Are you a fan of *Star Trek*? Perhaps you like to support strong women and inspirational leaders. Maybe you just like interesting and unique art installations. If any of these apply to you then the Janeway Project is something you will appreciate. The Captain Janeway Bloomington Collective is a group dedicated to erecting a monument to *Star Trek: Voyager* Captain Janeway here in the place of her future birth, Bloomington Indiana. While I lead this group it is the work and inspiration of many members of our community.

While it would be easy to think this is just about *Star Trek*, something that will appeal only to *Star Trek* fans, it is so much more. Captain Janeway, a scientist and a leader, was an inspiration to a generation of young women. From astrophysicist Erin Macdonald to astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti, the list of people who cite her as an inspiration is long. Captain Janeway led her crew with humanity, was a tough leader when necessary and a parental figure when needed.

Bloomington already has a strong connection to Voyager. Jeri Taylor, an Executive Producer of Voyager and the women responsible for placing the Captain’s origins here, is an IU graduate who spent some of her childhood in Bloomington. She has donated many of her personal papers, including those dealing with the creation of Voyager and Captain Janeway, to the Lilly Library. Our monument will build on that connection and provide another intriguing tourist draw in our town.

This project has turned out to be extremely popular in our community. We first brought it to the city and after some discussion we reached agreement to have the monument placed along the B-Line trail in the heart of downtown. While the exact location is yet to be determined, we do know that our monument will be within shouting distance of the Showers Building, the Mill district and other downtown landmarks. It will be freely accessible to all. We started with modest plans, perhaps a bench modeled on the one in Riverside, IA that marks that town as the future birthplace of *Star Trek*’s Captain Kirk. As we talked to more community members it became clear we could do so much more and we expanded our plans. We are now working on a life-size monument accompanied by an informational table that will highlight the character and her creator, Jeri Taylor.

The monument itself will stand around five and a half feet tall, the height of the character. The bust section will be made of bronze and the well-decorated base will be limestone. This will be a photo opportunity for visitors and locals alike and will bring positive attention to our already thriving downtown and arts scene in general.

As the project evolved we brought in more members of the local and State community to assist us. Primary among them is Artisan Alley, a local arts cooperative and creative space that houses a variety of artisan and activities. Through this partnership we achieved non-profit status that open up numerous fundraising opportunities.
From there we connected with Patronicity, a fundraising platform that specializes in community arts project, urban renewal and activating unused public spaces. This partnership opened up the ability for us to get matching funds from Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA). As it now stands, we are well on our way to meeting our goal of $12,500 raised through Patronicity and getting another $12,500 from IHCDA. This will go a long way to meeting our budget of $30,000.

The monument, when completed, will be more than just a static object. As part of our plan there will be a ceremony on May 20, 2020. May 20, 2336 is the birthday of Captain Janeway and 2020 is the 25th anniversary of Voyager premiering. If all goes as planned this will be just the first annual celebration of Captain Janeway and her influence.

As a society, we have come a long way in the last 25 years. At the time Voyager launched it was still very difficult to convince media executives that fans would accept a women as the Captain of a starship, and that a women could lead a new, action adventure that was being used to launch a new network, UPN. Kate Mulgrew, the actor who so skillfully played Captain Janeway, has spoken about how the executives were waiting for her to fail. After a few seasons (Voyager ran for 7) the situation improved but there was a continual pressure, as just like in our times, Captain Janeway had to be not just as good as the Captains that came before her but better. Most would argue that she succeeded.

So here we are today, well on our way to making the Captain Janeway monument a reality but with a lot of work left to be done. Fundraising continues, as well as simply trying to get the community more aware and to raise the level of excitement and involvement.

I hope that you find this project interesting and will tell your friends and coworkers about it. We have the full backing of CBS, which owns the rights to the Star Trek franchise. We have an original piece of art donated by artist J.K. Woodward, who has done Trek comics and other Trek work. Prints of the artwork he designed, Voyager over the Bloomington Courthouse, will be given as donor gifts to all who give $100 dollars or more. $500 and up will get you a high quality Janeway bust from Eaglemoss, and large donors, who as individuals or entities, give $1000 or more will have their names added to the informational table to stand forever as a sponsor of this project. For $2000 it can be not just a name but a logo.

Check us out, and see if you, your friends, or your department want to contribute. There are many things that make Bloomington special, this is your opportunity to be a part of one of the newest, and most unique, to come to Bloomington in a long time.