



2022 Impact Report



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Foundation

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Welcome

At the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, we believe in the power of business to solve our toughest problems.

We recognize the importance of democracy to national prosperity and know business has a role to play in strengthening it. To address the declining rates of civic engagement in society, we launched the Civic Trust—a new initiative dedicated to improving civics education and literacy. Our first major program, the National Civics Bee, began engaging middle school students in Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, New Mexico, Texas, and Wyoming.

We created the National Civics Bee to build enthusiasm for civics—and for America—because we believe all young people, no matter what job they dream of doing, should understand how democracy works and how to be active and engaged citizens.

This report celebrates the students who competed in the inaugural National Civics Bee and recognizes the partners who helped bring the vision of the competition to life.

We congratulate each of the finalists for demonstrating an exceptional understanding of civic knowledge and for their commitment to engaging constructively in the public life of their communities. We can't wait to bring the competition to many more communities next year.



Carolyn Cawley
President
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is dedicated to strengthening America's long-term competitiveness. We educate the public on the conditions necessary for businesses and communities to thrive, how business positively impacts communities and emerging issues, and creative solutions that will shape the future.

About the Civic Trust

We founded The Civic Trust to promote a broad range of efforts aimed at improving understanding of and involvement in American civic life. The Civic Trust aims to energize and modernize America's civic life by changing the conversation and perception of civics in classrooms, board rooms, on social media and through other platforms. It supports and engages leading national and local stakeholders in its areas of programmatic focus, including civic literacy and civics at work.

The Need



"We have come to take democracy for granted, and civic education has fallen by the wayside...Civic education, like all education, is a continuing enterprise and conversation. Each generation has an obligation to pass on to the next, not only a fully functioning government responsive to the needs of the people, but the tools to understand and improve it."

***John G. Roberts, Jr.
Chief Justice of the United States***

The Need

Every young American should have the knowledge and skills to be a productive citizen, whether they grow up to be a plumber or the president. Civics education has been deprioritized for decades, leaving far too many Americans uninformed. At the same time, we've lost faith in each other, and lack trust in government, institutions, and news media.

43%

of Americans can't name all 3 branches of government

76%

of 8th graders score below proficient in civics

35%

Know the length of a senator's term of office

52%

of young people think democracy has failed or is in trouble

1/3

worry about civil war in their lifetime

4 in 10

Americans trust the government to do what is right some of the time

Sources:

Annenberg Public Policy Center. "Annenberg Civics Knowledge Survey." Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2021, www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/political-communication/civics-knowledge-survey.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. "NAEP Report Card: Civics." The Nation's Report Card, www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics/results/achievement. Accessed 11 July 2022.

Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics. "Harvard Youth Poll." Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics, 2021, iop.harvard.edu/youth-poll/fall-2021-harvard-youth-poll.

Rasmussen Reports. "31% Think U.S. Civil War Likely Soon." Rasmussen Reports, 2018, www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/general_politics/june_2018/31_think_u_s_civil_war_likely_soon.

Pew Research Center. "Public Trust in Government: 1958–2022." Pew Research Center, 2022, www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/06/06/public-trust-in-government-1958-2022.

One Solution: The National Civics Bee



We created the National Civics Bee is to improve civic education and literacy among young people and their families.

During the inaugural year, we partnered with chambers of commerce to host pilot competitions in five states. In the first round, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders from public, private, charter, and home schools were invited to take part in an essay competition. Local judges then selected the top ten students to move on to a live quiz event to test their civics knowledge. In the final round, the three highest scoring finalists participated in a live Q&A with a panel of judges.

The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place winners in each location received cash awards furnished by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation in addition to prizes donated by local sponsors.

981

Contestants

- 6 states
- 135 schools
- 58% from lower income zipcodes



50

Finalists

- 26% had no civics education in school
- 60% African American, Asian, or Hispanic
- 44% eligible for free or reduced school lunch



\$10,500

Cash awards

45,515

Social media impressions



The Winners

10

The following students achieved the highest cumulative scores in their local National Civics Bee competitions by demonstrating their exceptional level of civic knowledge and thoughtful approach to solving community problems through constructive civic engagement.

1st Place

Michael Atika

Franklin Middle School
Reisterstown, Maryland

Essay Topic: Sewage management



Jared Calderon

South Texas ISD Preparatory Academy
Edinburg, Texas

Essay Topic: Forest conservation



Lucas Campbell

Simons Middle School
Flemingsburg, Kentucky

Essay Topic: Locally-produced food



Student Voices: What is Civics?

"In other words, civics is how we the people are involved with the government, far away and close to home. Some examples of civic participation are voting, volunteering in activities, and studying the government principles and laws to be well informed.

-Anna Richardson, 1st Place Winner, Albuquerque

The Winners

1st Place

Anna Richardson

Desert Willow Family School
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Essay Topic: Refugee needs



Kaitlyn Thangaraj

John Adams Middle School
Mason City, Iowa
Essay Topic: Bike-lane dividers



Student Voices: What is Civics?

"A lot of people don't recognize it for what it is. It helps you beyond academics because it's part of our world today, it's part of our government that runs us and how we run the government as well, being a Democratic government. It helps us to realize who we are and what we can do if we try."

-Kaitlyn Thangaraj, 1st Place Winner, Mason City

The Winners

2nd Place

Leah Dykstra

Lincoln Intermediate School
Mason City, Iowa
Essay Topic: Vandalism

Oliver Rich Jackson

21st Century Public Academy
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Essay Topic: Water supply

Gianna San Juan

Homeschooler
Bowie, Maryland
Essay Topic: Beaver protection

Jiwoo Kim

Model Laboratory School
Richmond, Kentucky
Essay Topic: Diversity

Seanah Mireles

IDEA San Benito
Rancho Vieja, Texas
Essay Topic: Local stereotypes

3rd Place

Sofia Ahari

John Adams Middle School
Mason City, Iowa
Essay Topic: Bike trails

Emilia Charles (tie)

Faulk Middle School
Brownsville, Texas
Essay Topic: Discrimination

Elian Diaz Erives

Harrison Middle School
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Essay Topic: Education

Charleston Girdler

Somerset Christian School
Somerset, Kentucky
Essay Topic: Voting

Jacqueline Nguessan

Redland Middle School
Derwood, Maryland
Essay Topic: Obesity

Christopher Zendejas (tie)

Oliveira Middle School
Brownsville, Texas
Essay Topic: Moral codes



Partners

"Having the marketing assets and branding available was really useful...We were astounded with the impact this program had on our community and would like the opportunity to continue moving forward and continue building the future of the workforce."



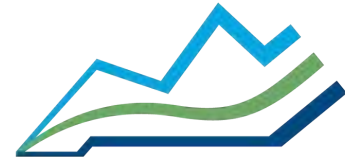
"The most important accomplishment was elevating the importance of civics education in our middle schools...we strengthened our partnerships with the school district and engaged the parents of the kids in the community. We had a very professional presentation, which "wowed" those in attendance. The essay portion was a great way to encourage students to start thinking critically about civics principles."

"The entire day was a true dedication to the students here in ABQ, including several schools we have relationships with. It aligned with our mission in supporting education here in New Mexico and in Albuquerque...Ultimately the event looked great and we had a lot of positive feedback..."



Partners

"We created a great space to engage middle school students (which has typically been our least-engaged age level of students through our work). We were able to utilize and foster relationships with new and different educators from across the state. All in all, we had a great event, held at our office, and increased our reputation with a new audience...We loved participating and can't wait to do it again next year!"



**Kentucky Chamber
Foundation**



"Through the National Civics Bee we were able to deepen the impact of the MD Chamber Foundation through this new initiative. We were thrilled to work directly with students and to build new partnerships in this space...The event itself was a blast -everyone had an incredible time."



Bring the National Civics Bee
to your community!

Contact us today:

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