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Strengthening Democracy Through History and Civics

American History and Civics Presidential Academies and Congressional Academies

LOS ANGELES — The Center for Civic Education has received a grant of \$2.8 million from the U.S. Department of Education for a five-year series of Presidential Academies for teachers and Congressional Academies for students. In the summers of 2019–2023 both Academies will include a two-week institute in conjunction with exemplary scholars and mentor teachers. Participants will be immersed in the study of constitutional history and principles following the intellectual framework of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution curriculum.

“There is a longstanding belief that our schools have a civic mission to develop among our youth a reasoned commitment to the fundamental values and principles of American constitutional democracy,” said Charles N. Quigley, executive director of the Center for Civic Education. “This federal investment recognizes the importance of that goal and the continuing need of each generation of students to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens.”

The project’s objectives are to provide the following:

- High-quality professional development in the content and methods of history and civics for a group of teachers of predominantly high-need students each year.
- High-quality, interactive instruction in history and civics for a group of high-need high school students.
- Outreach and follow-up activities with scholars that will benefit teachers, students and the general public during the year.

The intended outcomes are as follows:

- Improved subject knowledge and pedagogy for 51 teachers each year, leading to high-quality interactive instruction and a professional learning community aided by a History and Civics Online Forum.
- Improved content knowledge, skills and attitudes for 102 students each year, aided by a Student Online Forum.

- A series of eight online videos and four webinars that will extend the teachers' professional development and benefit students and the general public.

Each year the Academies will take place concurrently at a college or university in the mid-Atlantic region that is convenient for visits to numerous national parks. Each location will be conducive to thoughtful lectures, discussions and individual and collaborative work. In the summer of 2019 the Academies will take place at Hood College in Frederick, Md.

Partner organizations in every state will aid in the selection and follow-up processes. Teachers will be selected from schools with strong administrative support for work with high-need students. For each teacher, two high-need students from that teacher's school or school district will apply conjointly and participate in the Academies. The teachers and students will meet in separate sessions and also participate in joint learning and civic engagement activities during the summer and school year.

About the Center for Civic Education

The *Center for Civic Education* (www.civiced.org) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization dedicated to fostering the development of informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy. The Center's programs are implemented with the assistance of a network of public- and private-sector organizations and educational leaders in every state and congressional district in the country and in more than eighty other countries, many of which are emerging and advanced democracies.

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