



We the People

THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution integrates learning about political philosophy, civics, government, law, the Bill of Rights, U.S. History and current events. It is the largest nationwide civic education program in the country, with funding from Congress since 1987. Materials have been specifically designed by the Center for Civic Education for upper elementary, middle and high school grades, which can be used in social studies, civics, U.S. History or U.S. Government classes. The program culminates with simulated legislative hearings, with students responding orally to questions about the underlying philosophy, development and application of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights in history and today.

This well-designed, rigorous, intellectually engaging, evidence-based program builds 21st century college and career readiness skills as well as citizenship skills. ***We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution*** is one of the few programs that has been repeatedly evaluated and consistently found to be excellent:

- Independent studies by ETS in 1988, 1990 and 1991 revealed that ***We the People*** students scored significantly better on a test of knowledge of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution than students who participated in other instruction about the Constitution
- According to a 1994 study by Stanford University, students involved in the ***We the People*** program developed a greater commitment to democratic principles and values, and the program was effective in promoting political tolerance.
- A 2001 survey of ***We the People*** alumni revealed that they were better informed and participated at higher rates in voting than their peers.
- The Program Effectiveness Panel of the U.S. Department of Education's National Diffusion Network confirmed the program's powerful educational effects on students' civic knowledge and attitudes.
- A 2015 study by Georgetown University found that students whose teachers participated in ***We the People*** professional development scored significantly higher than students in the comparison group regarding respect for the rule of law, political attentiveness, civic duty, community involvement, commitment to government service, and the norms of political efficacy and political tolerance.
(See <http://www.civiced.org/resources/research/researchevaluation/wtp-research>)

The New Jersey Center for Civic Education offers an intensive, high quality ***We the People*** program of professional development taught by scholars and experienced teacher-mentors. Teachers of low-income and minority students as well as English language learners, and particularly new or inexperienced teachers, are especially recruited. Teachers from Bayonne, Camden, East Orange, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, Paterson, Pleasantville, Toms River and Trenton, as well as Bernards Twp., Chatham, Egg Harbor, Holmdel, Madison, North Haledon, Nutley, and Scotch Plains, to name a few, have been involved in the professional development program the past four years.



Teachers may prepare and register a class to participate in the annual state competition sponsored by the New Jersey Center for Civic Education. The 2019-2020 New Jersey State ***We the People*** High School competition will be held on **February 6, 2020**. The winner of the state competition represents the state of New Jersey at the National ***We the People*** competition. For more information about the ***We the People*** program go to <http://civiced.rutgers.edu/wethepeople.html>, or contact Robert O'Dell at 848-445-3413 or Robert.odell@rutgers.edu.