

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, Sept. 24, 2026

For more information contact:
dnr.pio@illinois.gov

Illinois State Museum-Lockport Gallery to open 'Dancing for Our Tribe' exhibition on Oct. 9

The exhibit features portraits by Citizen Potawatomi Nation photographer Sharon Hoogstraten

SPRINGFIELD — The Illinois State Museum-Lockport Gallery will open “Dancing for Our Tribe: Potawatomi Tradition in the New Millennium” on Oct. 9. The exhibit features 30 portraits by photographer Sharon Hoogstraten of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

The exhibition celebrates Potawatomi people dressed in dance regalia and explores regalia as a living tradition that reflects identity, cultural continuity and contemporary life. Her work highlights the descendants of the Great Lakes' early inhabitants as proud people who continue to preserve and celebrate their culture.

Hoogstraten began the project in 2010 at the Family Reunion Festival in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Over more than a decade, she photographed members of all nine Potawatomi nations in traditional regalia.

“Dancing for Our Tribe” demonstrates how regalia is more than a costume or historical artifact. It is a form of cultural expression that connects ancestral artistry with modern life, incorporating items such as sewing machines and synthetic fabrics, as well as stories about tattoos and military service.

Hoogstraten is an Emmy Award-winning photographer, animator and graphic designer. Her work has been exhibited at museums and cultural institutions across the country. Through the project, she also discovered connections to her own ancestry. Her large-scale portraits convey themes of cultural resilience with the motto “We are still here.”

A reception with Hoogstraten will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 17 at the gallery. The reception will feature Indigenous-inspired refreshments prepared by Jessica Walks First Pamonicutt, executive chef and owner of Ketapanen Kitchen, a Native American pop-up kitchen and catering company.

The exhibit will be on display through March 27, 2027, and is supported by the [Illinois State Museum Society](#), City of Lockport and Main Street Lockport.

The [Illinois State Museum-Lockport Gallery](#) is at 201 W. 10th St. in Lockport. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information, call 815-838-7400.

###