

# CRS Report for Congress

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## Civics Programs in Washington, D.C.

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### Summary

A number of programs in Washington, D.C., explain the workings of the national government to a diverse range of Americans, from middle school students to senior citizens. This report highlights six of the most popular programs. The Congressional Research Service does not endorse or recommend any organization or program. This report will be updated yearly. For a guide to short-term or summer housing in Washington, see CRS Report RS20505, *Coming to Washington, D.C.? Sources of Information on Temporary Housing*.

### Background

The costs of these civics programs typically range from \$500 to more than \$1,000, not including transportation to Washington, D.C. Although some offer financial help, many suggest that participants raise funds in their home communities. Interested persons should inquire with specific programs about costs, available scholarships, and application forms and procedures. Internet addresses have been included for these programs. To evaluate an organization's reputation, contact the following:

Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc.  
Charity Reports  
4200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 800  
Arlington, VA 22203  
[<http://www.give.org>]

Tel: (703) 276-0100

National Committee on Contests and Activities of the  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
(NASSP)  
1904 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191-1537  
[<http://dsa.principals.org/scaa>]

Tel: (703) 860-0200

The NASSP produces an annual Student Contests and Activities National Advisory List of educational programs that interested persons may use to identify a wide variety of program opportunities.

## **Programs**

### **Close Up Foundation**

44 Canal Center Plaza  
Alexandria, VA 22314-1592  
[<http://www.closeup.org>]

Tel: (800) 256-7387

This nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization began in 1970. It offers programs for middle school (grades 6-8) and high school students and their teachers, as well as for senior citizens.

### **Congressional Youth Leadership Council**

1110 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 320  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
[<http://www.cylc.org/>]

Tel: (202) 638-0008

Begun in 1985, this nonprofit, nonpartisan civics educational organization offers three programs for high school students:

- ! National Young Leaders Conference
- ! Global Young Leaders Conference
- ! Presidential Youth Inaugural Conference (during presidential inaugural years only)

### **National Youth Leadership Forum**

2020 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
[<http://www.nylf.org/>]

Tel: (202) 347-4036

This nonprofit educational organization, founded in 1992, offers three programs in Washington, D.C.:

- ! National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine
- ! National Youth Leadership Forum on Law
- ! National Youth Leadership Forum on Defense, Intelligence, and Diplomacy

### **Presidential Classroom**

119 Oronoco Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
[<http://www.presidentialclassroom.org>]

Tel: (800) 441-6533

Started in 1968, the Presidential Classroom Scholars Program provides a week-long overview of the nation's government to high school students. Also offered are these five special focus programs designed to give students in-depth exposure to policy areas of national importance: the Global Business, E-Commerce and Public Policy Program; the

Future World Leaders Summit; the Science, Technology and Public Policy Program; the Media and Democracy Program; and the Law and Justice in a Democracy Program.

**United States Senate Youth Program**

William Randolph Hearst Foundation  
90 New Montgomery Street, Suite 1212  
San Francisco, CA 94015-4504  
[<http://www.hearstfdn.org/ussyp>]

Tel: (415) 543-4057  
(800) 841-7048

Begun in 1962, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation provides an all-expense-paid week in Washington, D.C., for two high school student leaders from each state, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity to observe the federal government in action and meet key officials. Delegates, who must be elected student officers or school representatives, are selected by education officials in each state. Each student receives a \$5,000 college scholarship for undergraduate studies. This program has early fall deadlines.

**Washington Workshops Foundation**

3222 N Street, N.W., Suite 340  
Washington, D.C. 20007  
[<http://www.workshops.org>]

Tel: (800) 368-5688

Started in 1967, this private, nonprofit, nonpartisan educational foundation offers four programs for young people interested in the workings of national government:

- ! Congressional Seminar
- ! Diplomacy and Global Affairs Seminar
- ! Junior High/Middle School Seminar (grades 7-9)
- ! Advanced Congressional Seminar/Capitol Hill Internships