



NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 330

Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone: (402) 474-2131 Fax: (402) 474-4852

E-mail: nhc@nebraskahumanities.org

Website: www.nebraskahumanities.org

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Contact: Erika Hamilton, (402) 474-2131, ext. 104

Humanities Council seeks teachers for Capitol Forum

Applications must be in by May 15 for Nebraska high school teachers who want to participate in the tenth annual **Nebraska Capitol Forum on America's Future**.

Twenty-five teachers statewide will be selected to participate in the program.

Capitol Forum is designed to engage high school students in a discussion of our nation's future in a changing international environment. Hundreds of participating students learn the complexity of world politics and their role as active, informed citizens in the political process. Among the timely issues likely to be discussed are immigration, nuclear weapon proliferation, terrorism, trade and the global economy, and environmental concerns.

Two one-day workshops help teachers integrate forum curriculum into their classrooms and prepare for Capitol Forum Day. Each features a guest speaker or program that focuses on one of the international issues. The first workshop in early August will focus on bioterrorism. The second in early February will focus on environmental concerns. Past speakers have included Maj. Gen. Richard Newton and Lt. Gen. Robert Kehler, both of U.S. Strategic Command, Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale, and U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel.

Each teacher will select up to four students to participate in the forum at the State Capitol on March 31, 2008. During the forum, student representatives will report and deliberate over the international concerns of their classmates. The day culminates in a dialogue among students and elected officials. During the recent 2007 forum, 85 students from throughout Nebraska gathered to discuss global issues among themselves, with state policymakers, Hagel and U.S. Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Adrian Smith.

Following the day-long forum, teachers and students lead their classmates through a two-day lesson plan to complete a Nebraska Student Ballot on America's Future. Ballot results are distributed to participating Nebraska high schools, news media, and state and federal elected officials.

Teachers who participate in Capitol Forum will receive free curriculum units and other materials to engage their students in discussing important global issues. Funding is available for travel stipends and classroom substitutes.

The Nebraska Humanities Council presents Capitol Forum in collaboration with the office of Secretary of State John Gale and the Choices for the 21st Century Project, an outreach of Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies.

The 2007 Capitol Forum was funded in part by Anne Stuart Batchelder, Merrill Lynch, Duncan Family Trust, Mrs. J. Allan Mactier, A to Z Printing, the Nebraska Council of School Administrators, state aid funding appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature, and the "We the People" initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The 2008 Capitol Forum will be funded in part by the Cooper Foundation.

Capitol Forum conforms to Nebraska social studies standards. To receive information on the alignment with state standards, or to apply to the program, write to: Nebraska Humanities Council, 215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 330, Lincoln, NE 68508. A printable application form is available on the Capitol Forum page of the NHC website, www.nebraskahumanities.org. For more information, call Erika Hamilton at (402) 474-2131 ext. 104, fax (402) 474-4852, or e-mail erika@nebraskahumanities.org.

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