

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE FOR STATE AND DISTRICT COORDINATORS FOR CLASS ATTENDING NATIONAL FINALS

DATE:

CONTACT: State/District Coordinator Name
Title
Telephone Number

Tam Taylor
Center for Civic Education
818-591-9321

STATE STUDENTS COMPETE IN U.S. CONSTITUTION PROGRAM NATIONAL FINALS

On May 2, students from name of school and town will travel to Washington, D.C., where they will represent name of state in the national finals of **We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution**. About 1,200 high school students from all fifty states and Saipan will participate in the highly prestigious academic competition on the U.S. Constitution.

The name of school students have studied for months to prepare for their role as experts testifying on constitutional issues in a simulated congressional hearing. To represent their state at the national finals, the class won their congressional district and state competitions earlier this school year.

[Insert teacher quote about going to the nationals, e.g., the students' hard work to get there, competing against the top classes in the nation, the students' growth through this class and We the People competition.] "Quote," said teacher's first and last name, a subject matter teacher who led the class to the championship.

The first round of the national finals will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, Virginia, May 3 and 4. Now in its 21st year, the competition involves entire classes making presentations and answering questions on constitutional topics before a panel of judges recruited from across the country. Constitutional scholars, lawyers, and government leaders, acting as congressional committee members, will judge the students' performances. The combined scores of the classes during the first two days of hearings will determine the top 10 classes to compete in the championship round Monday, May 5 in congressional hearing rooms in the Senate Dirksen Office Building.

The annual three-day final competition is the culminating activity of **We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution**, the most extensive civic education program of its kind in the country. The name of school students have been studying *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution*, developed by the Center for Civic Education. The text provides students with an

understanding of the fundamental values and principles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Students representing high school name are [list].

During their stay in Washington, D.C., the students will tour historical sites and have an opportunity to visit name of senator and/or name of representative. [Insert information on visit with senator and/or representative or any other involvement with the class (signing certificates, visiting the school, etc.)]

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution is funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Education for Democracy Act approved by the United States Congress. The program is directed by the Center for Civic Education in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. State coordinator name administers the program for state while working closely with district coordinator name who coordinates the program for the # district. Nationwide, the program is implemented at the upper elementary, middle, and high school levels and has reached more than 30 million students and 81,000 teachers during its 21-year history.

A 2006–2007 independent study examined the effects of the **We the People** program on civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes, evaluating **We the People** participants and a matched comparison group of high school government students. **We the People** students scored 30 percent higher than their peers on a comprehensive test that measured understanding of core values and principles of democracy, constitutional limits on governmental institutions, and rights and responsibilities of citizenship.