

Celebrating 20th Anniversary of Constitutional Competition

High school students from John Stark Regional, Milford, and Nashua high schools will be competing **Friday, Jan. 12, 2007**, for the state championship of the "*We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution*" competition. This year marks the 20th year that the competition, sponsored by the New Hampshire Bar Association, has been held in New Hampshire.

The student presentations will take place from 10 a.m. to noon and from 1:30 p.m. to shortly before 4 p.m. at the Legislative Office Building in Concord. The winner of Friday's competition will be eligible to represent NH in the national competition in Washington, DC, held April 28-30. In past years, the NH team has toured various sites in the nation's capital and on several occasions, has had a private audience with Justice David Souter.

At the end of Friday's competition, the role of Howard J. Zibel, general counsel to the New Hampshire Supreme Court, who helped bring the *We the People* program to New Hampshire, will be celebrated. Zibel not only founded the program in the Granite State, but has also been involved in each year of the competition and also participates nationally as a judge and trainer. His service will be recognized by Senate President Sylvia Larsen and New Hampshire Supreme Court Chief Justice John T. Broderick, Jr., and he will receive a special award for public service from New Hampshire Bar Association President Richard McNamara.

"*We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution*" requires every student in a class to make a short oral presentation and answer questions regarding the philosophy, principles and application of the U.S. Constitution. The students are questioned and evaluated by panels of judges drawn from the law profession and courts, government and education. The judges for the final round this year include the New Hampshire Chief Justice and two other members (one retired) of the NH Supreme Court, four district court judges, a NH State Senator, a former U.S. Ambassador, the governor's legal counsel, and an aide to U.S. Senator John Sununu.

The competition is supported, in part, by grants from the Center for Civic Education and the New Hampshire Bar Foundation's IOLTA Program.

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In addition to entering the competition, dozens of schools each year participate by using the curriculum in their classes, magnifying the impact of the program. In 2006, more than 50 curriculum sets were distributed to schools throughout New Hampshire.

Since the inception of the *We the People* program in 1987, more than 28 million students and 90,000 educators have participated in this innovative course of study. The program enjoys the active participation of members of Congress, as well as support from professional, business, and community organizations across the nation.

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