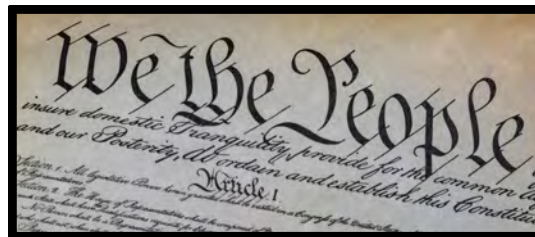


# 21ST ANNUAL **CONSTITUTION DAY** **MINI-CONFERENCE**

*Our Nation, Many Voices*



**SEPTEMBER 6, 2025**

RONALD REAGAN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY  
SIMI VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

sponsored by:



Center for  
Civic Education



**TEACH  
DEMOCRACY**



SimiValleySchools  
SIMI VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Los Angeles County  
Office of Education



## What is Constitution Day?

On September 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States of America was signed by 39 delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, establishing the legal framework of our nation's government. The State of Iowa was the first U.S. state to recognize Constitution Day on September 17, 1911. In 1952, President Harry Truman signed a bill designating September 17 as Citizenship Day.

In 2004, Sen. Robert Byrd of West Virginia included amendments to an appropriations bill that established September 17 as both Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. More than an observance on the calendar, under the 2004 law all federal agencies and public schools receiving federal funds are mandated to provide "an educational program pertaining to the United States Constitution on September 17 of each year." ("Notice of Implementation of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day on September 17 of Each Year." Federal Register, Vol. 70, No. 99, 24 May 2005.)

## Constitution Day Conference Committee

Lisa Salas Brown

James Koenig

Phoebe Moore, Ed.D.

Brett Taylor

*Ventura County Office of Education*

Angelica Chavez, Ed.D.

*Oxnard Union High School District*

Mark Gage

*Center for Civic Education*

Elaina Garza

*Los Angeles County Office of Education*

Megan Gately

*The Ronald Reagan Presidential  
Foundation & Institute*

Damon Huss

*Teach Democracy*

Jane Wagmeister, Ed.D.

*Moorpark Unified School District*

*After today's program, participants are invited to experience a self-guided tour of the  
Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum.*

**Welcome and Opening: 8:30 – 8:50 a.m.**

*Presidential Learning Center*

*Presentation of the Colors and Pledge of Allegiance by the Royal JROTC*

**Abbey Road Choir**

Santa Susana High School  
Simi Valley Unified School District  
*performing the National Anthem*

**Welcoming Remarks**



**Dr. Richard Schroeder**

Chief Education Programs Officer  
The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute



**Dr. César Morales**

Superintendent of Schools  
Ventura County Office of Education



**Dr. Ruth Pérez**

Deputy Superintendent  
Los Angeles County Office of Education

**Keynote Panel: 8:50 – 9:30 a.m.**

*Presidential Learning Center*



**Haco Hoang, Ph.D.**

*Professor and Chair of Political Science*  
*Pre-Law Program Director*  
California Lutheran University

*Moderated by Damon Huss, M.Ed., J.D. - Director of Publications, Teach Democracy*



**Kristen Holmquist**

*Teaching Professor of Law*  
*Faculty Director, Academic Skills Program*  
UC Berkeley School of Law

**Break: 9:30 – 9:40 a.m.**

**Breakout Session One: 9:40 – 10:25 a.m.**



**Civic Engagement in the United States**

Grades K-12

*Laura C. Romero, Ph.D., Founder and President, Brillante Strategies*

Location: Jefferson Room

Teachers will learn timely civic engagement strategies to prepare active, responsible and informed successful student citizens. Strategies based on presenter's extensive civic engagement background: UCLA Civic Engagement Seminar Creator and Instructor, UCLA Government & Community Relations Assistant Director, and experiential learning expertise.



**Using We the People and Project Citizen Towards the State Seal of Civic Engagement**

Grades 9-12

*Kevin Fox, AP Government Teacher; Master Mentor, Center for Civic Education*

Location: Air Force One Boardroom

Understand how We the People and Project Citizen can be used as one of the paths to the State Seal of Civic Engagement. Presenter will correlate the five criterion required by the State Seal with key elements of both programs. Examples will be provided.



**Operation Urgent Fury: An Exciting Cold War Simulation**

Grades 5-12+

*Education Team Facilitators, Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute*

Location: Air Force One Pavilion, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

The Reagan Leadership Center Simulations are designed to strengthen communication, informed decision making, and leadership skills through immersive historical international events. Behind the doors of the Reagan Leadership Center, you will enter the Oval Office, the Command Decision Center and the White House Press Room. Your team will become the President, Cabinet members, Military leaders, Intelligence Agencies, and the Press Corps. In this simulation, the island nation of Grenada has been taken over by a rebel government and American students lives hang in the balance. The mission: bring our American students back safely while preserving stability in the region. The world is watching and awaiting your decision!



**Factoring Stability: A Four Worlds Investigation — The Key to a Thriving Democracy**

Grades 6-12

*Olivia Naturman, Government and Economics Teacher, CCLA - ArTES High School*

Location: Roosevelt Room

How do democracies stay stable — or unravel? This session offers a hands-on ranking activity using the Four Worlds framework (politics, economy, society and culture) to help students analyze stability factors and engage in deeper inquiry, because a thriving democracy depends on it.

**Break: 10:25 – 10:40 a.m.**

*Please visit our exhibitors in the Presidential Learning Center.*

## Breakout Session Two: 10:40 – 11:25 a.m.



### **Empowering Students Through Civic Engagement: Transforming Learning in Alternative Schools**

Grades 6-12 as well as district and community leads

*James Koenig, Director Local District Support Services, Ventura County Office of Education*

*Gregorio Medina, Senior Program Director, Teach Democracy*

Location: Jefferson Room

Discover how civic learning empowers students in alternative and community schools. Gain tools, strategies, and real-world examples to build programs aligned with the State Seal of Civic Engagement that foster student purpose, participation, and community connection.



### **Cultivating Civic Engagement: Becoming a CA Democracy School**

Grades 4-12

*Elaina Garza, Coordinator III, History - Social Science, Los Angeles County Office of Education*

Location: Air Force One Boardroom

Join us for an engaging and informative session designed to guide educators and school leaders through the process of becoming a California Democracy School. Grounded in the principles of civic learning and student voice, this professional development will explore how schools can cultivate a campus-wide culture of civic engagement that empowers all students to become active, informed participants in our democracy.



### **Unwritten: Teaching Local Histories through Oral Testimony**

Grades 9-12

*Leila Kaseke, Education & Engagement Manager, Museum of Ventura County*

Location: Roosevelt Room

Explore Unwritten: Oral Histories of Ventura County, a resource highlighting diverse local narratives. Learn how this book and its teacher's manual enrich ethnic studies, foster critical thinking, and offer practical tools for integrating community voices into classroom learning.



### **Colonial Williamsburg Presents . . . Founding a New Nation**

Grades 5-12

2025 Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Fellows

Location: Reagan Leadership Center Classroom

This session spotlights a cohort of Ventura and Los Angeles County educators who participated in the program "Agents of Change: Civic Engagement, Past and Present" at the Bob and Marion Wilson Teacher Institute of Colonial Williamsburg. Through firsthand accounts, attendees will experience how immersive, primary source-driven learning brings the nation's founding, its leaders, and the Constitution to life for today's students. Presenters will share interactive techniques, including historical inquiry, role play, object analysis, and civil discourse protocols, and participants will leave with ready-to-use classroom resources aligned to civic education and constitutional literacy.



Since 1789, more than 11,000 amendments to the U.S. Constitution have been proposed, but Congress referred only 33 of those to the states for ratification. Only 27 have been ratified.

## Breakout Session Three: 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.



### **Let Your Students Tell the Story: Embedding National History Day in the Classroom**

Grades 4-12

*Jeni Boulanger, Teacher - U.S. History (grade 11), Oak Hills HS, Hesperia Unified School District*

*Harley Boulanger, Teacher - Grade 5, Baldy Mesa Elementary, Snowline Joint Unified School District*

Location: Air Force One Boardroom

National History Day (NHD) is a powerful way to put history directly into the hands of your students and allow them to tell stories that need to be told. Come learn how NHD has become a key learning opportunity in an already busy classroom at the elementary, middle, and high school level. Walk away with ready to implement materials to make your NHD journey work.



### **Freedom of the Press and Civil Conversation in the Classroom**

Grades 8-12

*Damon Huss, Director of Publications, Teach Democracy (formerly Constitutional Rights Foundation)*

Location: Jefferson Room

The Constitution provides for three branches of government, and it also provides for the “fourth estate” — the free press — in the First Amendment. Learn how to use Civil Conversation in the classroom to teach media literacy in our democratic-republic.



### **Teaching Historical Thinking is our Civic Duty**

Grades K-12

*Zachary Cote, Executive Director, Thinking Nation*

Location: Reagan Leadership Center Classroom

Despite threats to democracy, social studies remains marginalized. But by collaborating around a shared disciplinary language — Historical Thinking — we can strengthen our field and empower students for civic life. Let's explore together. Free resources included!



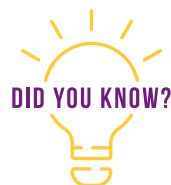
### **Operation KAL 007: An Exciting Cold War Simulation**

Grades 5-12+

*Education Team Facilitators, Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute*

Location: Air Force One Pavilion, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

The Reagan Leadership Center Simulations are designed to strengthen communication, informed decision making, and leadership skills through immersive historical international events. Behind the doors of the Reagan Leadership Center, you will enter the Oval Office, the Command Decision Center and the White House Press Room. Your team will become the President, Cabinet members, Military leaders, Intelligence Agencies, and the Press Corps. This simulation: When Korean Flight 007 flew into Soviet airspace, it caused a chain of events that doomed the aircraft and started an international crisis. Tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States are at a boiling point. Your decisions could have catastrophic consequences!



When the Constitution went into effect in 1789, Congress set up the U.S. Supreme Court with six justices. Congress did not fix the current number at nine justices until 1869.

**Session for All Participants: 12:20 p.m. – 12:50 p.m.**  
*Presidential Learning Center*

**Student Civic Engagement Panel**  
Grades 4-12

Join students from Ventura County as they participate in and moderate a panel on what civic engagement looks like and what it means for young people.

*Bring your questions for the Q&A, and be ready to be inspired by these young voices for civic life!*

**Lunch: 12:50 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
*Presidential Learning Center*



***Our Nation, Many Voices***  
**Student Art Competition Winners**



Celebrate these talented students from around Ventura County who creatively expressed the meaning of civic participation in relation to this year's theme!



***Final Raffle Winners Announced!***



**Visit Our Exhibitors!**

**Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute**

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute is the sole nonprofit organization created by President Reagan charged with advancing his legacy and principles – individual liberty, economic opportunity, freedom and democracy, peace through strength, and national pride.

<http://www.reaganfoundation.org/education>

**Teach Democracy**

Teach Democracy (formerly Constitutional Rights Foundation) is a national, non-partisan nonprofit dedicated to educating America's young people about the importance of civic participation in a democratic society. We develop, produce, and distribute programs and publications for teachers and students, including California Mock Trial as well as our free Civic Action Project and BRIA curricular magazine.

<http://www.teachdemocracy.org>

**National Archives and Records Administration**

In a democracy, the records belong to the People. Explore our nation's history through National Archives and Records Administration documents, photos, and videos. The National Archives stores and provides access to these records. Additionally, NARA has developed teaching tools and educational experiences that incorporate primary sources into classroom learning. <https://www.archives.gov/>

**League of Women Voters – Ventura County**

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

<https://my.lwv.org/california/ventura-county>

**Southern California Social Science Association**

Providing a professional home to educators since 1912, we help teachers give students the tools, knowledge, critical thinking skills and experiences they need to meet the challenges of today's world and grow into effective citizens. SCSSA is a local council affiliated with California Council for the Social Studies. <http://www.socalsocialscience.org/>

**Center for Civic Education**

The Center for Civic Education provides high-quality curricular materials for grades K–12 and adult learners. The Center's research-backed flagship civic education programs are We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, and Project Citizen. The Center, a national non-partisan, nonprofit organization, also delivers free and low-cost professional development to teachers with its network of partners throughout the United States. [www.civiced.org](http://www.civiced.org)



Roosevelt and Jefferson Room

Presidential Learning Center

AFO Boardroom

RLC Classroom

Reagan Leadership Center

