History at Hillsdale College and Fellow of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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