

HISTORY CONNECTIONS



Newsletter for the Teaching American History Grant—Rockford Public Schools #205, Rockford, Illinois

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Upcoming Events at a Glance:

- Springfield Trip — July 1st and 2nd. ALPLM and more! (Filled)
- TCM Workshops at NIU Rockford: August 3, 4, and 5
- **Freedom Project** Summer Institute: "Teaching the Stuff of History" — August 13 & 14 at NIU Rockford
- "Teaching History with Primary Digital Resources" — Wed., Aug. 19th at NIU Rockford
- **Freedom Project** Opening Symposium for 2009-2010 — "The Living Constitution" — Sept. 11th and 12th
- **WEBLESSONS** Workshop — Tuesday, Sept. 29, 4:30-6:30PM
- "The Culture of Islam" — special workshop co-sponsored by NIU and **Freedom Project** at NIU Rockford on Sat., October 24th



Sign up now for Year 2 of the **Freedom Project!**
Go to the website for information and download an application.

OPENING SYMPOSIUM FOR 2009-2010: THE LIVING CONSTITUTION

The second year for **Freedom Project** will get underway on Friday, September 11th with an all-day workshop—the first event of a two-day Symposium—for teachers in grades 5, 7, 8, and high school who teach US history and/or US government. The workshop, "Reading the Founding Documents: Structure and Organization," will be conducted by the Bill of Rights Institute. Substitutes will be provided for the first 30 teachers who register for this session which will be held from 8 AM until 3:00 PM at the NIU Rockford Center.

"Reading the Founding Documents" is a full day of intensive training which includes presentations by a reading specialist, as well as the master teacher, providing teachers with the background knowledge necessary to educate their students about America's Founding docu-

ments, Founding principles, and the link between their lives and our constitutionally protected rights. Research-based and classroom tested teaching strategies will be presented to assist teachers in leading their students to understand the roots of our fundamental freedoms, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the role that the law and the courts play in their daily lives.

A seven-unit teacher's guide, "Being an American: Exploring the Ideals that Unite Us," will be given to each participant; it contains core lesson plans and a variety of activities to help students understand the meaning and responsibilities of citizenship while helping them develop their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Units include: the *Declaration of Independence*, *U. S. Constitution*,



Bill of Rights Institute to conduct workshop on September 11th

U.S. Bill of Rights, America's Civic Values, American Heroes: Past and Present, and American Citizenship: A Personal Response.

Day Two of the "The Living Constitution" will feature two notable speakers on Constitutional Law. Opening the session on Sat., September 12th, (cont. on page 2)

NEWS FROM THE HISTORIAN-IN-RESIDENCE

This newsletter finds the Historian-in-Residence NOT in residence!! JD Bowers is presently on hiatus with students from NIU in Cyprus!! It is not exactly a vacation, however, as JD will be conducting a human rights seminar and speaking on several occasions to university students.

From JD: "We just arrived in Cyprus last night after two days in Istanbul. There we saw a great many sights for being so rushed. I bought a Turkish prayer rug and we ate fresh fish for lunch caught right from the Bosphorus. Topaki Palace is better than any European castle I have ever seen (and I have seen my share of those!).



...from the beautiful Mediterranean island of Cyprus

Today we begin our study of the US in the Middle East and our role in the Cyprus problem (think Henry Kissinger, Cold War policies, Truman Doctrine, and the "need" for strategic listening posts in the region). We are staying at Near East University with students from more than 50 countries and a

fabulous campus located just 10 minutes from downtown Lefkosa. My Turkish is in need of much improvement, but everyone is kind about it. The worst part is the very different keyboard with different letters, different key locations, and some letters we do not use at all. My best wishes to everyone!"

Why Cyprus? According to JD, the "Cyprus Question" has been ongoing for more than 50 years. In an effort to understand the various issues, he began working with representatives in both communities—Turkish and Greek—in 2004. To find out more, please go to JD's blog which is a chronicle of that journey: cyprusbeyondgreenline.blogspot.com

THE LIVING CONSTITUTION (CONT.)

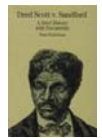
(Cont. from page 1) will be Dr. Louis Fisher, senior specialist with the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. Fisher began work with the CRS in 1970 and served as research director of the House Iran-Contra Committee in 1987, writing major sections of the final report. Among his numerous books are: *The Constitution and 9/11* (2008), *American Constitutional Law* (2005), and *War Power* (2006), a copy of which will be given to each of the first 40 teachers who registers for the symposium. In addition, with Leonard Levy, Louis Fisher co-edited the four-volume *Encyclopedia of the American Presidency* (1994) which earned him the Dartmouth Medal and he has twice won the Louis Brownlow Book Award.



Also sharing the podium with Dr. Fisher will be Dr. Paul Finkelman, professor at Albany Law School. He is the author/editor of more than 25 books and the author of more than 150 scholarly articles in history and law. He writes on slavery, antislavery, freedom of religion, civil liberties, legal history, African-American history, Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, US Constitutional History, and Baseball and the Law. He was the chief expert witness in the Alabama Ten Commandment Monument case and in the lawsuit over the ownership of Barry Bonds' 73rd Home Run ball. Dr. Fisher will speak on "The War Power," citing specific cases and explaining the interpretation of the Constitution in each case. Dr. Finkelman will be presenting



content on "Dred Scott 150 Years Later." Participants will also be receiving a copy of Dr. Finkelman's book, *"Dred Scott vs. Sandford: A Brief History with Documents"* upon registration as preparation for the symposium.



Following a catered lunch at the NIU Rockford Center, the afternoon session for Day Two of the Symposium will feature a half-day workshop conducted by Dr. Aaron Willis of Social Studies School Service. Dr. Willis will present "New Ideas and Strategies for Teaching the U.S. Constitution." Participants will receive classroom resources and teaching materials as a part of this workshop.

To register for either or both days of "The Living Constitution," use the form on page 4.

SUMMER WORKSHOPS FILLING FAST!

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* Summer Professional Development for teachers in grades 5, 7, 8, and high school who teach US history is still available for some of the workshops being offered in August through the Teaching American History Grant. Teachers may still register for the following: "Building Literacy" TCM Workshop on August 4th at NIU Rockford, "Teaching with Primary Sources and Social Studies Strategies for New Teachers" TCM Workshop on August 5th at NIU Rockford, the *Freedom Project's* Summer Institute: "Teaching the Stuff of History" on August 13 and 14th at NIU Rockford, and the "Teaching History with Primary Digital Resources" Library of Congress Technology Workshop on August 19th at NIU Rockford. For more information, go to the district's "History Grant" website.

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COORDINATOR'S CORNER

By Kathy Cassiopi, Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator for RPS #205— Thanks to all who have signed up for the new Glencoe United States MS and HS textbook trainings! There are still a few more openings so please contact me ASAP so that I can sign you up. (Sending the registration form to Geri will **not** assure you a spot with the Glencoe trainings.)

I am looking forward to working with many of you this summer on committee work. It is essential that all middle and high schools are represented at these very important discussions—curriculum maps will be refined, adding essential questions to guide instruction; Power Standards will be examined to reflect curriculum changes; one or more common assessments will be created for high school and middle school; and for high schools, Quadrant D lessons will be developed. Most importantly, opportunities for curriculum articulation among all schools will provide professional growth and support.

Thanks to all who have participated in the TAH Grant this year! We look forward to seeing many new faces join the familiar ones this fall!

WONDERFUL WEBSITES

Looking for some outstanding sites for US HISTORY? Check out these!

Want a great interactive US History Map to see what your students (and you!) know about our country and its past? Go to this website and see how you do!



<http://www.learner.org/interactives/historymap/index.html>

Another great website is the National History Education Clearinghouse website where you can find great lesson plans such as this one on "Understanding and Using Political Cartoons" to teach history:

<http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/21733>

Fascinated by the John Adams miniseries on HBO? Go to this website to learn about the letters behind the episodes in the series!

<http://www.masshist.org/adams/explore-adams/>

This last site is an interactive one with just about everything you want to know about the Constitutional Convention!!

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/>

WORKSHOP ON THE CULTURE OF ISLAM

Ever since 9/11 teachers in America at all grade levels, and particularly at the secondary level, have had to face many questions to which most could only provide a sketchy answer. Not only is Islam a far more complicated religion than most of us suspected, but authorities, from the national government to education supervisors, have viewed Islam not so much a religious and cultural issue but more a political problem to solve. With textbooks and the media often providing erroneous information, and as war developed between the US and certain Muslim countries, the failure to solve problems reveals a terrible truth: not only American teachers but



American military planners need to better understand a culture and religion that for 1500 years had dominated vast areas of our world.

To be able to better understand the culture of Islam and the Muslim people, on Saturday, October 24th, instructors from Georgetown University's Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding will present a workshop at the NIU Rockford Center for teachers of grades K-12. Sessions will include such topics as "Basic Beliefs and Practices of Islam," "Contemporary Hot-Button Issues," "Historical Issues in Teaching About Islam," and "Building a Comfort Zone."

The goal of the Center for

Muslim-Christian Understanding is "to build bridges of understanding between the Muslim world and the West by addressing stereotypes of Islam and Muslims and issues and questions such as the clash of civilizations, and the compatibility of Islam and modern life—from democratization and the pluralism to the status of women, minorities and human rights—and American foreign policy in the Muslim world." Islam, a subject about which whole libraries have been written, is perceived by many teachers as the most difficult topic in the curriculum. This workshop will address the needs of teachers giving them confidence, providing content knowledge and helping them integrate the content into their curriculum and standards. Each topic covered will be paired with teaching materials with resources meeting accepted guidelines.

To register, use the form on p. 4.



*Register
NOW
for
"The Culture of
Islam"*

LOOKING AHEAD FOR FP IN 2009-2010

In addition to the Opening Two-Day Symposium on "The Living Constitution," the **Freedom Project** has lots more in store for teachers of US history in RPS 205! On Tuesday, September 29th, eLearning Systems, Inc. will conduct a two-hour workshop on "USING WE-BLESSONS," the online history resource website which contains over 200 units for students in grades 5, 7,



8, and high school US history. Teachers who attend this workshop will have unlimited access to the lessons, graphics, quizzes, documents, summaries, as well as the reporting and assessment capabilities of the site. This is an incredible teaching tool and a workshop you won't want to miss!! Limited to 20 teachers so register early to be assured of a spot!

The **Freedom Project's** second symposium for 2009-2010 will be held on Sat., November 7th at NIU Rockford focusing on "The American Revolution: Context and Culture." Keynote speaker will be Dr. Carol Berkin, professor of the Graduate School of New York and author of several outstanding works on Women in the Revolutionary War. Her book, **Revolutionary Mothers**, will be one of two books each participant will receive upon registration. The second speaker will be Dr.



Edith Gelles of Stanford University who has written several books on Abigail Adams and her famous letters to husband John! A copy of her most recent work, **Abigail and John: Portrait of a Marriage**,

published in April of 2009, will also be given to each participant upon registration. The third presenter for this event will be Karen Quinones of New York City who will be taking participants on a virtual "Walking Tour of Revolutionary Era Manhattan," complete with photos and primary documents. A great way for forty people to take a fabulous field trip back in time!!

The remaining symposiums for 2009-2010 have been scheduled so mark your calendars now!!

Sat., January 23rd:

"Immigration: Then and Now"

Sat., March 27th:

"Good Times and Bad: the Roaring '20's to the Great Depression."

Sat., April 24th:

"Industrialization and the Women's Movement"



*Fraunces Tavern in
lower Manhattan—
one of the stops on the
Virtual Walking
Tour of Revolution-
ary Era Manhattan!*

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District #205

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Living and loving history!



"Teaching the Stuff of History"
Freedom Project's
Summer Institute
Aug. 13th and 14th
At NIU Rockford



Coming in the next newsletter:
*Reporting from Virginia—FP
teachers' trip to Historic Wil-
liamsburg, Jamestown, York-
town, Monticello, Richmond*

7th grade Social Studies
Teachers:
New Curriculum for 2009-2010
Join TAH Grant Activities
And Get a Head Start on
Teaching American History!!
Workshops are filling fast!

REGISTRATION FOR TAH GRANT SUMMER WORKSHOPS

YES! Register me for the following Summer Workshops which will be held at NIU Rockford, 8500 E. State St. from 8 AM—3 PM

___ Mon., Aug. 3rd—Differentiation Strategies (TCM Workshop) **FILLED**

___ Tues., Aug. 4th—Building Literacy (TCM Workshop)

___ Wed., Aug. 5th—Teaching with Primary Sources/Strategies for New Teachers

___ Thurs., Aug. 13 & Fri., Aug. 14th— "Teaching the Stuff of History"—
Freedom Project's Summer Institute with Jonathan Chu, JD Bowers

___ Wed., Aug. 19th— "Teaching History with Primary Digital Resources"
conducted by the Library of Congress and KIDS

Name: _____
School: _____ Subject/Level: _____
Email address: _____
Phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Send via Board Mail to: Betsy Homewood, c/o Grants and Research at Roosevelt
Fax to: 815-966-8902 or email: betsy.homewood@rps205.com

Registration Form for Upcoming Symposiums and Workshops

Please register me for the following **Freedom Project** Events:

- ___ Fri., Sept. 11th "The Living Constitution: Bill of Rights Workshop"
- ___ Sat., Sept. 12th "The Living Constitution" Symposium
- ___ Tues., Sept. 29th "Using WebLessons"—Technology Session
- ___ Sat., Oct. 24th "The Culture of Islam" Workshop
___ Elementary Session or ___ Secondary Session
- ___ Sat., Nov. 7th "The American Revolution: Context and Culture"

Name: _____
School: _____ Subject/Level: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Send completed registration to: Betsy Homewood, c/o Grants and Research or
FAX to Betsy at 815-966-8902

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Applications for **Freedom Project** can be found on the grant's website.
Go to <http://webs.rps205.com/departments/TAH/home.html>
To download an application and learn more about the district's TAH Grant!
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