



# **L&C Launching Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Renovation Project with a Ceremonial Groundbreaking**

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**GODFREY** – With a celebratory groundbreaking ceremony at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 16, Lewis and Clark Community College will officially kick off the renovation of the historic Lincoln School at 1220 N. Main Street in Edwardsville to create the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities.

Mannie Jackson, L&C President Dale Chapman, Edwardsville School District Superintendent Ed Hightower, elected officials and local dignitaries will officially “turn the dirt” at the project site to mark the start of the renovation project. The entire project is expected to take approximately 12 months.

Jackson, an Edwardsville native who went on to become an entrepreneur and influential African American business leader, announced the creation of the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities and initially pledged \$200,000 toward a program endowment

in April 2012 during a book signing event for his memoir, “Boxcar to Boardrooms.” Since his announcement, and with his leadership, the college is approaching nearly \$2 million raised to date for the Center’s endowment.

The historic Lincoln School will be repurposed to be the headquarters of these humanities outreach initiatives that will bring together diverse audiences and programming through lectures, readings, dialogues, public service opportunities and humanities programs. The Center will aim to create a global nation of neighbors by supporting cultural differences, encouraging exchanges and fostering a better understanding of the modern world.

“I have faced many societal challenges during my life. The formation of the endowment and center will result in programs that give people a better understanding of societal differences and how we should embrace those differences. Without that understanding, people throughout the world will continue to have conflicts with other cultures,” Jackson said.

Lewis and Clark President Dale Chapman pointed to current local and world conflicts as a reason for the growing need for such a place. “Our world is becoming increasingly pluralistic and polarized. We must learn to listen to our neighbors, from around the world, and develop a better understanding and appreciation for their struggles and concerns, to inform our way forward to solutions and progress.”

In July of 2011, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced Lewis and Clark as one of the first six two-year colleges ever to receive its challenge grants. These competitive grants aim to help raise endowments to strengthen humanities programs at community colleges, encourage the development of model humanities programs and curricula, and broaden the base of financial support for humanities on two-year college campuses.

The \$250,000 challenge grant required Lewis and Clark to raise a \$500,000 match, which was surpassed early with the support of Mannie Jackson and numerous other donors throughout the community.

“We have received tremendous support from individuals and businesses in this community who recognize the tremendous need for a center like this,” Edwardsville School District Superintendent and L&C Board Member Ed Hightower said. “I’m honored to have been a part of this project from the start, and am looking forward to the impact this center and its thoughtful programming and activities will have not only on the Edwardsville community, but this ever-changing world.”

In addition to a personal gift of \$200,000, Jackson also donated the former Lincoln School to the college to serve as the programming center for this endeavor.

The event is open to the community. Those who wish to attend should RSVP to Alexandria Ruiz at [aruiz@lc.edu](mailto:aruiz@lc.edu). Parking access for the event will be available at Main Street Community Center and Eden Church parking lots. In the case of inclement weather, the event will move to the Leclair Room at the college's N.O. Nelson Campus.

#### About Mannie Jackson:

Jackson was born in a railroad boxcar in Illmo, Missouri before moving to Edwardsville and finding statewide high school success on the basketball court. He was recruited to play college basketball at the University of Illinois, where he became the first of the school's African-American student athletes. He then went on to a playing career for the Harlem Globetrotters before rising through the ranks at Honeywell to become one of the company's senior corporate officers and one of the most influential African American corporate executives in the country. Jackson later bought the Harlem Globetrotters and became the nation's first African American owner of a global sports and entertainment brand.

For more information visit [www.lc.edu/manniejackson](http://www.lc.edu/manniejackson)