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CAMP O'CONNOR: FREE CIVICS SUMMER CAMP FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
O'Connor Institute and AZ Bar Foundation Launch Inaugural Civics Camp in Phoenix, Arizona

January 30, 2016 (Phoenix, AZ) – The Sandra Day O'Connor Institute and the Arizona Bar Foundation are pleased to announce the launch of Camp O'Connor, a free weeklong summer program providing civics education and leadership development for middle school students. The 2017 camp session will be held June 5 – 9 in downtown Phoenix at the Beus Center for Law and Society, home of the ASU Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law. The application for Camp O'Connor is available online for area students entering 7th and 8th grade during the 2017-2018 school year.

As Arizona was the 48th state to enter the Union, 48 students will be selected from applications received to attend the inaugural Camp O'Connor. Campers will develop leadership skills and greater knowledge of our nation's democracy. The program will also include hands-on experience to witness civics in action.

Camp O'Connor instructors will include leading Arizona civics teachers Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law students will be selected to serve as camp counselors.

Campers will hear guest speakers representing the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government as well as participate in field trips to enhance their learning. Students will visit the Sandra Day O'Connor Federal Courthouse, the Arizona State Legislature, and the Maricopa County Elections center to gain an understanding of the voting process and importance of each vote.

According to the 2014 National Assessment of Education Progress, only 23% of American eighth graders scored "at or above proficient" in civics. A report by the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools found young adults are less likely to vote, are less interested in public and political issues than previous generations, and lack an overall knowledge of democratic processes and principles. The report concludes that many young adults are simply unprepared to participate in our democracy.

The goal of Camp O'Connor is to **educate, inspire and encourage** the next generation of leaders to develop a deeper understanding of and appreciation for our democracy and their important role as citizens.

Camp O'Connor has been made possible by generous grants from Thunderbird Charities, The Scottsdale Charros and the Safeway Foundation.

Camp O'Connor applications are being accepted online at www.CampOConnor.org through Wednesday, February 28, 2017. The selected recipients will be notified by Friday, March 31, 2017. For more information, please contact the O'Connor Institute, 602-730-3300 or camp@OConnorInstitute.org

About The Sandra Day O'Connor Institute

Founded in 2009 by retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the O'Connor Institute continues her distinguished legacy and lifetime work of solving important social, economic and political problems through civil discourse and civic action. At the O'Connor Institute, civic engagement intersects with public policy to build consensus, form collaborations and help craft solutions to vital public issues, in an environment of mutual respect and shared purpose for a better state and nation. www.OConnorInstitute.org

About the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education

The Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education provides technical and financial assistance to legal aid organizations, schools and community groups. The Foundation promotes "Access to Justice for All Arizonans" by supporting law-related education and free legal services and by promoting statewide collaborative efforts. The Foundation plays a leading role in preparing Arizona students for civic responsibility and reaches more than 100,000 children each year by training teachers, school resource officers and probation officers about our laws, justice system and the foundations of democracy. It is also home of www.LawForKids.org, America's first web site dedicated to teaching students about the law.

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