



Jack Miller Center announces Teaching America250 Awards recipients

Nationwide teaching program awards 51 teachers with \$5,000 each in celebration of the Semiquincentennial anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence

Philadelphia, PA — *January 14, 2026*: The Jack Miller Center (JMC), an educational non-profit committed to civic education, today announced the winners of the Teaching America250 Awards thanks to the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The Awards will allow 51 teachers from across the country to develop and implement engaging educational projects focused on the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

"The Teaching America250 Award winners are introducing the next generation to the essential ideas, stories, and documents of America's civic tradition," said Hans Zeiger, president of the Jack Miller Center. "Through their projects, these amazing educators will make America's 250th birthday a memorable experience for thousands of students across the country."

The 51 teachers selected represent each state and Washington, D.C. Each recipient will receive \$5,000 in funding for a project of their own design that engages students with the history of America's founding and the ideals of the Declaration. Projects include field trips to museums and state capitals, school assemblies, student art projects, and community events. Select winners will be chosen to attend JMC's [National Summit on Civic Education](#) or the [Civic Learning Week National Forum](#), hosted by iCivics and the Democratic Knowledge Project.

The full list of awards recipients is below and information on each teacher's project can be found here: <https://www.jackmillercenter.org/teaching-america250-award-winners>.

- Rebecca Tomaso, Baldwin Preparatory Academy (Loxley, AL)
- Donica Nash, River City Academy (Soldotna, AK)



- Kim Alvin De Lara, Hartford Sylvia Encinas Elementary School (Chandler, AZ)
- Cherese Smith, Ozark Junior High School (Ozark, AR)
- Lucas Viera, Beacon Hill Classical Academy (Camarillo, CA)
- Barbara Taylor, Evergreen Middle School (Evergreen, CO)
- Erica Zamsky Hunt, Newington High School (Newington, CT)
- Elizabeth Bear, Cab Calloway School of the Arts (Wilmington, DE)
- DaeTrelle Jones-Taylor, Dunbar High School (District of Columbia)
- Brett Swan, Dr. Kiran C. Patel High School (Tampa, FL)
- Chelsea Falk-Orr, Manchester High School (Manchester, GA)
- Chayane Brooks, Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School (Pahala, HI)
- Mark Olsen, White Pine STEM Academy (Ammon, ID)
- Lucas Rojas, Geneva Community High School (Geneva, IL)
- Sean Scott, Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities (Muncie, IN)
- Kelly Steffen, Vinton-Shellsburg High School (Vinton, IA)
- Thomas Fulbright, Hope Street Academy (Topeka, KS)
- Jennifer Brown, Menifee Central K-7 (Frenchburg, KY)
- Catherine Womble, Bolton Academy (Alexandria, LA)
- Celia Mawhinney, Lewiston Middle School (Lewiston, ME)
- Melaney Sanchez, Mount Harmony Elementary School (Owings, MD)
- Will Donovan, Ursuline Academy (Dedham, MA)
- Seretta Davis, Carver STEM Academy (Detroit, MI)
- Megan Thompson, Osseo Senior High School (Osseo, MN)
- Michelle Rafach, Hancock High School (Kiln, MS)
- Charles Yeldman, Lindbergh High School (St. Louis, MO)
- Taylor Olsen, Harlowtown High School (Harlowtown, MT)
- Kendra Sullivan, St. Gerald Catholic School (Ralston, NE)
- Adam London, American Heritage Academy (Henderson, NV)
- Donna Morin, Alvin High School (Hudson, NH)
- Carlos Miranda, Paterson P-Tech High School (Paterson, NJ)
- Raymond Lopez, Mt. View Middle School (Roswell, NM)
- Lauren Goepfert, Longwood High School (Middle Island, NY)
- Colin Richardson, Green Hope High School (Cary, NC)
- Melissa Uetz, Explorer Academy (Fargo, ND)
- Ashley Fraley, Springfield Junior and Senior High School (Akron, OH)



- Tracy Isbill, Bethel Middle School (Shawnee, OK)
- Andy Haugen, Valley Catholic High School (Beaverton, OR)
- John Corrigan, Roman Catholic High School (Philadelphia, PA)
- Christine Costa, Tiverton Middle School (Tiverton, RI)
- Tonya McCullough, Cannons Elementary School (Spartanburg, SC)
- Amber Stout, Jefferson Elementary School (Pierre, SD)
- Scott Johnson, Battle Creek High School (Spring Hill, TN)
- Ashlee Happy, Haggard Middle School (Plano, TX)
- Payton Ashby, South Sevier Middle School (Monroe, UT)
- Scott Davenport, Brattleboro Area Middle School (Brattleboro, VT)
- Essie Jones, Alexandria City High School (Alexandria, VA)
- Lucas Claussen, Reeves Middle School (Olympia, WA)
- Adena Barnette-Miller, Ripley High School (Ripley, WV)
- Michael Kwas, St. Ambrose Academy (Madison, WI)
- Bryce Mittelstadt, Kelly Walsh High School (Casper, WY)

Winners were selected through a review process by JMC staff, board members, and members of the National Civics Council. Proposals were evaluated on multiple aspects, including relevance to the Declaration of Independence and its central themes, student engagement, creativity, and feasibility. Winners represent public, private, and charter schools and rural, suburban, and urban communities.

ABOUT THE JACK MILLER CENTER

The Jack Miller Center is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advancing the work of scholars who teach and study the ideas, documents, and history we hold in common as Americans. We seek to grow the talent pipeline of university educators who teach the American political tradition, to forge new models for university-based training of K-12 civics and history teachers, and to build a diverse coalition of Americans to ignite a civic education renaissance.

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