



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**O'Fallon-Shiloh IL Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Chamber Foundation Partner to
Bring the 2026 National Civics Bee® to O'Fallon-Shiloh IL**

Middle school students will test their civics knowledge and compete for national title

O'Fallon, IL —The O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce is proud to partner with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to bring the National Civics Bee to O'Fallon-Shiloh IL for the 2026-2026 program year. This annual initiative – now expanding to all 50 states in celebration of American's 250th anniversary in 2026 – invites middle school students to showcase their civics knowledge, engage in their communities, and build trust in others and institutions through a nonpartisan, multi-round competition.

The National Civics Bee begins with a written essay and culminates in live events at the regional, state, and national levels. Finalists who advance to the National Championship in Washington, D.C., will compete for cash prizes, national recognition, and a \$100,000 529 education savings plan contribution. Thanks to the generous support of the Fisher Global Foundation, the first-place winner in each state may also secure a \$5,000 donation for their school.

The essay application portal opened on September 8, 2025, at 6:01pm Hawaii Standard Time (HST) and closes on February 3, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time (HST). All students in grades 6-8 are encouraged to apply. For more information, visit <https://civics.uschamberfoundation.org/ncb-how-it-works/>.

“As we approach America's 250th anniversary, we have a powerful opportunity—and responsibility—to reignite civic learning across the country. Our hope is that the National Civics Bee inspires more schools to prioritize civics education, equipping young people with a deeper understanding of how our government and democracy work—and the essential role they play in strengthening their communities and our nation,” said Hilary Crow, vice president of civics at the U.S. Chamber Foundation. For more information about entering the National Civics Bee, visit nationalcivicsbee.org.

The regional live event features two rounds of civics questions followed by a Q&A round to test civics knowledge. The O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce will host its local competition on May 6, 2026.



“With our country’s 250th anniversary on the horizon, it’s the perfect moment to encourage young people to see how local engagement strengthens our democracy. The Civics Bee reminds students that big change often starts right here at home,” says O’Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Debbie Arell-Martinez.

For more information on entering the National Civics Bee® in Illinois, visit: [National Civics Bee – O’Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce](#) or nationalcivicsbee.org.

For interview requests or additional information, please contact Debbie Arell-Martinez, director@ofallonchamber.com.

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The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation harnesses the power of business to create solutions for the good of America and the world. We anticipate, develop, and deploy solutions to challenges facing communities – today and tomorrow.

About National Civics Bee®

The National Civics Bee®, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s The Civic Trust®, is an annual nonpartisan competition aimed at improving civics education and literacy among middle school students, their families, and communities. The National Civics Bee® helps elevate civics as a national priority through a network of state and local chambers across the country. The National Civics Bee® is made possible through the generous support of its founding partner, the Daniels Fund, as well as Carnegie Corporation of New York, Citizen Travelers, and other funders.