

## **NEW MCCORMICK GRANTS FURTHER STRENGTHEN YOUTH CIVIC EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT IN ILLINOIS**

**CHICAGO, March 27, 2013**—When it comes to civic learning, Illinois doesn't make the cut. Illinois is one of 10 states that does not require a standalone civics or government course and its standardized tests ignore social studies altogether. In an effort to fill this void and offer high-quality civic learning opportunities for youth ages 12 to 22, the [Robert R. McCormick Foundation](#) will invest \$1.4 million in Chicago-area civic education and engagement initiatives in 2013.

“By supporting work that exposes young people to civic knowledge and provides meaningful experiences to engage with civic institutions, we can help fully prepare our youth to take the reins and become active and effective participants in the civic life of our community,” said David Hiller, president and CEO, McCormick Foundation.

“The civic education challenges we are facing here in Illinois and around the country are immense,” said John Sirek, Civics Program director, McCormick Foundation. “Years of neglect and the ongoing deluge of mandatory testing have all but removed civics from our classrooms. The Foundation is committed to increasing the numbers of students receiving high-quality civic learning opportunities and supporting policy initiatives that will bring civics back for all of our students.”

Along with its grants and ongoing support of high-quality civic learning and engagement opportunities for youth, the McCormick Foundation also held its annual convening of the [Illinois Civic Mission Coalition](#) on March 7 & 8. Attendees created of a common vision for civic learning in the state, and their contributions will be reflected in the second edition of the [Illinois Civic Blueprint](#), set for publication and dissemination this fall.

### **2013 First-Round Grants Supporting Civic Education and Engagement**

1. [Chicago Metro History Education Center](#), Chicago, IL  
\$80,000 over two years  
For support of the Chicago Metro History Fair which employs inquiry- and project-based approaches to study local and community history.
2. [Facing History and Ourselves](#), Chicago, IL  
\$100,000 over two years  
For the support of teacher development programs and resources which highlight education as a critical tool for strengthening civil societies.
3. [Mikva Challenge Grant Foundation](#), Chicago, IL  
\$125,000 one-year grant  
For the support of three core civic engagement programs: *Elections in Action*, *Issues to Action*, and *Democracy in Action*.
4. [Barat Education Foundation](#), Chicago, IL  
\$100,000 over two years  
To support the Our American Voice program, connecting middle-school youth to the democratic process through active community problem solving.
5. [Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights](#), Chicago, IL  
\$60,000 one-year grant  
For the Youth Civic Leadership Academy which engages youth in the Chicago area in community programs with a focus on civic education, service and leadership.

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**About the Robert R. McCormick Foundation**

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation is committed to fostering communities of educated, informed and engaged citizens. Through philanthropic programs, Cantigny Park and museums, the Foundation helps develop citizen leaders and works to make life better in our communities. The Foundation was established as a charitable trust in 1955, upon the death of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*. The Robert R. McCormick Foundation is one of the nation's largest foundations, with more than \$1 billion in assets. For more information, please visit [www.McCormickFoundation.org](http://www.McCormickFoundation.org), follow us on [Twitter](#), or like us on [Facebook](#).

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