



JEFFERSON
EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

WINTER SCHEDULE



3207 STATE STREET, ERIE, PA
814.459.8000 | JESERIE.ORG

2026 JES Winter Schedule

Study the past. Examine the present. Explore the future.

For more information to register, visit JESerie.org, call 814.459.8000,
or stop by 3207 State St., Erie, PA.

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Community Conversations, Lectures, Discussions, and Visiting Speaker Events

| When | What | Who | Program Type | Location |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Tuesday, Feb. 10 6 p.m.: Kick-off reception 7 p.m. Event | The Years Bring Enlightenment: The Friendship and Politics of Abigail Adams and Thomas Jefferson | Abigail Adams (portrayed by Kim Hanley*, B.F.A.) and Thomas Jefferson (portrayed by Steven Edenbo*, B.A.) | USA 250 Visiting Speaker Event | JES |
| Wednesday, Feb. 11 Noon | Thomas Jefferson and the Boisterous Sea of Liberty | Thomas Jefferson (portrayed by Steven Edenbo*, B.A.) | USA 250 Visiting Speaker Event | JES |
| Wednesday, Feb. 11 7 p.m. | The American Flag Unfurled | Betsy Ross (portrayed by Kim Hanley*, B.F.A.) | USA 250 Visiting Speaker Event (Free) | JES |
| Thursday, Feb. 12 Noon | 'Remember the Ladies' | Abigail Adams (portrayed by Kim Hanley*, B.F.A.) | USA 250 Visiting Speaker Event (Free) | JES |
| Thursday, Feb. 12 7 p.m. | 'All Men are Created Equal' at 250: Thomas Jefferson's Perpetual Revolution | Thomas Jefferson (portrayed by Steven Edenbo*, B.A.) | USA 250 Visiting Speaker Event | JES |
| Monday, Feb. 16 7 p.m. | Revisiting the 1976 American Bicentennial: 'It was a Really Big Deal!' | Richard Arthur, M.A., <i>Historian</i> | USA 250 Lecture (Free) | JES |
| Tuesday, Feb. 17 7 p.m. | Erie County, Pennsylvania, in the Civil War | George Deutsch, B.S., <i>Executive Director, Emeritus, of the Erie County Historical Society/Hagen History Center</i> | USA 250 Lecture in Partnership with the Erie Civil War Roundtable (Free) | JES |
| Wednesday, Feb. 18 p.m. | Geo-politics of the Middle East: The New Syria – Implications for the Region and the World | Baher Ghosheh, Ph.D., <i>JES Scholar-in-Residence; Chair, JES Board of Trustees</i> | Lecture (Free) | JES |
| Thursday, Feb. 19 6 p.m. | Venezuela and the 21st Century International Order | Diane Chido, M.S., M.A., <i>JES Scholar-in-Resident; Nicolás Bell, B.A., former JES intern, researcher</i> | Lecture (Free) | ECAT |
| Friday, Feb. 20 Noon | Protecting Natural Spaces and Building Community: Asbury Woods' Impact in NWPA | Sarah Bennett, M.S., <i>Executive Director, Asbury Woods;</i> and Patrick Miller, B.A., <i>Director of Development and Marketing, Asbury Woods</i> | Community Conversation (Free) | JES |
| Monday, Feb. 23 6 p.m. | Ukraine and Russia: Where Are We Now, Where Are We Headed? | Lena Surzhko-Harned, Ph.D., <i>Political Science Professor, Penn State Behrend, JES Scholar-in-Residence</i> | Brock Institute Lecture (Free) | Lincoln Community Center Library |
| Tuesday, Feb. 24 6 p.m. | Multi-Generational Leadership: Guiding Age-Diverse Work Groups in Modern Business | Bradley Thompson, B.S., <i>JES Raimy Fellow</i> | Lecture (Free) | Corry Higher Education Council |
| Wednesdays at 3 p.m., beginning Feb. 25 through March 25 | A History of Rivalry Between US Presidents and the Supreme Court of the United States | George Deutsch, B.S., <i>Executive Director, Emeritus, of the Erie County Historical Society/Hagen History Center</i> | USA 250 Course (five events) | JES |
| Thursday, Feb. 26 6 p.m. | Global Demographic Trends and Population Policies | Baher Ghosheh, Ph.D., <i>JES Scholar-in-Residence; Chair, JES Board of Trustees</i> | Lecture (Free) | ECAT |
| Friday, Feb. 27 Noon | Abundance vs. Scarcity: The Impact of Inclusive Investments in Erie County | Gary N. Lee, M.B.A., <i>Chief Administrative Officer, Diverse Erie</i> | Community Conversation (Free) | JES |
| Monday, March 2 7 p.m. | Sole Talk: A Discussion on Foot Health | LECOM Health Experts: Drs. Anthony Colonna, Colette Yori Tobia, and Alan Kidon | Living Successfully Series Panel Presentation in Partnership with LECOM Health (Free) | JES |

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Programs at the JES will take place at 3207 State Street, Erie, PA 16508.

JES SATELLITE PROGRAMMING SPONSORED BY



JES Satellite Programming, sponsored by Erie Insurance, will be held at:



Erie Center for Arts & Technology
(ECAT, 650 East Ave, Ada Lawrence
Community House, Erie, PA 16503)



Corry Higher Education Council
(221 N Center St, Corry, PA 16407)



Lincoln Community Center Library
(1255 Manchester Road, Erie, PA 16505)



Harborcreek Township Building
(5601 Buffalo Rd, Harborcreek, PA)

All JES Satellite Programs are free and open to the public.

2026 JES Winter Schedule

Community Conversations, Lectures, Discussions, and Visiting Speaker Events

| When | What | Who | Program Type | Location |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Tuesday, March 3 7 p.m. | Exploring the Past and Present of Gerrymandering: How It's Done, Why It's Done, and What's Happening Now | Robert Speel, Ph.D., <i>Professor of Political Science, Penn State Behrend</i> | Brock Institute USA 250 Lecture | JES |
| Wednesday, March 4 6 p.m. | The Rise of Authoritarianism: What Failed Democratization Stands to Teach the US, Other Democracies | Lena Surzhko-Harned, Ph.D., <i>Political Science Professor, Penn State Behrend, JES Scholar-in-Residence</i> | Brock Institute Lecture (Free) | Harborcreek Township Municipal Building |
| Thursday, March 5 6 p.m. | Addressing Population Decline in Erie County: What are the Trends, Why It Matters, and What to Do About It | Members of the JCLA 2025 Cohort | JES Civic Leadership Academy Graduation featuring cohort presentation (Free) | JES |
| Friday, March 6 Noon | Infinite Progress – Updates on How Infinite Erie is Putting Plans into Action | Kim Thomas, M.P.A., <i>Executive Director, Infinite Erie</i> | Community Conversation (Free) | JES |
| Monday, March 9 6 p.m. | The French Expeditions to Lake Erie: An American Legacy | David Frew, Ph.D., <i>JES Scholar-in-Residence</i> | USA 250 Lecture (Free) | Lincoln Community Center Library |
| Tuesday, March 10 6 p.m. | Exploring the Legacy of the Historic Eagle Hotel | Richard Arthur, M.A., <i>Historian</i> | USA 250 Lecture (Free) | Corry Higher Education Council |
| Wednesday, March 11 6 p.m. | Multi-Generational Leadership: Guiding Age-Diverse Work Groups in Modern Business | Bradley Thompson, B.S., <i>JES Raimy Fellow</i> | Lecture (Free) | Harborcreek Township Municipal Building |
| Thursday, March 12 6 p.m. | Identity Matters | Rev. Charles Mock, D.Div., <i>Retired Pastor, Community Leader</i> | USA 250 Lecture (Free) | ECAT |
| Friday, March 13 Noon | From Founders to Frontiers: 250 Years of Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation | Brian Slawin, B.S., <i>Ben Franklin Technology Partner Regional Director and Portfolio Manager</i> | Keystone Sparks USA 250 Community Conversation in Partnership with Ben Franklin Technology Partners (Free) | JES |
| Monday, March 16 7 p.m. | Songs That Remember: Oral Traditions and Cultural Resilience in Diasporic Families | Shreelina Ghosh, Ph.D., <i>Director, Writing Program at Gannon University</i> | USA 250 Lecture | JES |
| Tuesday, March 17 7 p.m. | From Deck to Deadline: B.S. Osbon's Civil War Naval Experience – How One Man Served in the Union Navy, Reported the War, and Illustrated the Conflict | Brian Graff, M.S., M.A., <i>Retired Geographer/ Cartographer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i> | USA 250 Lecture in Partnership with the Erie Civil War Roundtable (Free) | JES |
| Thursday, March 19 6 p.m. | The Black Presence in Erie's Public Schools | Johnny Johnson, M.Ed., <i>JES Scholar-in-Residence</i> | Lecture (Free) | ECAT |
| Friday, March 20 Noon | The MWRI-Erie Story: World-Changing Medicine Happens Here | Michael Annicine, <i>CEO of the Pittsburgh-based Magee-Womens Research Institute (MWRI)</i> ; Halina Zyczynski, MD, <i>Medical Director for MWRI in Erie</i> ; Ralph Ford, Ph.D., <i>Chancellor of Penn State Behrend</i> | Stronger Women, Stronger Erie Community Conversation Panel Presentation (Free) in Partnership with the Magee-Womens Research Institute and Hamot Health Foundation | JES |
| Monday, March 23 6 p.m. | The Grizzly Bears of Yellowstone National Park | Steve Ropski, Ph.D., <i>Retired Gannon University Professor</i> | Lecture (Free) | Lincoln Community Center |
| Wednesday, March 25 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. | A Tale of Two Sacred Spaces: Part II – Walking Tour of St. John's Lutheran Church and St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church | Michael E. DeSanctis, Ph.D., <i>JES Scholar-in-Residence</i> | Walking Tour (Free); Limited Capacity; Advanced Registration Required) | St. John's Lutheran Church (2216 Peach St., Erie, PA 16502), & St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church (147 W. 24th St., Erie, PA 16502) |

More than 75% of programs are FREE!

Check JESerie.org for event updates, additions, and changes.

Visiting Speaker Events

History Brought to Life – A Series of Events with Thomas Jefferson, Abigail Adams, and Betsy Ross



Thomas Jefferson
(Portrayed by
Steven Edenbo)



Abigail Adams and Betsy Ross
(Portrayed by Kim Hanley)



Tuesday, Feb. 10 through Thursday, Feb. 12

Join the world-class performers and educators from the American Historical Theatre, as they entertain, educate, and inspire by bringing to life Thomas Jefferson, Abigail Adams, and Betsy Ross! Together, Jefferson and Adams will explore their friendship and politics in a spirited debate on women's rights, Shays' Rebellion, sedition, immigration, presidential powers, supreme court appointments, and other issues. In additional events, Jefferson will offer his insights on the political divides of the nation leading up to and through the election of 1800 and what "all men are created equal" means 250 years later; Adams will expound on her famous imploring to "remember the ladies!"; and Ross will unfurl the story of the American flag.

Registrants are welcomed – and encouraged – but not required to attend the entire series to enjoy and learn from individual events.

ECGRA GRANT MONEY WORKS HERE!
ecgra.org 814-897-2690



Did you know that in addition to in-person, virtual, and hybrid events, the JES offers courses? Returning in 2026 are both the weekly course, "**Great Conversations**," in which participants read a range of materials – from the classics to notable contemporary works – and "**Great Decisions**," a bi-monthly course in partnership with the Foreign Policy Association, in which participants dive into critical, global issues with national- and local-level implications. Political science professor, national security expert, and JES Scholar-in-Residence Diane Chido and former Foreign Service Officer and JES Scholar-in-Residence Christine Riehl guide "Great Decisions," of which two sections are being offered, and JES Trustee Bill Koehle facilitates "Great Conversations," of which one section is being offered.

New in 2026: The JES will offer a five-part course, "**A History of Rivalry Between US Presidents and the Supreme Court of the United States**." As course instructor George Deutsch, historian, educator, and Executive Director Emeritus of the Erie County Historical Society, notes: History proves virtually nothing is new – prologue informs the present. Today's spotlight on controversies both with and between the Presidency and the Supreme Court often scream from the headlines.

This course will examine the long history of rivalry between Presidents and the Court over a series of five lectures. Contentious cases will be reviewed from Dred Scott through Plessey to Presidential Immunity (Trump v United States 7/1/2024).

"**A History of Rivalry Between US Presidents and the Supreme Court of the United States**" begins Wednesday, Feb. 25 and runs through Wednesday, March 25, and will be held at 3 p.m. at the JES.

Capacity for courses and each section is limited, and registration is processed on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about the courses, visit JESerie.org.

Breakdown of Program Costs (unless otherwise noted):

Lectures: \$10/person; \$15 with a guest

Visiting Speaker Lectures: \$15/person; \$25 with a guest

Community Conversations: Free, lunch optional \$5/person

Great Conversations Course: \$50/person; \$75 with a guest (does not include cost of materials)

Great Decisions 2025 Course: \$100 (includes materials)

A History of Rivalry Between US Presidents and the Supreme Court of the United States Course: \$50/person

All JES Programming is FREE to all Erie County students with advanced registration and proof of enrollment.

A \$1 service charge will be applied to each transaction, along with a 3% City of Erie Amusement Tax. Payments must be made at registration. Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, and Discover accepted. Cash payments are no longer accepted by the JES.

Act 48 hours for the Erie Catholic Diocese, Erie Day School, Erie School District, Corry, Fort LeBoeuf, Girard, Harborcreek, and Wattsburg teachers apply to ALL programs at no additional cost.

For presenter bios, fuller program descriptions, and details on how to register for events, please visit www.JESerie.org. Registrations can also be made by calling 814.459.8000 or by visiting the JES at 3207 State St., Erie, PA 16508.



The views and opinions expressed in the program descriptions and during the events are those of the presenter(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Jefferson Educational Society or its employees.

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ERIE, PA 16508**

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Examine **THE PRESENT.**
Explore **THE FUTURE.**