

July 23, 2009

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NO. 09-05
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ESTHER R. JOHNSON, Ed.D.
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SUBJECT: Constitution Day 2009

1. Purpose. To remind the Job Corps community of the federal mandate to instruct students about the United States Constitution in observance of Constitution Day, and to provide suggestions to Job Corps centers about how to institute Constitution Day on center.

Constitution Day is a federal holiday that recognizes the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, and also recognizes all who have become citizens due to either coming of age or naturalization. It is observed on September 17, the day the U.S. Constitution Convention signed the Constitution in 1787.

2. Background. In 1939, William Randolph Hearst advocated, through his chain of daily newspapers, the creation of a holiday to celebrate citizenship. In 1954, President Truman moved the holiday to the date of the signing of the U.S. Constitution, September 17, and changed the name to Citizenship Day.

The holiday progressed through the years, and in December 2004, Senator Robert Byrd attached a provision to the Consolidated Appropriations, 2005 (Pub. L. 108-447). This provision changed the name of Citizenship Day to Constitution Day and mandated that educational institutions receiving federal funds must instruct students on the U.S. Constitution on September 17, or the following week if September 17 falls on a weekend or holiday.

3. Action. This is a unique learning opportunity for the Student Government Associations (SGAs). The SGA advisor and other center staff can assist the SGA in developing activities and materials to recognize Constitution Day 2009.

Due to an intentional lack of specific directives for implementing Constitution Day in the classroom, Job Corps centers are free to provide a wide array of programming for their students.

Listed below are a few of the variety of educational resources available online to assist with this task, as well as suggested activities:

Educational Resources

- a. *The Constitution Day Implementation Guide* – This document provides information on everything from the notice of implementation from the U.S. Department of Education to sample programming ideas and constitutional links and resources. This guide was developed in 2005 by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and can be downloaded free from: <http://www.naspa.org/policy/guide.pdf>.
- b. *Education World* – An online resource developed to allow educators to more easily integrate the Internet into the classroom, this site provides an entire page of helpful links and suggested classroom activities at: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson347.shtml.
- c. *The National Archives* – Provides the “Charters of Freedom” Web site that offers an interactive constitution at: http://www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/charters/constitution.html. In addition, the National Archives has a nationwide network of research facilities, including presidential libraries. Information about the facilities (by region and state) can be located online at: <http://www.archives.gov/facilities/index.html>.
- d. *The National Constitution Center* – For additional information on celebrating the birthday of our government, please refer to The National Constitution Center at: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/ConstitutionDay/>.

Suggested Activities

- a. *Bill of Rights Role Playing* – The purpose of this activity is to educate students on their basic rights by simulating violations of people’s civil liberties in 21st century contexts. The students will set scenes in which a right or set of rights afforded them by the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution are blatantly violated. The players (who may be well-coached students designated for this task weeks ahead of time) will be given a box full of nondescript set pieces and costume wear in order to improvise their scenes. The audience members will be given a worksheet with the scenes numbered, and they will have to describe the rights violated in the particular scenes and give a brief justification for their answer. Randomly, a facilitator of the activity will call on people to share their justification, and prizes can be awarded for accurate and complete answers.

- b. *Preamble Race* – This is a team racing event that turns the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution into a puzzle. Two teams begin with large pieces of laminated cardstock with some sort of adhesive backing or Velcro. On the opposite sides of the cardstock pieces are dismembered sections of the Constitution’s Preamble. The object of the game is to reconstruct the Preamble from the dismembered pieces in less than 2 minutes on a tack board or Velcro tri-fold. The team that finishes first or has the greatest amount finished in the least amount of time will win.
 - c. *Constitution Quiz* – Administrators construct a quiz that tests students on teams on their knowledge of the Constitution. Questions should be interesting and obscure, and students can be incentivized with prize rewards.
 - d. *Naturalization Card Game* – A set of cards is constructed to simulate the process of naturalization in the United States. This is to give students a more realistic picture of the naturalization process and dispel any myths regarding the ease or difficulty of obtaining a residency card. The game also helps build appreciation for the value of U.S. citizenship for students that were born on U.S. soil. This particular activity should be approached with sensitivity and care, as the activity has the potential, if constructed incorrectly, to offend or misinform students.
 - e. *Constitutional Virtual Field Trip* – Find materials and facts on this program at the following URL: <http://tinyurl.com/lhvtoo>.
4. Expiration Date. September 25, 2009.
5. Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to Linda Marshall at (202) 693-3106 or marshall.linda@dol.gov.