



Dr. Thomas J. Morain Award for Outstanding Iowa History Teacher

This award is to recognize and reward a fulltime Iowa K-12 teacher who provides exceptional and outstanding educational experiences centered around Iowa's history. Recipients of this award actively teach about Iowa's history and foster in their students a desire to learn more about their state's history. This award honors Dr. Thomas J. Morain (1947-2020), historian, educator, author, and tireless promoter/advocate of and for Iowa history.

Recipients will receive a plaque, a one-year complimentary Iowa Council for the Social Studies membership, and a cash award. They will be asked to lead a session on teaching Iowa history at the Annual Conference.

Nomination and Selection Process

The award will be presented at the Iowa Council for the Social Studies' Annual Conference, beginning in 2022. Nominations are due on May 31. The Iowa Council for the Social Studies' Awards Committee will judge all nominations and select the winner.

To be eligible, the nominee must be:

- A fulltime K-12 teacher in Iowa
- A member in good standing of the Iowa Council for the Social Studies.

Nominations may be made by any group or person, including the nominee.

The nomination must be accompanied by the following information:

- Nominator's name and contact information
- Nominee's resume with specific information to nominee's current teaching contract
- A narrative description of the nominee's outstanding classroom accomplishments
- Documentation.
 - **Required:** specific examples of lessons, units, and/or curriculum taught by the nominee. Examples provided must clearly demonstrate a connection to Iowa and local history.
 - **Optional supporting documentation** can include, but is not limited to, items such as:
 - Digital documentation, such as YouTube videos of the teacher teaching, or a presentation of students' projects, etc.
 - Other awards won, or notable achievements of, the nominee or nominee's students.

- Commentary on the results or impact of the lessons, units of study, or curriculum.
- Letter of support or recommendation – 1 required
 - The letter must address the ways in which the nominee’s teaching of Iowa and local history is exemplary and noteworthy.

About Dr. Morain

The award honors Dr. Thomas J. Morain (1947-2020), a native Iowan who was an award-winning historian, educator, author, and promoter of Iowa’s history at all levels. He literally co-authored the textbook used in classrooms to teach Iowa history, *Iowa Past to Present: The People and the Prairie*, now in its third edition. Throughout his life, Dr. Morain was dedicated to sharing his love of Iowa history with all Iowans. At various times in his professional career, he was the Director of Research and Interpretation at Living History Farms, the Chief Administrator for the State Historical Society of Iowa, and Director of Government Relations at Graceland University. He was the author of countless articles and at least three books on Iowa history.

In 2016, Dr. Morain delivered the keynote address at the unveiling of a new memorial to the Littleton’s, an Iowa family that had lost 6 brothers fighting in the Civil War. The words he spoke that day epitomize his belief in the importance of teaching Iowa history. “We Iowans sometimes let the East and the West coasts shape our own perception of who we are, and because they know so little about Iowa history, they tempt us to think that we have none... History doesn’t happen only ‘Somewhere Else;’ important people don’t all live ‘Somewhere Else.’ We need to connect, and to connect our children, to this place... We, too, are part of the story and we, too, shall leave our mark.”

To learn more about the life of Dr. Morain, visit these resources:

- Dr. Morain’s obituary: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/amestribune/name/tom-morain-obituary?pid=196944943>
- The *Iowa Council for the Social Studies* Volume 29, Issue 1 (Winter 2021) carried a remembrance of Dr. Morain in. Available at www.iowasocialstudies.org.