



News Release
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National World War I Museum and Memorial Announces \$300,000 Gift from William T. Kemper Foundation

Gift to Museum will Continue Preservation of WWI Objects & Documents

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Kansas City’s philanthropic community continues to respond generously to the National World War I Museum and Memorial. The William T. Kemper Foundation has pledged \$300,000 in support of the Museum’s effort to preserve precious objects and documents from the Great War as well as to make them accessible online. The grant also assists with expenses for additional staff and critical digitization equipment.

“The National World War I Museum and Memorial holds the most comprehensive collection of Great War objects and documents in the world,” said National World War I Museum and Memorial President and CEO Dr. Matthew Naylor. “Enhancing both the process and the speed with which we’re able to digitize the collection is absolutely critical. We’re grateful to the William T. Kemper Foundation for assisting the Museum in making it possible for individuals around the world to access the collection digitally.”

The goal of the Museum’s digitization effort is to make thousands of World War I objects and documents searchable via an online database on the organization’s website. The project is intended to amplify public outreach and educational opportunities for students, researchers, family members of World War I descendants as well as individuals with an interest in the subject matter locally, nationally and internationally. Cumulatively, the William T. Kemper Foundation has contributed \$550,000 to the Museum in support of digitization work since 2011.

“The William T. Kemper Foundation is pleased to offer continued support to the National World War I Museum and Memorial for its vital efforts to preserve and promote access to the Museum’s extensive collection,” said Commerce Bank Foundation Office Director Beth A. Radtke. “This work will help to ensure that the Great War and its lessons remain in the collective consciousness for generations to come.”

Since the database was launched in 2013, more than 200,000 searches resulting in more than 690,000 pageviews have been conducted by individuals from all 50 states and more than 145 countries across the world.

Since 2013, attendance at the Museum and Memorial has increased more than 50 percent, serving more than 525,000 guests in 2016 and an additional 425,000 individuals through the organization’s website.

The National World War I Museum and Memorial holds the most diverse collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and personal experiences of the war.

Media interested in covering any of the Museum’s offerings should contact Mike Vietti at 816-888-8122 or mvietti@theworldwar.org.



About the William T. Kemper Foundation

The William T. Kemper Foundation, Commerce Bank, Trustee, was established in 1989 following Mr. Kemper's death. The foundation is dedicated to continuing Mr. Kemper's lifelong interest in improving the human condition and quality of life. The Foundation supports Midwest communities and concentrates on initiatives in education, health and human services, civic betterment and the arts.

About the National World War I Museum and Memorial

The National World War I Museum and Memorial is America's leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum holds the most diverse collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and experiences of the war. The Museum takes visitors of all ages on an epic journey through a transformative period and shares deeply personal stories of courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice. Designated by Congress as America's official World War I Museum and Memorial and located in downtown Kansas City, Mo., the National World War I Museum and Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the Great War era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations. To learn more, visit theworldwar.org.

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