

# NATIONAL HISTORY ACADEMY



National History Academy  
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## OVERVIEW

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**The Journey Through Hallowed Ground created National History Academy** in 2018. The Journey is a congressionally designated non-profit National Heritage Area that encompasses the region between Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and Charlottesville, Virginia, and provides an ideal outdoor classroom for students to learn American history and civics.

National History Academy has operated as a residential summer program for high school students based at Foxcroft School in Middleburg, Virginia in 2018, 2019 and 2022. With the Covid-19 pandemic, the Academy shifted to an online program in 2020 and 2021, greatly increasing the number of students we serve.

Over the course of the Academy, students learn beyond the classroom, visiting more than 30 historic sites; meeting with nationally known leaders and scholars; and participating in civil discourse through our parliamentary debate program. In the classroom, students study key historical events through the case-based approach of the History of American Democracy curriculum developed by Harvard Business School Professor David Moss.

The Academy addresses the current crisis in American civic and historical literacy. Numerous reports issued in recent years document a shocking lack of knowledge of the core elements of American democracy. Nationwide, high school



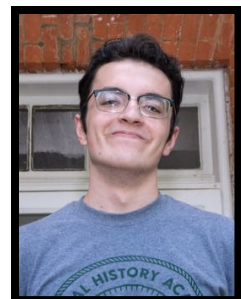
students score lowest on US History out of seven tested subjects, and most schools no longer offer civics classes. Undergraduate history majors have dropped by 34% since 2011, and nearly two-thirds of adults in the country cannot even name the three branches of government.

The Academy's first five years of operation have been a resounding success. The combined impact of this experiential, collaborative and participatory program has been transformative, resulting in improved critical and creative thinking skills while raising the self-esteem and self-confidence of our students.

National History Academy is poised to play a leading role in promoting history and civic education in the United States. To fulfill this promise, we have begun a comprehensive campaign to provide the Academy with a strong financial foundation, establish a scholarship fund, and create new programs.

It's all about everyone bringing their perspectives to the table because that's what the fabric of the country is built on. Dr. King said it was his dream that this nation would rise up to live out the true meaning of its creed, and we all have a little bit different idea of what that means, but what binds us together is the idea that we can exchange ideas and live on.

*-Ben Kellerhals, Surprise, AZ*



## ABOUT THE STUDENTS

### *The Class*

The first three years of the residential Academy (2018, 2019, 2022), saw over 600 students apply, and 236 students who were passionate about understanding American democracy attended the Academy. Enrollment is typically capped at 90 students, but in 2022, due to COVID, we accepted 66 students (22 males, 40 females, 4 other gender) Students represented 26 states, 1 US territory, and 5 foreign countries.

With the shift to online programming in 2020, the Academy has virtually reached over 1000 students from all 50 states, three territories and 20 countries. In 2022, 52 students participated in the online program.

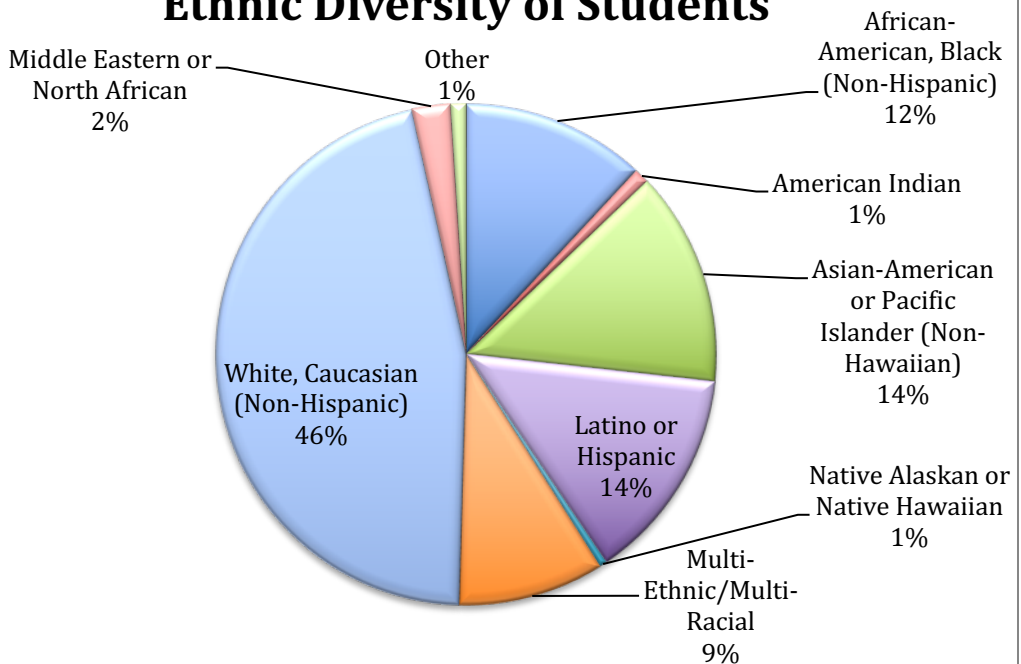
### Average Student

- Age: 15.8
- GPA: 3.95
- PSAT: 1140
- SAT: 1300
- ACT: 27.5

### *Diversity*

Our students are not only academically talented, but exhibit extraordinary political, ethnic, geographic and socio-economic diversity. Since 2018, National History Academy has awarded over \$2 million in scholarship funds, and over 90% of students have received partial or full financial aid. It is imperative that we fund a robust scholarship program in order to maintain this remarkable diversity.

### Ethnic Diversity of Students



## COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM

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Our curriculum challenges students to participate and interact with their peers and important historic places. Our learning objectives are to increase our students' civic knowledge and skills while also encouraging them to develop a civic disposition and think about the greater public good. The curriculum is built around four components: (1) visits to the defining sites of American history; (2) Case Method Institute history cases; (3) parliamentary debates; and (4) guest speakers.

### *Site visits and unique experiences*

The Academy alternates classroom work with visits to the defining historic sites in American history, from Gettysburg, PA to Charlottesville, VA; Harpers Ferry, WV to Washington, DC; and Colonial Williamsburg to Historic Jamestowne. Students experience iconic National Parks, museums, presidential homes, battlefields, and Civil Rights sites. The students also have once-in-a-lifetime opportunities: in 2018, they saw the hit musical *Hamilton* at the Kennedy Center and, in 2022, Harper Lee's masterpiece *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

### *Case Method Institute cases*

The Academy uses the case-based History of American Democracy curriculum developed by HBS Professor David Moss. The cases provide an interdisciplinary and contextual examination of key historic events, permitting students to consider multiple viewpoints and to place themselves in the role of decision makers. In 2019, Professor Moss taught the first case on the US Constitution at the National Archives. These cases allow students delve more deeply into the lives and times of historical figures.

### *Braver Angels debates*

In partnership with the Braver Angels and the College Board, the Academy offers a parliamentary debate program designed to encourage civil discourse across the partisan divide in an open and respectful environment, while developing both speaking and listening skills. This formal style of debate allows students to explore challenging contemporary issues in contrast to the historical debates studied in the cases.

### *Guest Speakers*

Many nationally recognized guest speakers have supplemented classroom activities since 2018. Our speakers represent many disciplines, including American history, government, law, finance and historic preservation. Among the speakers have been:

- **David M. Rubenstein**, Financier and Philanthropist
- **Christy Coleman**, CEO of the American Civil War Museum
- **Ernest Green**, one of the "Little Rock 9"
- **Brent Glass**, Director Emeritus of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History
- **David Vela** – Acting Director, National Park Service
- **A'Lelia Bundles** – Author, *On Her Own Ground: The Life and Times of Madam C. J. Walker*
- **Ron Maxwell**, Filmmaker, *Gettysburg*
- **Trevor Potter**, former Chairman of the Federal Election Commission
- **Cecile Ganteaume and Paul Chaat Smith**, Curators, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
- **Robert Duvall**, Academy Award-winning actor

## **RESIDENTIAL LIFE AND EXPERIENCE**

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### **Campus Life.**

National History Academy is hosted at Foxcroft School in Middleburg, Virginia, a premier private residential secondary school campus. Foxcroft School features modern residence halls, high-tech classrooms and a full-range of recreational facilities and amenities with a focus on safety for high-school students.

Friendships form quickly over meals in the dining hall, in the classroom, and during free time when the students can enjoy the swimming pool, tennis courts, volleyball, kickball, basketball, Frisbee, billiards, ping pong, trivia competitions, chess matches, card games, or visiting the horses in Foxcroft's stables. Friendships are further cemented through fun outings, such as professional baseball games, river tubing trips and hiking. During the first week, the students go through a challenge course, with each class working on building communication, cooperation and trust by facing challenges together as a team.

Additionally, the residential aspect of the Academy provides an opportunity for students to live away from home for an extended period of time, therefore preparing them for college and independent living.



### **Staff and Faculty.**

Our staff consists of an Academy Director, four teaching fellows, twelve college-aged teaching assistants/counselors and two staff nurses. Classroom staff are all highly trained with backgrounds in education, history, government, and law.

Our talented and caring staff work with our students from morning to night on gaining skills to live independently, respecting your neighbors, doing laundry, keeping common area space clean. We believe strongly that creating a safe, respectful and encouraging environment for our students to learn and grow – both in and out of the classroom – is the foundation of our program.

I was very impressed with the way NHA approached sensitive topics. Yes, I needed to stand up for myself and my ideas. At the same time, I was able to listen, learn, and revise my conclusions. History is anything but the past. It is the present and the future. The majority of people today think that history is dead, just a list of dates and long-deceased men. It most definitely is not. By learning history, one can adapt it, absorb it, and apply it.

*-Eden Carnes, Friendsville, TN*





## IMPACT ON STUDENTS

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Students who attend National History Academy come away better prepared for college and with a deeper understanding and appreciation of what it means to be an American. Each day, students examine defining moments of our history as well as challenging contemporary issues in historical context. The Academy is based on active learning; all students participate in case discussions and debates. Students develop their opinions and advocate for their viewpoints. They question each other, consider differing opinions and, inevitably, learn from each other as their individual positions evolve on key issues.

In addition to a dramatic increase in historical and civic literacy, students gain social literacy. Most are living away from home for the first time, and as they are developing creative and critical thinking skills, they learn how to interact with peers from very different backgrounds from their own. They learn from and personally visit with national leaders from a variety of fields. The students learn how to share dormitory space, manage their own time and money, and write thank you notes. Students gain self-confidence and feel better prepared for life beyond high school. These gains in historical, civic and social literacy were documented both anecdotally and through survey results of our students.



- 96% felt they had a better understanding of what it means to be an American.
- 92% said the Academy improved their opinion of people with different backgrounds and perspectives than their own.
- 96% of students thought the National History Academy was more memorable than their other experiences studying history and government.
- 90% felt more confident after attending the Academy.
- **96% feel more prepared for college.**
- **100% would recommend National History Academy to a friend.**

The Academy's positive impact extended to faculty and teaching assistants who drew inspiration from both a challenging curriculum and a class of highly motivated students. Their leadership, hard work and sustained energy contributed to the Academy's unique learning environment.

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## **EXPANDING OUR IMPACT - OTHER PROGRAMS IN DEVELOPMENT**

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### ***Spring Break Programs***

In the future, National History Academy will offer a spring break Academy for high school students. The program will be 6 days and 5 nights, focusing on the Constitution and visits to historic sites including:

- The National Mall in Washington, DC
- Monticello and Montpelier in Virginia
- Gettysburg in Pennsylvania
- Harpers Ferry in West Virginia

### ***Virtual Tours***

In 2021, JTHG also began offering free, open to the public weekly virtual tours of historic sites across the country using our National History Academy Facebook account, every Wednesday at 4:00 pm ET. These tours are streamed live from Zoom, allowing viewers to ask the tour guide questions on our Facebook page which are then answered live. We have completed 47 tours to date, with a total of 15,025 viewers, an average of 319 viewers per tour. Of the 47 tours, 28 have been of National Park sites.

These live virtual tours have also offered us the opportunity to partner with new sites. In 2021, we worked with Hispanic heritage sites across the country during Hispanic Heritage Month to show different aspects of the Hispanic experience through history. We also coordinated site visits during the fall to line up with the US history curriculum so that teachers were able to take advantage of these tours in their classrooms.

### ***History Field Trips***

During the summers of 2020 and 2021, we moved our programs online due to COVID-19. We attracted over 800 students who committed up to 10-15 hours a week to our immersive online classes. Building on that success, we purchased [www.historyfieldtrips.org](http://www.historyfieldtrips.org) and began offering a way for teachers to connect their students directly with historic sites. Through the virtual field trips program, teachers can work with National History Academy to virtually bring one of these important places in U.S. history to their classroom. We provide pre- and post-visit curriculum and cover any site fees normally incurred by the teacher. This ensures all teachers are able to participate, regardless of budgetary restrictions.

## HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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National History Academy has only existed for five years (three residential, two online due to COVID-19), but we have already established ourselves as one of the leaders in history and civics education. As we grow, we have ambitious goals to fundamentally change the way history and civics are taught in this country. However, as a new program, we need your help.

### ***Student Referrals***

Every year, we want to recruit the strongest class possible with students from around the country. One of our goals is to have at least one student from every state enrolled each summer. We appreciate all student referrals as we raise awareness of the Academy.

### ***Intellectual Partners***

We are always seeking academic and institutional partners who are concerned about the current crisis in historical and civic literacy and want to inspire young people to learn the foundations of our democracy and the responsibilities of citizenship. National History Academy is a perfect platform to test new ways to teach history and civics



### ***Funding Partners***

We have a robust scholarship program that allows us to create a program that truly looks like America. The Academy would not be the same without our remarkable diversity. Tuition is \$7,995, which would be cost prohibitive for a large number of even middle-class families. Since 2018, National History Academy has awarded over \$2 million in scholarship funds, and over 90% of students have received partial or full financial aid. We are always looking for scholarship sponsors to ensure that every student who qualifies for the program will be able to attend, regardless of his or her ability to pay.

For more information, please email us at [info@historycamp.com](mailto:info@historycamp.com).



## SPONSORSHIP & DONOR RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

### Naming Opportunities

- **\$3,000,000 – Named Student Scholarship Fund** that will provide permanent financial support for students, *e.g.*, “*Smith Scholars.*”
- **\$2,000,000 – Named Teaching Fellowship Program** that will provide permanent financial support for our teachers, who will be known as, *e.g.*, “*Smith Teaching Fellows.*”
- **\$1,000,000 – Named College Student Fellowship Program** that will provide permanent financial support for top college students to serve as teaching assistants and student counselors, *e.g.* “*Smith Fellows.*”
- **\$500,000 – Named Speaker Series** that will provide permanent support for distinguished historians and speakers, *e.g.*, “*Smith Speaker Series.*”

### Scholarship Opportunities

A student scholarship is \$4,000. Designated scholarship contributions may be directed to support students from a specified state or region. Non-designated scholarship contributions will be distributed to students based on merit and need. Scholarship contributions, whether designated or non-designated, support the Academy’s goal of creating a diverse student body, which is key to our educational mission. Each scholarship applicant’s qualifications will be considered on an individual basis.

### Annual Sponsorship Opportunities

- **\$250,000** – Sponsor the Teaching Fellowship program for one year.
- **\$100,000** – Sponsor the College Student Fellowship program for one year.
- **\$50,000** – Sponsor a 3-day, 2-night trip to Williamsburg or Philadelphia.
- **\$25,000** – Sponsor the Speaker Series for one year.
- **\$25,000** – Sponsor a day’s site visit, *e.g.*, Monticello, Gettysburg, etc.
- **\$2,500** – Sponsor one speaker.

*National History Academy is operated by the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area. The Journey is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, and your gift is entirely tax deductible as allowed by law.*



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