



# 2020

ANNUAL REPORT

*Building the next generation of active participants in our democracy.*

Educate. Engage. Empower.



## 2020 Annual Report

### From the Chair and President



Kimberly A. Dunne  
*Chair*



Amanda Susskind  
*President*

**W**e currently live in a polarized world where people on opposite sides of the political spectrum do not talk to each other. We struggle to come together over all sorts of issues, whether climate change, gun violence, immigration, foreign policy, or the economy. For many, cynicism reigns.

Thankfully, Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) is just the right panacea. Founded in 1962, CRF is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering our nation's young people to affect the world around them by understanding and actively participating in democracy and government. Through our nationwide programs, CRF has provided teaching tools to educators and has taught generations of K through 12 students to become well-informed, engaged, and active citizens. In a very real sense, our work contributes to the health of our democracy — a critical mission today.

**When it comes to our democracy, we cannot afford to be passive. The educators and youth of our communities cannot afford for us to wait. We must engage. We cannot stand still.**

Unfortunately, 2020 was particularly challenging for CRF. At the beginning of the year, a massive flood forced us to vacate our offices and undertake major repairs to the building's infrastructure. Then, the pandemic also significantly impacted our work, requiring us quickly to pivot to remotely delivering programs that typically are given live, raising funds in an online environment, and working from home. 2020 also marked the retirement of our longtime president, Marshall Croddy, and the launch and completion of our planned search process to identify CRF's new leader, which culminated in the hiring of Amanda Susskind as our new president.

What follows are some highlights of CRF's key achievements in 2020.

- **CRF'S Response to the Critical Online Learning Needs in the Pandemic**

As our "new normal" unfolded in March, school districts from across the nation struggled with how to provide a rigorous and meaningful education in a remote environment. With extensive experience using technology to engage teachers, CRF jumped into gear. Within days, we were able to help teachers make the extraordinary pivot to online programming with engaging K-12 lessons. We also quickly identified a need for youth-to-youth programs as students quickly grew overwhelmed or disengaged with remote instruction. As the fall term began, these successes grew even more. Teachers were especially excited about our **Civics on Call** webpage where we provided classroom-ready lessons pulled from the day's headlines.

## Our Mission

Constitutional Rights Foundation seeks to instill in our nation's youth a deeper understanding of citizenship through values expressed in our Constitution and its Bill of Rights and to educate young people to become active and responsible participants in our society. CRF is dedicated to assuring our country's future by investing in our youth today.

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- **Civic Action Project (CAP)**

This cutting-edge program, provided in **all 50 states** and several countries, teaches civics by addressing real issues in the news from improving access to higher education to social justice issues. Students learn about the systems and ideals of our democracy, the importance of public policy, and how to work with government officials and community agencies to achieve real change. CAP reaches over **235,000 students** each year. In 2020, CRF created a series of webinars, CAP Live, to allow students to come together from across the nation, interact with special guests, and compare notes on their individual civic action projects. Our partner, Empower the People, founded by two former students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Sari Kaufman, a freshman at Yale, and Casey Sherman, a sophomore at Duke University, along with our CAP Youth Board helped plan and lead *CAP Live*.

- **California Mock Trial**

Each year, over **7,500 high-school and middle-school students** throughout the state, including nearly 2,000 from Los Angeles County, compete as courtroom participants in a simulated criminal trial. Presided over by judges and attorneys, California Mock Trial builds confidence, critical thinking, collaboration, and presentation skills while leading many participants to pursue legal or public-service careers. Although the pandemic cut the mock trial season short in March, CRF was able to regroup and roll out an entirely virtual version of this marquis program in September. **In Los Angeles County, nearly 1,700 students** signed up for this remote program.

- **Expanding Horizons Institute (EHI)**

For over 25 years, CRF has offered seminars and paid internships in professional workplaces for **dozens of low-income, first generation, high-achieving students each year**. These young people come from some of our most challenged Los Angeles communities. Our students gain valuable training, work experience, and most importantly, confidence in the fields of law, business, and public service. In 2020, staff moved nimbly to provide the experience online through remote workshops, leadership skill-building, college prep, and mentoring opportunities.

- **New Youth and Police Programming**

In 2020, CRF also launched a partnership with the Los Angeles Police Museum to bring new lessons to high school youth that focus on public safety. The lessons feature a simulation of a police commission hearing and help youth understand how police policies are made and how the public can influence policies related to public safety and policing.

- **Project LEAD**

Since 1993, CRF, in partnership with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, has offered Project LEAD (Leadership, Enrichment, and Decision-making) to teach fifth grade students about the criminal justice system. The program reaches **over 1,000 students annually**. One of the new schools to the program in 2020 was the Pacoima School, where 20 percent of the student population is unhoused.

All this work was made possible by the support of our donors, the dedication of our Board of Directors, the energy and talent of our staff, and the dedication of our volunteer judges, lawyers, and business professionals. We gratefully thank them all.

**By working together, CRF will continue these programs, reach more students, transform more lives, and build the next generation of active participants in our democracy.**



Kimberly A. Dunne  
Board Chair



Amanda F. Susskind  
President



## What is CRF?

Constitutional Rights Foundation is a non-partisan educational nonprofit dedicated to helping our nation’s young people understand their rights and responsibilities as members of our democracy and helping them become well-informed, engaged, and active citizens. Established over 60 years ago, CRF is guided by a dedicated board of directors drawn from the worlds of law, business, government, education, and the media.

CRF’s professional staff includes teachers and educators, lawyers, writers and editors, and youth development specialists. Volunteers also provide vital support for many CRF programs and activities and serve as adult role models for youthful participants.

Due to the pandemic, the year 2020 presented CRF with exceptional challenges to deliver the effective, high-quality civics and social studies resources CRF is renowned for. CRF has proved its adaptability and commitment to support teachers and students in compulsory distance-learning circumstances through an expansion of its online programs, publications, and professional development. To accomplish its goals and objectives, CRF applies its resources in the following areas:

### Resources for Learning in the Time of COVID-19.

In March 2020, as schools nationwide suddenly had to close their doors and move to distance-learning instruction on a mass scale, CRF swiftly responded by the creation of an easily navigable resource page of new and trusted CRF lessons and activities for teachers. CRF drew on its existing collections, including Challenge of Democracy (lessons on issues and controversies concerning U.S. governance, information, violence, and diversity), Teaching with Primary Sources (a partnership with Barat Education Foundation and the Library of Congress), and CRF’s *Bill of Rights in Action* magazine. CRF also created new webinars and webcasts: “The Census in U.S. History” and “Public Policy: A Crash Course in Real time” for high school; “Our Rights and Freedoms” and “The Common Good: Empowering Yourself from Your Couch” for middle and high school; and “The Trial of People v. A. Wolf” and “My Town and the Three Branches of Government” for elementary school.

**Civic Action Project.** In 2020, CRF continued to expand Civic Action Project (CAP), an innovative web-based program that provides a dynamic, civic-education experience for students by challenging them to explore the connection between social issues, government, and public policy. Through CAP, students choose an issue



that matters to them and complete “civic actions” to address that issue by engaging their peers, policymakers, and other community stakeholders to initiate positive change. CAP features a 15-lesson

curriculum linked to state standards; teacher professional development and support; and student project-planning tools. CAP provides numerous opportunities for teachers to implement the proven practices of effective civic learning by using CAP lessons and resources in their classrooms.

To meet the needs of schools during the pandemic lockdown, CRF created unique offerings of online CAP programming. In spring 2020, in partnership with Empower the People (EtP) — founded by Parkland, Florida, students Sari Kaufman and Casey Sherman — CRF offered “By Youth for Youth: Remote Learning for Civic Action.” This remote series walked young people through the essential steps of developing their own civic action project. Their learning continued with “Summer CAP,” in which students participated in a specialized summer program designed to provide a safe and productive space to grow their leadership skills, develop their ideas, and elevate their CAP projects to the next level of organization. Again, this program was led by Sari and Casey with support from global teen leaders who served as special guests and experts in a variety of different fields and topics. Summer CAP youth worked on a variety of issues including human trafficking, teen mental health, climate change and homelessness.

In the fall, CRF offered CAP Live a series of ten webinars to help students navigate the process from choosing an issue to taking civic actions to sharing their projects with a wider audience. Webinars included special guests active in civic engagement, including Nolan Williams Jr., music composer and video director for “I Have a Right to Vote,” an upbeat crash course in voting rights history and civic responsibility.

CAP website’s “Connect” feature continued to afford students from around the nation the means to discuss, publish, and share a variety of media describing their CAP issues and projects. The CAP Youth Board consists of CAP student alumni who act as peer coaches for new CAP students currently engaged in developing their own CAP projects. During 2020, CRF staff provided a variety of virtual professional development sessions for teachers resulting in another record year of registrants to CAP’s online platform for a total of over 5,531 registrants across all 50 states and five continents, including Africa, Australia, Europe, and South America. Evaluation data of CAP’s implementation this year once again demonstrated high levels of teacher satisfaction and improved civic capacities among students who participated in the CAP program.

**The Board of Police Commissioners: Los Angeles Police Museum.** In 2020, CRF and the Los Angeles Police Museum worked together to develop a curricular resource to help young people explore their role as informed members of their community to promote reform and policy change that improves public safety. The curriculum features a simulation of a police board of commissioners’ meeting, which requires students to examine various scenarios and evaluate the commission’s role in deciding related policy issues; budgetary issues; and police training and discipline. Students learn how citizens can influence the revision, elimination, or creation of new policies to address community concerns and contribute to positive police-community relations in their neighborhoods.



**California Mock Trial.** CRF’s Mock Trial is an educational competition that teaches young people about law, the Constitution, and the trial process in a realistic simulation. Young people develop analytical, critical-thinking, and presentation skills that promote their success on their college and career paths. In 2020, over 8,000 students participated across 37 California counties using CRF’s mock trial case materials. The emergency conditions of the coronavirus pandemic halted all travel and social gathering, forcing a cancellation of the 2020 statewide competition, however we held the first-ever completely virtual Los Angeles County competition in fall 2020 with 110 middle and high school teams and over 200 attorney and judge volunteers participating.

**Lawyer in the Classroom.** Two CRF programs provide students throughout Los Angeles County with a deeper understanding of the judicial system and its processes by connecting them with members of the legal community.

*Courtroom to Classroom* brings judge and attorney teams to middle or high school classrooms where they engage students with materials designed to support U.S. history and U.S. government courses. In the traditional program, attorneys and judges visit a local classroom. The program has expanded to include school visits to the United States District Court for the Central District of California where middle-school students learn about what it’s like to be a federal judge, U.S. marshal, assistant U.S. attorney, and federal public defender. Students then participate in a moot-court activity with help from volunteer attorneys and judges. In 2020, the program went virtual and served 182 students.

*The Appellate Court Experience (ACE)* provides students with an opportunity to observe oral arguments in a criminal appeal, meet with presiding justices at the California State Court of Appeal, and engage in content-rich classroom activities. The ACE program serves students in Los Angeles County and, in 2020, the virtual program impacted 202 students from Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

**Project LEAD.** CRF established this law-related education program in partnership with the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office to teach children about the legal system and positive decision-making skills. The 20-week curriculum brings prosecutors into the classroom to teach lessons on social and legal consequences of juvenile crimes, such as truancy and illicit drug use, and includes lessons about conflict resolution, tolerance, and respect for diversity. The culminating mock trial gives students a hands-on experience of America’s criminal justice system. Project LEAD persevered through the pandemic with nearly 120 volunteer facilitators from the L.A. District Attorney’s Office, reaching 46 classes in 32 elementary schools through online sessions.

**Expanding Horizons Internships.** For 25 years, our Expanding Horizons Institute program has provided intensive civic learning and college preparation seminars and work experience in professional settings to over 1,850 of Los Angeles’s most deserving and underserved youth. In summer 2020, students were not able to experience the internship component due to the pandemic’s restrictions, but they participated virtually in the transformative and educational seminars that uniquely prepares them for civic life, college, and career.

**California Three Rs Project.** CRF administers this project to educate California’s teachers and administrators about fostering rights, responsibility, and respect in teaching about freedom of conscience and religious literacy in our public schools with the First Amendment’s establishment clause and free-exercise clause serving as guides. The project’s advisory council and planning committee are comprised of partners from county offices of education, nonprofit groups, and religious studies scholars. In 2020, CRF staff presented online professional-development trainings for educators on the FAIR Education Act in California, which added teaching about the history and contributions of LGBT Americans as well as people with disabilities to the California Education Code.



**Publications.** CRF’s signature periodical *Bill of Rights in Action* (“BRIA”) reached over 31,000 educators with four new issues to help teachers and students with content-rich, standards-based curriculum on U.S. history, world history, U.S. government, and current issues. Each lesson includes an activity based on the proven practices of effective civic education: simulations, small-group deliberations, and productive discussion of current issues and controversies. In 2020, BRIA published lessons on impeachment in the U.S. Constitution, the troubled populism of Huey Long, Brexit, the end of South Africa’s apartheid, the Kurds, the election of 1980, workplace equality for LGBT people, a history of presidential campaign advertising, and other topics.

In 2020, CRF’s websites attracted over four million visitors to access programs and download free lesson plans and classroom materials. Educators access our websites for Civic Action Project, Educating About Immigration, Educating About Intellectual Property, The California Three Rs Project, and Project LEAD, among others, for online resources for the social studies and civic education. CRF continued adding lessons to our latest website feature Civics on Call, a one-stop page for classroom-ready lessons on issues of the day. Among the lessons added in 2020 were “Containing the Coronavirus,” “Racism as a Public Health Crisis,” and “Vote by Mail: Election Controversy in the Time of the Coronavirus.”

CRF continues to raise its profile on social media, with a steady growth of page likes and followers on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

In 2020, CRF’s 17 staff members were able to plan, develop, and deliver new and ongoing materials and programs, guided by a 71-member board of directors and underwritten by an approximately \$2.3 million operation.

# Constitutional Rights Foundation

## Statement of Unrestricted Activities

For the Year Ending December 31, 2020

### Revenues

GRANTS		
Government	347,692	12%
Private	286,375	10%
CONTRIBUTIONS		
General	346,911	12%
Events (net of expenses)	294,750	10%
Donated materials, services, and facilities	526,553	18%
INVESTMENT INCOME/(LOSS)	380,437	13%
MATERIAL SALES	17,263	0%
PROGRAM FEES	142,103	5%
OTHER SOURCES	563,226	20%
	<u>\$ 2,905,310</u>	100%

### Expenses

PROGRAM SERVICES	1,911,202	72%
ADMINISTRATION	630,768	23%
FUND RAISING	<u>128,978</u>	5%
	<u>\$ 2,670,948</u>	100%

These figures are unaudited though CRF is audited annually and a complete audited financial statement will be available upon request.

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# Securing the Future for Generations to Come

## Endowment Builders

Since 1990, CRF has been fortunate to receive a number of endowments given by people who share our passion for civic education and support our mission, teaching young people how to be engaged citizens in our democracy.

CRF acknowledges with enormous gratitude past presidents who established endowments at CRF: Jerome C. Byrne, James A. Cobey, and Alan I. Rothenberg; to past board members, Jack Stutman and Robert Rosenstiel; and to our long-time supporters Phyllis and Robert Henigson for their continuing Life Income Gifts. We would also like to recognize Dr. Jama Laurent and the board of directors of the Creative Kids Foundation for establishing an endowment allowing CRF to place students as interns in arts organizations in Los Angeles. To all of you, a very special thank you. Most of all, we would like to send out a loud cheer and celebrate our champion of champions, Lloyd M. Smith, who throughout his life embodied the highest ideals of American democracy and believed in the importance that all young people be educated about their constitutional heritage. It was Lloyd who established the CRF Endowment Builders Program, ensuring that CRF's mission continue long into the future.

To all of our friends, supporters, and donors, and to those people who have indicated that they will remember CRF in their will or by bequest: We thank you for your generosity and for the trust you have given us. Most important, we thank you on behalf of the students of tomorrow who will have opportunities to learn about and celebrate our Constitution and its Bill of Rights for generations to come.



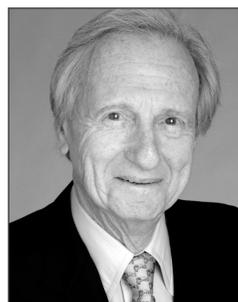
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We acknowledge with enormous gratitude those who have pledge to include CRF in their estate planning.

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\* Ray Fisher, of blessed memory, was one of CRF's most treasured supporters over many decades. He is dearly missed.

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\* Ray Fisher, of blessed memory, was one of CRF's most treasured supporters over many decades. He is dearly missed."



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