



# CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION

EDUCATING TOMORROW'S CITIZENS

March 16, 2010

## **NATIONWIDE LAUNCH OF *EDUCATING ABOUT IMMIGRATION* Innovative and interactive web based resource for students and teachers**

**Los Angeles...** Today the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) launches *Educating About Immigration*, an interactive web based resource focused on helping students everywhere understand one of this nation's most emotionally charged issues.

*Educating about Immigration* is a rich, interactive web-based educational resource designed to provide classroom lessons, historical perspective, and current information about this important topic to students and teachers nationwide. The United States currently has the largest number of people born in another country in over 80 years. It is important for young people to know about the contributions of immigrants, the history of immigration and about the issues being considered on a national level. *Educating About Immigration* allows students to form their own educated opinions and exert their voices as young citizens.

***“Students need to learn about the rich and varied contributions that have been made and continue to be made by immigrants across the country. *Educating About Immigration* is a tremendous resource for both teachers and students,” states Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa***

An original curriculum was developed by CRF at the request of the Los Angeles Unified School District in response to a student walkout in 2006. Because of the success of that project and the continuing need to address this issue in classrooms, the Weingart Foundation provided a generous grant, which, with support from the Ford Foundation, allowed CRF to develop the current extensive web-based educational resource.

***LAUSD Superintendent Ray Cortines states, “Immigration is a critical issue for many LAUSD students. CRF has created a tool that not only provides relevant information but encourages students to engage in dialogue and take leadership roles in this debate.”***

The project includes several exciting components:

- The website itself which contains news, discussions of current issues, information about proposed legislation, and summaries of court decisions.
- 24 lesson plans for teachers to bring balanced and thought-provoking discussions to the classroom.
- *Student Action*, which provides young people with tips and tools for making their voices heard on issues and includes a regular opinion *Poll*.

- Professional development sessions designed to show teachers how to effectively use the resources on the site and hands-on demonstrations of the available lessons and features.

Nearly seventy teachers have participated in testing and rollout of the teacher professional development sessions and selected lessons from the curriculum have been field tested in LAUSD schools.

One of the most exciting components of the project is *Immigrant Stories*, a section where visitors can share their personal stories of how their families came to America. CRF is currently collecting stories from students, civic leaders, celebrities and others to ensure that this website is a diverse, vibrant representation of how immigrants have shaped this country.

***I have traveled to many wonderful countries around the globe, and even considered living in a few of them. Each time I return to America, something in me kisses this ground. This land that is forged and built, sustained and governed, on the blood, sweat, prayers, and dreams of Freedom Seekers. We all have a Freedom Story.... What's yours? asks actress Lorraine Toussaint (Any Day Now, Law & Order)***

For more information about *Educating About Immigration* or to post your own story, go to: <http://www.crfimmigrationed.org> Sign in and you can share your own or your family's story.

Constitutional Rights Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan education organization. It seeks to instill in our nation's youth a deeper understanding of citizenship through values expressed in our Constitution and its Bill of Rights. Over the last 46 years, it has educated thousands of young people to become active and responsible participants in our society with a variety of programs including Mock Trial, and History Day among others.

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