

Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and the World Wide Workshop Foundation Announce Winners of 1st Annual Globaloria Civics Games Competition

Charleston, WV, June 9, 2010: Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and the World Wide Workshop Foundation are proud to announce the winners of the 1st Annual Globaloria Civics Games Competition. Kaitlyn and Billy, students from the Sandy River Middle School in Avondale, West Virginia, members of a team they named *The Fox Racers* won first place for their original game "The Race to Justice."

With the support of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and in collaboration with West Virginia Department of Education, iCivics.org and Sandra Day O'Connor as Honorary Chair, the World Wide Workshop launched its first civics and news literacy initiative in June 2009, as a novel curricular component of the Globaloria program. This new "Globaloria Civics Track" features a community website; a comprehensive civics knowledge framework; a digital library of civic resources including sample games and simulations for students to play, remix, and expand; and a mentoring program to help educators facilitate research and discussions about civics topics and game design content.

The innovative program and its competition drew the participation of 25 student teams led by four educators, and provided an exciting opportunity for students to engage and excel in civics understanding – a complex subject that most educators find hard to teach and many students find boring to study.

Students' hard work has been celebrated and recognized by a panel of distinguished judges including Bob Wise, former Governor of West Virginia and President of the Alliance for Excellent Education; iCivics.org's Executive Director Abigail Taylor; WV's Assistant State Superintendent, Dr. Jorea Marple; Jessica Goldfin, a Program Associate at the Knight Foundation; Dan Norton of Fillament Games; and the First Lady of West Virginia, Gayle Manchin, who has been the co-initiator and co-chair of the Globaloria program with Dr. Idit Harel Caperton, World Wide Workshop President and Founder.

"Ensuring that our children are prepared for college and careers, and ready to take their places as active citizens is vitally important to our nation's economic and intellectual vitality," said Former Governor Wise. "The creators of Globaloria recognize this, and after serving as a judge for its 1st Annual Civics Games Competition, I can tell you that the Globaloria students of West Virginia recognize this as well."

Launched in the West Virginia public school system in 2007, the Globaloria platform and program is now in its third pilot year, operating in 22 middle schools, high schools, community colleges and universities across the state, and will triple in size again in the next school year. Research already shows that Globaloria's innovative digital learning model increases student mastery of state content standards and objectives and 21st-century skills by immersing students and educators in a learning-by-doing.

"Globaloria provides the next generation of citizens and decision-makers with the 21st-century literacies they will need to thrive in the digital age," said Jessica Goldfin, Journalism Program Associate at the Knight Foundation. "We are impressed with how well this approach to civics and news-literacy learning has been embraced by both students and teachers."

Competition finalists included a game by Globaloria students at Greenbrier East High School entitled “The American Choice” on the electoral process; two games by high school students from Randolph Technical Center entitled “What Are They Thinkin’?” on differences between political parties, and “The Galaxy Guide: Operation Government Branches” explaining through play the three branches of government; and a game by South Harrison High School students called “Citizenship Trivia” about immigration laws.

The Fox Racers’ winning game, “The Race to Justice,” is designed to teach their peers about civil law. Their game is featured on iCivics.org and WorldWideWorkshop.org as a learning tool for classrooms nationwide, and each team member won a laptop with tools and software for supporting their computational creativity for years to come. Every student who entered the 1st Annual Globaloria Civics Games Competition received a letter of commendation from the Globaloria panel of distinguished judges.

“Kaitlyn and Billy were excited to enter the contest, but I believe that learning to create a really good game and showing off our school in a positive light were more important goals for them than winning,” said their teacher, Mrs. Ingrida Barker. “The competition gave my students that extra push in working towards their final goal of imagining and completing a game that works. In the process, they learned so much, and had to take their time researching their topics, as they knew that the experts would be reviewing the content of their games. For me this was the best way to teach students about reliable and non reliable sources of information as well as the importance of citing sources.”

Members of the Department of Education were also impressed: “The Globaloria Civics Games Competition was a great opportunity for teams of students to learn together and apply their technology knowledge in the design and construction of an educational game prototype to support Civics content learning,” said Dr. Jorea Marple, Assistant WV State Superintendent. “The competition is an evidence for Globaloria’s success in providing our students with all kinds of knowledge and skills to work in collaborative teams to produce prototypes of educational games that have a social purpose,” Dr. Marple added.

“Having worked with the Globaloria students early on, I was thrilled to see their progress and their ideas come alive,” exclaimed Abigail Taylor, Executive Director of iCivics.org. “It’s hard to make a good civics game, I know this from experience, and these students impressed me with their knowledge of civics and creative game designs.”

“Our first annual civics games competition has been a tremendous success,” proclaimed David Lowenstein, State Director of the Globaloria execution in West Virginia. “We are proud of all the students and educators who joined this challenging experiment and participated in this year’s trial competition, and we are grateful to our sponsors and our competition judges for their advice and enthusiastic support. We now know that this innovative initiative can be expanded in West Virginia and in other states in future years,” added Mr. Lowenstein.

The World Wide Workshop (www.WorldWideWorkshop.org) is a global foundation for developing innovative open-source applications of social media technology and game production, to enhance learning, innovation, entrepreneurship, and an understanding of the world in economically-disadvantaged and technologically-underserved communities. The foundation lead to transformational change by working with forward-thinking leaders, corporations, governments, school systems, foundations and research centers worldwide to enrich existing formal and non-formal education with the latest technology and innovative learning opportunities.

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (www.KnightFoundation.org) advances journalism and civics literacy in the digital age, focusing on projects that promote informed, engaged communities and lead to transformational change. The Knight Foundation partnered with the World Wide Workshop in June 2009 to add a novel curricular component to the Globaloria program on civics and news literacy. The “Globaloria Civics Track” and its “First Annual Globaloria Civics Games Competition” provided an exciting opportunity for students to engage and excel in civics understanding – a complex subject that most educators find hard to teach and many students find boring to study.

Globaloria (www.worldwideworkshop.org/programs/globaloria) was invented by the World Wide Workshop in 2006. The Globaloria.org platform and program teach young people to create educational games and simulations for their own academic and professional development, and for the social and economic benefit of their communities. Using the Globaloria, students learn to work independently or in teams to develop original games from idea to finished product. They learn game design and programming through a hands-on curriculum. Along the way, they learn to author wikis, and post interactive game content, prototype videos, simulations, graphics, music and sound effects; and write blogs about their gaming ideas and content research. They receive feedback and support from their classmates, students from other schools, and professional game makers from around the nation and the world. Globaloria is an advanced college-style course that is suitable for students at all levels. No prior web design or programming skills are needed (see videos: www.worldwideworkshop.org/programs/globaloria/voices-from-the-field).

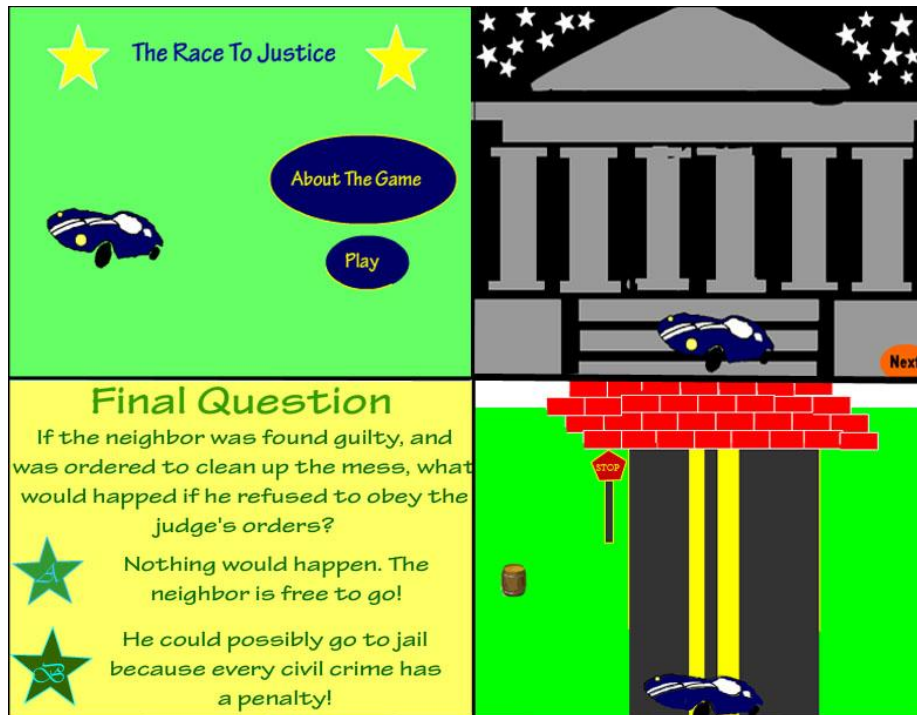
iCivics Inc. (www.icivics.org) is a web-based education project designed to teach students civics and inspire them to be active participants in our democracy. iCivics is the vision of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who is concerned that students are not getting the information and tools they need for civic participation, and that civics teachers need better materials and support. iCivics features free lesson plans, interactive modules, and games. With these tools, iCivics will help empower the first generation of 'digital natives' to become knowledgeable civic participants and leaders.

Globaloria-WV (www.worldwideworkshop.org/programs/globaloria/globaloria-in-wv) launched in the West Virginia school system in 2007 as a unique course in public middle schools and high schools. Hailed by local, state, and national education leaders as a model for educational transformation, Globaloria increases student mastery of state content standards and objectives and 21st-century skills. Support for Globaloria in WV is provided by Governor and First Lady Manchin, the WV Department of Education, the WV Department of Education and the Arts, Benedum Foundation, Verizon WV, Knight Foundation, and Caperton Fund. This is the first year of the Globaloria Civics Games Competition in West Virginia. (www.worldwideworkshop.org/programs/globaloria/civicsgames).



For more information please contact: David@WorldWideWorkshop.org tel: 304-957-8379

Images 1-4: Screens from The Fox Racers' team game, entitled, "The Race to Justice"



Instructions: In this game, you will become a lawyer who is going to the court house to deal with a civil lawsuit. While you are going down the road, you will have to avoid obstacles. At every stop sign, a civics question will be asked. You need to use the arrow keys to navigate the road. Once you get to the court house you will have a case to solve. On the way to court, the game will give you hints about your case. Good luck!

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The collage consists of four distinct panels:

- Top Left:** A matching exercise titled "Match the correct scene with dictatorship." It features four panels: 1) A colorful castle with a crown. 2) A red alien labeled "Leader" standing over a line of green figures. 3) A grid with icons for "Education", "Welfare", and "Healthcare". 4) A green alien standing next to a sign that reads "Government Owned Farm & Market".
- Top Right:** A scene with a large yellow star in a blue sky, two stick figures on pedestals, and the text "READY!?!?".
- Bottom Left:** A graphic titled "Let's Play..." comparing "Democrats" (represented by a blue donkey) and "Republicans!" (represented by a red elephant). It includes the text "vs." and a small "off on" logo.
- Bottom Right:** A space-themed graphic with a black background and white stars. It features several colored circles with text: a green circle labeled "Justicia", a large orange circle labeled "THE POWER", a blue circle labeled "Exucti", and a red circle labeled "Legistvial". To the right is a bar chart with three bars and the text "Balance!".