

Center News



APRIL, 2005

Center Leads Civic Education Campaign

The Center is proud to be leading the Michigan Coalition on Civic Education, a newly formed coalition to promote the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. The Coalition is a voluntary partnership between education organizations, civic education providers, advocacy organizations, government agencies, legislators, school board members, student leaders, colleges and universities, and philanthropic institutions. The Coalition's efforts were given a boost when Michigan was selected as one of six states to receive funding from the Carnegie Corporation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation for the campaign to renew and elevate civic education in schools.

The framework for the Campaign's work is the Civic Mission of Schools report (civicmissionofschools.org), published in February 2003. The report's six promising approaches affirm the work of the

Center over the last twenty years.

1. Provide instruction in government, history, law, and democracy.
2. Incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events into the classroom, particularly those



Educating for Democracy

that young people view as important to their lives.

3. Design and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction.

4. Offer extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities.
5. Encourage student participation in school governance.
6. Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.

Through the work of the Michigan Coalition on Civic Education, more attention will be focused on the importance of civic education, which, when done well, provides students with the necessary knowledge and skills for citizenship in a democracy.

The Coalition plans to effect state and local policy to improve civic education so that higher percentages of students experience rigorous civic education.

2005 MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL TOURNAMENT STATE FINALISTS

Andover High School
Clarkston High School
Ann Arbor Community H. S.
East Kentwood High School
Forest Hills Northern H.S.
Kalamazoo Central H.S.
Lahser High School (2 teams)
Lutheran High School North
Midland High School

Civic Education Teacher of the Year



Carole Cottis (Northern Hills Middle School, Forest Hills Public Schools) was named Civic Education Teacher of the Year at this year's Educating for Citizenship conference. Carole's excellence in working with her students on Project Citizen was just one of several factors leading to the award. Presenting the award is Center Board President Michael Langnas.

Teachers: We Need You!

The Michigan Coalition on Civic Education and the National Civic Mission of Schools Campaign is collecting practice examples for grades K-12 that show how schools and teachers are educating students for democracy. The examples should

suggest practices and programs that develop students' civic competencies—not only civic knowledge, but also civic skills and dispositions. All examples must align with one or more of the CMS six promising approaches (above)

and demonstrate criteria for high-quality civic education practice. We know teachers are doing exciting work to educate youth for responsible citizenship. Please contact the Center at mcce@oakland.k12.mi.us for more information.

Lahser Mock Trial Champions

The Lahser High School (Bloomfield Hills) mock trial team finished in first place at the Michigan High School Mock Trial Tournament State Finals, in Lansing on April 16.

The team is coached by teacher Garry Davison, and attorney Jeffrey Sherbow. The team now goes on to the National Championships in Charlotte, North Carolina, in May.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We the People Finals, Washington DC	April 30-May 3
Project Citizen Hearings, Lansing	May 12
We the People Level I/II Showcase, Lansing	May 20
Civitas Directors Meeting, Amman, Jordan	June 2-7
We the People Summer Institute, Holland, MI	June 20-24

Kathleen Straus receives Coleman Award for Civic Education

Kathleen Straus, President of the State Board of Education, was selected as the 11th recipient of the Mary S. Coleman Award by the Board of Directors of the Michigan Center for Civic Education. The award was presented at the Center's Educating for Citizenship conference in December.

This award is given in honor of Mary S. Coleman, former Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court who was instrumental in the establishment of the Center in 1981. Coleman believed that educators, policy makers, lawyers, judges, and other members of the community should work together to educate youth for responsible citizenship. The

award was first given in 1984.

Mrs. Straus was first elected to the State Board of Education in 1992 and was re-elected in 2000. Straus has committed the majority of her life to the furthering of public education and community services in Michigan. She has strong interest in curriculum, assessment and raising the standards for all students across the state.

Mrs. Straus serves on the Michigan Delegation to the Congressional Conferences on Civic Education and the Steering Committee for the Michigan Coalition on Civic Education.



Kathleen Straus (right) with (from left) Frantisek Toth, Ministry of Education, Slovakia; Daniel Kroupa, Member of Parliament, Slovakia, and U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow at Educating for Citizenship.

Czech and Slovak Officials visit Michigan

The Center recently hosted a delegation to Michigan, which included members of Parliament, officials from the Ministries of Education, and the directors of our partner civic education organizations, from the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The Michigan visit included meetings at the Michigan State Capitol, the Michigan Department of Education, Clarkston Community Schools, and the Educating for Citizenship conference. From Michigan, the delegation traveled to Washington, DC where they attended the Second Congressional Conference

on Civic Education. There, they had the opportunity to participate in discussions about the content and strategies of civic education across the United States.

This exchange was made possible by Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program, a cooperative project of civic education organizations in the United States and emerging and established democracies throughout the world. Civitas is funded by the United States Department of Education under the Education for Democracy Act approved by the United States Congress.



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East Grand Rapids Champions Again

Teacher Pierre Sirois' Constitutional Studies class at East Grand Rapids High School took first place in this year's We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution state finals. The competition, held on January 7 in the Senate hearing rooms of the State Capitol, requires students to become constitutional experts, and then to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge by taking positions on constitutional questions and defending them before a panel of judges. Each group's performance under pressure is scored, and the winning class earns the right to represent Michigan in the national competition, held in Washington, DC, April 30-May 3. The final round of the national finals takes place in actual

hearing rooms on Capitol Hill.

Howell High School claimed second place, and East Kentwood finished third. Also competing in the finals were classes from Comstock Park High School, Dryden High School, Grand Haven High School, Hudsonville High School, Marquette High School, Richmond High School, and Tri-Unity Christian High School.

In May, Michigan elementary and middle school classes take part in a similar exercise at the Capitol in a non-competitive format. Contact the Center for more information on the We the People program.



While in Lansing to compete in the state finals of the *We the People Competition*, students from Marquette High School, with their teacher, Fred Cole (bearded in back), met with Governor Jennifer Granholm (center).