

Presidential Classroom Becomes Part of U.Va.'s Miller Center

Will Combine Resources to Create Unique Interactive Web Experience to Educate Students about U.S. Presidency and Government

Presidential Classroom, an organization that pioneered experiential civic education through Washington-based programs since 1969, has become part of the Miller Center at the University of Virginia. Sharing a mission to promote civic education, the two organizations are combining resources to create Presidential Classroom 2.0, a unique interactive web experience that will teach students about the U.S. presidency and government. More than 3,000,000 people, most of them high school students and teachers, use the Miller Center's website each year.

"For over four decades, Presidential Classroom has introduced more than 120,000 high-school students to government. By providing them with a rigorous educational experience in Washington, D.C., Presidential Classroom has prepared these young men and women to be leaders in public service and private enterprise. Presidential Classroom 2.0 will allow us to reach even more students and inspire an entire new generation," said Mitchell Shore, chairman of Presidential Classroom.

"Millions of students already visit millercenter.org each year to learn about U.S. presidents and government. With the Internet transforming education and expanding the possibilities for student interaction, Presidential Classroom 2.0 will make students' experience even more engaging. For students and teachers who can't travel to Washington to learn about our government, Washington will now come to them," said Gov. Gerald L. Baliles, director of the Miller Center.

With the power and flexibility of the Internet, this updated Presidential Classroom will offer unrivaled educational opportunities, through the thousands of hours of unique audio, video, and broadcast materials the Miller Center produces, collects, and curates. Presidential Classroom 2.0 will feature:

- Expert essays on all U.S. presidents, first ladies, and Cabinet officials
- The most comprehensive presidential speech archive available online
- Audio and transcripts of the secret White House tapes recorded by every president from Franklin Roosevelt to Richard Nixon
- Oral-history interviews conducted by Miller Center scholars on every administration from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush, including interviews with presidents, their closest advisers, and members of their administrations
- Videos of remarks by leading government officials, scholars, authors, and journalists discussing policymaking as well as historical and current events
- An online community that will allow students and teachers to ask questions, post suggestions, and connect as they learn

- A virtual classroom experience, using audio and video, that will allow government officials and university professors to interact with students
- Lesson plans and syllabi to help educators teach about the presidency and U.S. government

Presidential Classroom 2.0 will launch in January 2012. The Miller Center will create a small advisory group of scholars, journalists, and representatives of Presidential Classroom to meet semi-annually to receive reports and review this work. Additionally, the Miller Center will annually convene an in-depth civic education symposium for teachers in honor of John R. Sims, Jr., co-founder of Presidential Classroom and distinguished alumnus of the University of Virginia. The symposium will be known as the “John R. Sims, Jr. Civic Education Symposium.”

Presidential Classroom and the Miller Center share a fundamental and abiding interest in civic education. Presidential Classroom has served as one of America’s leading organizations in introducing students to matters of public policy and public service. The work of the Miller Center, supported by the Miller Center Foundation and significant endowment funds, gives students and teachers the opportunity to explore American history and current affairs – through the Center’s scholarship, policy studies, broadcasts, and web resources on the U.S. presidency especially which are used by millions each year in high school communities across the country. Joined with the reach and assets of the Miller Center, Presidential Classroom’s mission of civic education and public service will continue, and inspire a new generation of students.

Presidential Classroom’s more than 120,000 alumni include Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY), Melody Barnes, domestic policy adviser to President Obama, former Rep. Chet Edwards (D-TX), and actress Angela Bassett.

Founded in 1975, the Miller Center is a nonpartisan institute at the University of Virginia focused on the presidency, policy and political history that works to inform public debate and national decision-making. It is the leading organization in the country looking to provide historical insights for the policymaking challenges the country faces today.

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