

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2014



Conference of Chief Justices

The National Center for State Courts hosted the Annual Conference of Chief Justices this year at the Greenbrier Resort in Lewisburg, West Virginia. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor participated in this year's conference to present the annual award named in her honor in recognition of outstanding achievements in civic education. Recipients of this year's national honor were Justice R. Fred Lewis of the Supreme Court of Florida and Annette Boyd Pitts, Executive Director of the Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc. Click [here](#) for a link to the full article, titled *Sandra Day O'Connor Advancements in Civic Education Award Presented during Conference of Chief Justices in West Virginia*.



United States Senate Youth (USSY)

The date to submit the application for the 2015 USSY Program is October 17, 2014. You can find a link to the application [here](#). If you are currently a high school junior or senior that serves in an elected capacity in an on-campus organization such as student government or an off campus civic/community organization, we encourage you to apply. If you have questions, please contact Annette Boyd Pitts at staff@flrea.org.



Civics Curriculum Wheel

The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc. has developed a wide range of lessons and accompanying PowerPoint presentations and resources to help with your seventh grade civics course and preparations for the Civics End of Course Exam. Do not forget to sign up for the valuable resources available in the Civics Curriculum Wheel at www.flrea.org. Click [here](#) to register for the materials. Training is available in districts with 25 or more participants. Webinars are also being provided to groups of all sizes. Contact staff@flrea.org for details.



Civics EOC Exam

Recently FLREA held a Civics Webinar to introduce the seventh grade civics and government benchmarks, valuable tips to help prepare students for the civics end of course exam, incredible resources, and recommended strategies. You can review the taped webinar [here](#). The program includes a PowerPoint presentation, as well as the audio of the webinar.



Civics Item Specifications Booklet (Item Specs)

Every seventh grade civics teacher should be intimately aware of the Civics EOC Item Specification Booklet. This booklet contains a range of information to help clarify specifically how the benchmarks will be addressed on the end of course exam. The booklet contains benchmark clarifications, content limits, content focus, vocabulary, and more. The civics textbooks that are currently in use may have been published prior to the release of the Item Specification Booklet. Make sure you have this [document](#) to reference daily as you teach the civics benchmarks.



Justice Teaching

Do you need a partner for your classroom? Could you use some help teaching some of the law related concepts in your civics, government, or law courses? Have you signed up for a volunteer lawyer or judge to be your partner through the Justice Teaching Program? Sign up at www.justiceteaching.org or contact staff@flrea.org and we will put you in touch with the program coordinator. Justice Teaching is a partnership program developed by Justice R. Fred Lewis of the Florida Supreme Court.



We the People E-Book Pilot

FLREA is sponsoring a limited number of FREE We the People Middle School EBooks to teachers interested in participating in the pilot for the digital resource. If you are interested, please contact staff@flrea.org. Teachers must agree to participate in a training webinar, as well as prepare the class to participate in a mock congressional hearing competition.



iCivics

The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc. serves as state director for the iCivics program. Anyone teaching seventh grade civics should really get acquainted with this valuable resource. The platform incorporates lessons, games, and a new Drafting Board writing exercise. Teachers can create their own accounts and log in student information for tracking and grading purposes. We suggest downloading the Scope and Sequence Guide to see how the themes fit within the Florida benchmarks in civics and government. Go to www.icivics.org. (Need a first suggestion for a lesson? Try James Bond in a Honda simulation.)



Setting the Bar: Miami Dade Civics and Law Programs

Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the fourth largest school district in the country, has set the bar high in Florida with its extensive array of civics and law programs. The school district, under the leadership of the Department of Social Sciences Executive Director Robert Brazofsky and Supervisor Jackie Viana, has spearheaded the most expansive and respected middle and high school law programs in the state with courtrooms on school campuses, a wide range of law elective courses, quality professional development opportunities, and extensive law-related academic competitions and showcases. Click [here](#) for a link to the full article.



The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) Informed Voters Project (IVP)

The "Informed Voters – Fair Judges" project is a non-partisan education project developed to increase awareness about the judicial system. The program includes an interactive presentation and a video featuring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Click [here](#) for more details.



Seeking Student Alumni

The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc. is seeking students that have participated in our mock trial, moot court, Project Citizen or We the People programs. We are interested in knowing how these programs impacted your life and why you think civics and law related education are so important. We also need teacher testimonials to help encourage others to see the benefits of these and other programs. If you have been a participant in the Justice Teaching Institute or any of our training programs, please drop us a note at staff@flrea.org.



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Needs Survey

Tell us what you still need help with in your civics or law courses. Any special topics or lessons that you may need? Any questions or concerns? Contact us at staff@flrea.org.



Upcoming Events

January 16: We the People State Finals
March 5-7: Florida High School Mock Trial State Finals Competition
April 17: Project Citizen Portfolios due
April 20-24: Project Citizen Capitol Showcase
May 15: Project Citizen Oral Hearings and Portfolio Showcase Finals
Click [here](#) to see a full calendar of events.



Constitution Month Video Contest

In honor of Constitution Day, the Florida Coordinating Committee of the Informed Voters Project of the National Association of Women Judges is pleased to invite YOU to honor the importance of protecting a fair and impartial judiciary for all by participating in the 2014 Constitution Day Florida Video Challenge. All entries must be submitted by October 17, 2014. Click [here](#) for contest rules and to participate.

Questions or comments? Visit our website at <http://www.flrea.org> or email us at staff@flrea.org.

The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc.
2930 Kerry Forest Parkway
Suite 202
Tallahassee, FL 32309
Phone: (850) 386-8223 – Fax: (850) 386-8292