

National History Day

National History Day is not just a day, it is an experience!



www.tennesseehistoryday.org

National History Day (NHD) is a yearlong, curriculum enhancement program, focused on grades 6-12 and designed to change the way history is taught and learned in the classroom. NHD requires students to conduct primary and secondary source research, interpret information, and draw conclusions about the meaning of the past. In the process, students examine a topic that relates to the annual theme of NHD within its historical context, learning important content as well as gaining valuable research, critical thinking, and communications skills. Students who participate in NHD have shown dramatic improvements in research techniques, writing skills, historical knowledge, creativity, literacy, communication skills, and college readiness. NHD promotes a better-informed citizen in a democracy where problem solving, clarity of thought, in-depth research, character, and rigorous academic learning are critical.

Students compete in one of five categories: research paper, exhibit, documentary, performance, and website. Each category, with the exception of the research paper, is divided into individual or group entries. NHD students compete in both Junior (grades 6-8) and Senior (grades 9-12) divisions.

NHD originated in Cleveland, Ohio in 1974. Concerned about the state of history education in schools, the history department faculty at Case Western Reserve University organized a local history fair. The contest quickly expanded to other states, and in 1980, the first national contest was held in Washington, D.C. Since then, NHD has grown to include an annual participation of more than 750,000 students and 40,000 teachers from across the country.

NHD in Tennessee originated in Memphis in the late 1970s and soon thereafter Chattanooga began its own competition. Beginning in 2000, the NHD program expanded throughout the state with district competitions feeding into the state contest. Currently, there are six district competitions: Knoxville (East Tennessee Historical Society/University of Tennessee History Department); Greeneville (Tusculum College, Andrew Johnson Heritage Association, & Niswonger Foundation); Cleveland (Museum Center at Five Points); Murfreesboro (Middle Tennessee State University History Department); Clarksville (Austin Peay State University History Department); and Memphis (University of Memphis History Department/Memphis Redbirds). In 2009, the Tennessee Historical Society (THS) became the program sponsor and the state NHD headquarters moved to Nashville. The THS and each of the district's sponsoring organizations, along with the NHD nation office at the University of Maryland at College Park, collaborate to provide teachers with History Day resources as well as conduct free teacher workshops.

In 2014, NHD in Tennessee was a great success! In East Tennessee alone, more than 5,000 students, representing public, private, and home-schooled students, carried out history day research and developed thought-provoking projects. Moreover, East Tennessee students continued a streak of winning and reaching the final rounds at the national contest that stretches back to 2007! Winning students at district, state and national contests receive medals and prizes. Outstanding teachers also receive statewide and national recognition.

The 14th Annual East Tennessee History Day contest will be held on March 6, 2015 at the Carolyn P. Brown University Center at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The East Tennessee Historical Society provides free NHD teacher workshops and resources. In addition, East Tennessee History Day staff is able to travel to schools and share NHD instruction with teachers and students and offer scholarships for senior division thanks to East Tennessee History Day presenting sponsors: Jenny & Randy Boyd and Stephen A. South/South College.

For more information on NHD in East Tennessee, please contact your East Tennessee district coordinator:

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Also check out the East Tennessee History Day District's webpage on the state NHD website at www.tennesseehistoryday.org (click on "East TN District Competition" on the right side of the page).