

Op/ed piece by Congressman Dave Loebsack
On behalf of the Hoover Presidential Foundation

As a native Iowan, former Cornell College political science professor, and, finally a seven-term Democratic congressman representing southeast Iowa, I take great pride in the fact that little more than 30 minutes from my home in West Branch is the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, dedicated to the memory of Herbert Hoover, America's 31st president.

Not long after I left Congress, I was informed that the Hoover Presidential Foundation would be embarking on a \$20 million campaign to update the museum, the first renovation in some 30 years. To help in this effort, I gladly accepted an appointment to the campaign's honorary committee.

The campaign's name, Timeless Values | Modern Experience, perfectly describes the goals of the new museum. The last renovation of the library and museum took place in 1992 and now is the time to transform Iowa's only presidential museum into a modern destination that will continue to showcase the values of Hoover himself; honesty, leadership, and generosity.

Throughout his life, Hoover and his wife, Lou Henry, put the needs of others ahead of their own as they led a remarkable life of philanthropy and service.

Hoover was orphaned at the age of nine but became a mining engineer millionaire by the age of 40. At that time, he decided to dedicate himself to public service. He worked tirelessly to provide famine relief around the world. And he was called upon to coordinate disaster relief in response to the 1927 Mississippi River flood and other natural disasters.

A revitalized museum will rival the offerings of the larger, better-known presidential museums around America. Clearly, technological developments over the past three decades demand the Hoover library and museum incorporate new methods of reaching an even greater audience of all ages. In particular, the renovations will provide immersive experiences that bring to life the history of Herbert and Lou Hoover.

For instance, the updated museum will offer state-of-the-art permanent galleries. Flexible gallery space will be provided for seasonal, rotating exhibitions. Audiences of any age and background will be able to access augmented online and onsite programs. Storytelling will be enhanced by modern technology, digital media and physical interactives.

Particularly appealing to me will be the new Uncommon Iowan Center where students will engage in critical thinking via a game-based exercise. They will role play and think about important decisions (e.g., formulating a proposal to provide humanitarian food relief during the two world wars) that have occurred in our nation's history.

Support for this project must come from a variety of sources. Iowans can help by taking advantage of the new Hoover Tax Credit. This program allows state residents and businesses to contribute generously to this project and receive a generous tax credit when they file their Iowa income taxes.

I hope you will join me in this exciting endeavor and support what is truly a treasure for the state of Iowa. To find out more, go to TimelessValuesCampaign.org.

Dave Loeb sack