



U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Foundation



# 2023

## Impact Report



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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. With support from the Daniels Fund, we began engaging middle school students in 2022 through our first major program: the National Civics Bee®.

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 2023 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. Since the conclusion of the 2023 cycle, we've scaled to 28 states and aim to host competitions in all 50 states by 2026. We can't wait to bring the Bee to many more communities next year.



## **Hilary Crow**

Vice President, Civics  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

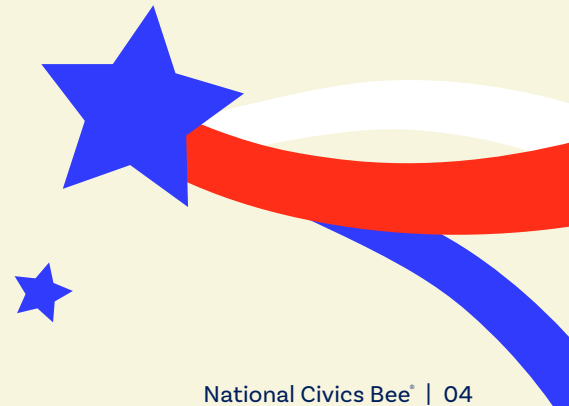
# About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

The mission of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is to harness the power of business to create solutions for the good of America and the world. We anticipate, develop, and deploy solutions to challenges facing communities today and tomorrow.



## About The Civic Trust®

The Civic Trust® is a nonpartisan educational initiative focused on elevating civics as a national priority with programs that advance and promote civic knowledge in schools, workplaces, and communities.



# The Need



**“A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?”**

George Washington

# The Need

We believe all young people and their families should understand how our democracy works and how to be active and engaged citizens. While civics education was once a banner of public education, it has been deprioritized for decades. Young Americans are left unequipped with the skills vital to thriving in our democracy and our workforce.

**72%**

of Americans are dissatisfied with the way democracy is working in this country.

**78%**

of 8th graders score below proficient in civics knowledge.

**68%**

believe they will lose liberties, freedom, and rights over the next decade.

**95%**

of adults cannot name all First Amendment rights.

## SOURCES

Jones, Jeffrey M. "Record Low in U.S. Satisfied with Way Democracy Is Working." Gallup, February 7, 2024.

U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2022 Civics Assessment.

Annenberg Constitution Day Survey 2023. ASAPH Survey, August 2023.

McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022.

# One Solution



## The National Civics Bee®

We created the National Civics Bee® to harness the potential of young Americans to turn this country around by engaging in civics and contributing to their communities.

The National Civics Bee® is a fun-filled annual competition that serves as an on-ramp for youth who may not otherwise access civics education. The competition reaches young Americans during a critical window of their development and removes barriers for participation by incentivizing learning as a fun game with a clear path to success: to win the championship and secure prizes along the way.

In 2023, we challenged 2,000 students from public, private, charter, and home schools across the country to learn about civics and engage as leaders.

**2,000**  
students

**9**  
states

**1,055**  
schools

**50**  
chambers





**379**  
finalists

**40%**  
reside in  
rural areas

**25%**  
eligible for free  
or reduced  
school lunch



**\$40K+**  
cash awards

**75K+**  
social media  
followers

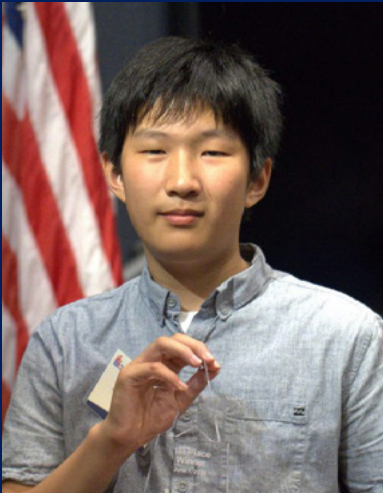
**245**  
media stories



# The Winners



The following students achieved the highest cumulative scores in their 2023 National Civics Bee® State Finals by demonstrating their exceptional level of civic knowledge and thoughtful approach to solving community problems through constructive civic engagement.



**“It’s a great opportunity. It’s super fun, engaging, and you get to make an impact.”**

## **Benjamin Wu**

Greater Vancouver, Washington  
Essay Topic: Computer education



## **Sriram Yalavarthy**

Arvada, Colorado  
Essay Topic: American civility



## **Matilda Peterson**

Council Bluffs, Iowa  
Essay Topic: Homelessness



## **Javan Dotson**

Southeast Kentucky, Kentucky  
Essay Topic: Economy

# The Winners



**“I think it’s important for young people to be educated about civics, so when you become older you know about your rights, and so you can defend them.”**

**Gianna San Juan**

Crofton, Maryland

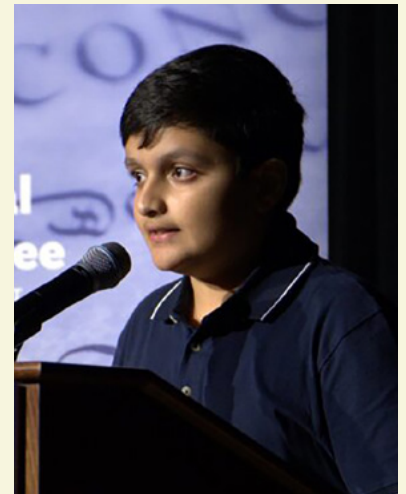
Essay Topic: Gardening regulations

**“I feel more educated about what’s happening in my community. Now I can finally understand what they are saying on the news ... I feel like I can make a big impact, and I can be a better citizen after knowing all of this.”**

**Aarit Koul**

Canton, Ohio

Essay Topic: Pollution



# The Winners



**“I definitely have a lot better understanding of what civics is and just how important it is.”**

**Nathan Lackey**

Pearland, Texas  
Essay Topic: Drunk driving



**Auburn Eichers**

Rio Rancho, New Mexico  
Essay Topic: Sexual assault

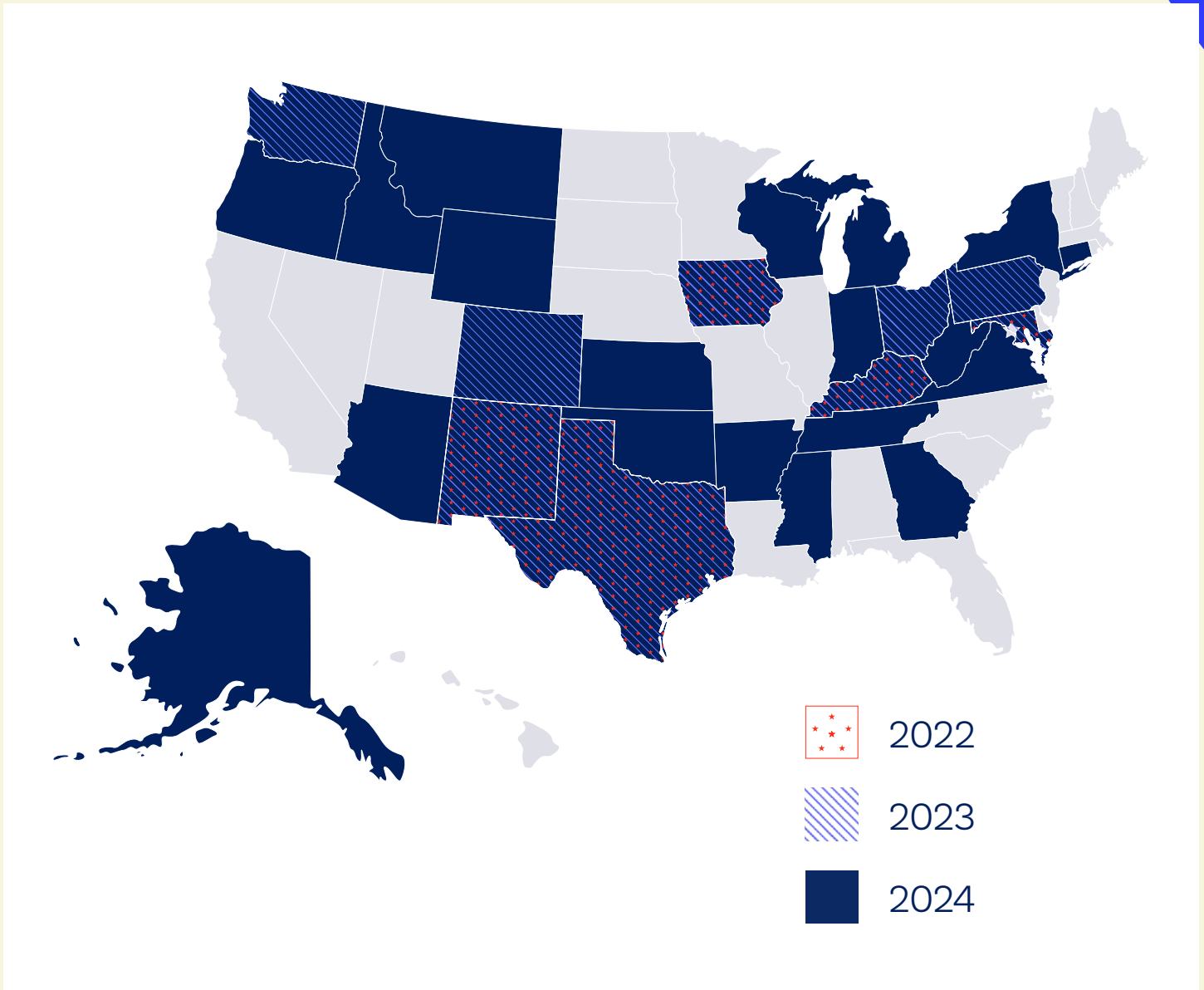


**Nathaniel Gushurst**

Chester, Pennsylvania  
Essay Topic: Environment

# Participating States

The National Civics Bee® is hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation in partnership with state and local chambers of commerce from across the country. It gives chambers the opportunity to promote greater civic knowledge among young people and their families, while energizing their communities with a celebration of civic pride. Chambers interested in participating in the National Civics Bee® should email the U.S. Chamber Foundation at [civictrust@uschamber.com](mailto:civictrust@uschamber.com) to request more information.



# Our Partners

Thank you to the chambers of commerce who joined us in 2023 to celebrate our democracy and strengthen civic engagement in their communities.

## Colorado

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Colorado Chamber of Commerce Foundation  
Arvada Chamber of Commerce  
Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce  
Craig Chamber of Commerce  
Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce

## Iowa

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Iowa Chamber Alliance (ICA)  
Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce  
Mason City Chamber of Commerce

## Kentucky

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Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Foundation  
Bardstown-Nelson County Chamber of Commerce  
Campbellsville-Taylor County Chamber of Commerce  
London-Laurel County Chamber of Commerce  
Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce  
Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce  
Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

## Maryland

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Maryland Chamber of Commerce Foundation  
Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce  
Frederick County Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce  
Howard County Chamber of Commerce

## New Mexico

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New Mexico Chamber of Commerce  
Rio Rancho Chamber of Commerce

## Ohio

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Ohio Chamber of Commerce  
Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce  
Lancaster-Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce  
Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce

## Pennsylvania

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Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce  
Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County (CBICC)  
Chester County Chamber of Business & Industry  
Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership  
Greater Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC

## Texas

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Brownsville Chamber of Commerce  
Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce  
Odessa Chamber of Commerce  
Pearland Chamber of Commerce

## Washington

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Association of Washington Business  
Greater Vancouver Chamber



Laura Lanese  
President, Inter-  
University Council

Eric Kearney  
President, Greater  
Cincinnati African-American  
Chamber

Former Gov  
Bob Taft

**“This event definitely elevated our brand and helped strengthen some of our partnerships while also increasing access to civics education for youth in our community.”**

Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce | Ohio



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**“Participation in the National Civics Bee® has been transformative for our chamber, fostering deeper connections with our community’s educational institutions.”**

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**“It’s not just about knowledge; it’s about empowerment and engagement, forging stronger bonds between our chamber, city, region, schools, and families.”**

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**“Through this platform, students find their voices, addressing pertinent issues and shaping our collective future.”**

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**“The National Civics Bee has changed the way students in our area think about civics education. It is now a permanent part of their formal curriculum, and many of the finalists have taken action on projects stemming from their essay ideas. I can confidently say this event has made a lasting impact on the community.”**

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The background features a dark blue field with a large, stylized letter 'C' formed by thick, curved bands of red and blue. Three blue, five-pointed stars are scattered around the 'C'. A white circle is centered over the 'C', containing the text.

Bring the  
**National  
Civics Bee<sup>®</sup>**  
to your community!

CONTACT US TODAY:

[civictrust@uschamber.com](mailto:civictrust@uschamber.com)