



Randy Roberts

FOUNDATION

EST. 2009



Program Application

Due: January 28, 2020 by 4pm



The Randy Roberts Foundation is pleased to bring to you an opportunity for your Junior class. Congressional Classroom is a program filled with first hand experiences that will leave a lasting impression on your students. This year, Congressional Classroom has will take place for 5 days, September 12-16, in Washington, DC. During that time, students are fully immersed in the federal government.

Congressional Classroom

The overall purpose of Congressional Classroom is to educate and engage our youth in democracy and to foster an interest in public service. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity for interested and motivated high school juniors to visit the U.S. Capitol for an inside view of the democratic process. The students will be provided with opportunities to witness our government in action, meet with officials, and tour points of interest throughout the Washington, D.C. area.

Participation Guidelines

The selection process was created in a manner that simulates the process followed by someone seeking election into public office.

- **Eligibility:** All interested high school juniors who attend a high school located in Polk County and Plant City High School are invited to participate.
- **Filing to Run:** Interested students must complete the enclosed application form. These applications are first reviewed by a school review committee to ensure eligibility in both academic and discipline areas. Students may self-nominate if school approves.
- **Campaign/Election:** Students who receive the school's approval are then eligible to campaign for the votes of their peers. An election among the Junior Class should take place. From this election, the top 3 candidates are advanced to compete for a seat in the Congressional Classroom Program. (Note: Schools sending less than three students will be placed in an at large group for selection purposes.)
- **Interview:** All candidates will be interviewed by an independent panel of judges, composed of business and community members from Polk County and its surrounding areas. The candidates will be scored on poise and leadership qualities, as well as their knowledge of history, government, current events, and the essay portion of their original application. Decisions made by the judges regarding student selection are considered final.
- **Selection:** One student from each of the groups will be selected for the honor of representing their school in RRF's Congressional Classroom Program. Please note that the selection process is non-partisan.

We hope you will consider working with your students to participate in this program. The Randy Roberts Foundation funds the program entirely. Students representing your school should be prepared to adhere to all guidelines and dates in this packet. Dates will only change if there is major local event that will hinder travel. Additionally, selected students who do not attend the mandatory orientation with a guardian or obtain an injury or illness near the travel dates will not be allowed to participate in the class. Please note that this trip requires walking long distances each day throughout the DC Metropolitan area, the use of public transportation and 16-hour active days.

Feel free to contact our office at rrfoundation@icloud.com or leave a voicemail at 863-398-7272 with any questions or concerns that you may have regarding Congressional Classroom. Our staff and Board Members are looking forward to the opportunity to work with your school and your students.

Congressional Classroom Overview

Who can apply? All Juniors who attend a high school located in Polk County and Plant City High School.

What is the school's responsibility?

The school coordinator should process the applications and screen them as follows:

- Remove applications from students with behavior problems.
- Remove applications from students who do not have at least a 3.0 GPA.
- Allow the junior class to vote on the remaining applicants.
- Send the top three applications to:
RRF - Congressional Classroom, P.O. Box 2753, Lakeland, FL 33806
Or email scanned applications to RRFoundation@icloud.com
No later than 4pm, January 28, 2020.
- After the interview process, the school coordinator will be notified of the results, and may share that information with the applicants and student body.

Why the election? Designed by a Member of Congress who wanted the students to have participated in an election process, the election was included so that the participants would have a better understanding of “representative” government. The winning student will represent your school in meetings with high level decision makers in Washington, D.C.

How is the interview process conducted? Each school's three top applicants will face a panel of judges. The students will be asked routine questions about themselves and their interests. There will also be a “current events” portion in the interview. Students will be provided with sample questions prior to the interviews. Students' answers will be given numerical values and the winner will be selected based on the ranking of total scores.

What about politics? Do the students have to hold certain political beliefs? Quite the opposite. Students are interviewed by community leaders. The judges are only given the students' first names. No political questions are asked. The process includes a portion of “right or wrong” answers so that the selection is not biased. It is the desire of the board that a diverse group of students participate so that they can debate issues and ask meaningful questions of our speakers.

Who chaperones this trip? Experienced chaperones who have undergone a background check will accompany the students to Washington, D.C. Most have worked in the DC area as well.

Who pays for this trip? Sponsored by the Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc., the trip is funded by donations from corporations, civic organizations and individuals. The students and schools are not obligated for any expense related to the trip.

What are the students' responsibilities? Applicants must fill out their application COMPLETELY. This includes a photo, parent or guardians' signature and essay. It is important to stress that the students read the directions on the application and make note of the dates involved. Students should check their calendars to make certain they can attend **ALL** dates if chosen.

Selected students **MUST** attend orientation with one parent or guardian (on date indicated in packet), **MUST** provide medical authorization and insurance information, and **MUST** adhere to the appropriate dress and behavior rules outlined at the orientation. Students who do not follow the rules will be sent home at their parents' expense.



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SCHOOL COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

Please use the following tool to guide you through the complete application process for the Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc. Congressional Classroom Program.

1ST STEPS

- Determine who your School Coordinator will be and notify the Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc. at (863)398-7272 or at sara@randyrobertsfoundation.org. Please include name, email address and phone number for our future communication purposes.
- Calendar/Note the following date: **January 28, 2020 by 4pm** - Applications due to Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc.
- Determine Application Review Team, made up of faculty.
- Determine your school deadline for applications to allow time for review, election and top three (3) applications to be sent to the Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc.
- Set date for Application Review Team and make Team members aware.
- Set date for Junior Class election.

ANNOUNCEMENT

- Issue an invitation to ALL members of the junior class.
- Make an announcement.
- Use Press Packet information to place on video production announcements and/or website.
- Create posters and place in visible areas. Make sure to include your deadline and your name as the School Coordinator.
- Notify history, government and/or junior class homerooms of the program and ask that they encourage participation.
- If your school has had past participants, ask that they help describe the event and seek applicants.
- Issue a reminder 1 week prior to your school deadline.

APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM DETAILS

- Review applications prior to Junior Class election.
- Remove any applications where applicant meets any/all of the following criteria:
 - Non-junior
 - History of behavioral problems
 - Less than a 3.0 GPA
- Remaining candidates will be presented to the Junior Class for their election of the top three (3) representatives.
- Distribute ballots to Junior Class.

FINAL STEPS

Complete the School Certification Form and include with the top three (3) applications.

School Certification Form **MUST** be signed by School Coordinator and Principal.

Mail the top three (3) applications and School Certification Form. All documentation must be received by the Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc. by **4pm, January 28, 2020**. Packets should be mailed to:

Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc.

Congressional Classroom

P.O. Box 2753

Lakeland, FL 33806

Or email scanned applications to RRfoundation@icloud.com

Thank you for serving as the School Coordinator. We will notify you of the final selection by **February 21, 2020**.



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Congressional Classroom 2020 Dates and Deadlines

PACKETS AVAILABLE – Friday, January 3, 2020 to 2019 participating schools

PACKETS AVAILABLE – Monday, January 6, 2020 to schools who did not participate in 2019

PACKETS DUE TO RRF – Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Packets must be received ON or BEFORE 4pm on this date.

 **INTERVIEWS – Wednesday, February 5, 2020 (Polk County early release day)**

Interviews for up to 3 selected students from your high school.

Location: Lakeland City Hall, appointments are scheduled between 1pm and 4pm, and will be assigned by Friday, January 31, 2020.

SELECTIONS – Friday, February 21, 2020

School Coordinator will be notified of student selections on or before this date.

 **CONGRESSIONAL CLASSROOM ORIENTATION – Saturday, August 22, 2020**

Attendance is mandatory for participant AND parent(s)/guardian

Location: Florida Southern College, 9a.m. - noon

 **WASHINGTON, D.C. – *Tentatively September 12 – September 16, will be confirmed by February 2020***

 **MANDATORY EVENTS**



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2020 Congressional Classroom



Application Packet

Name: _____

School: _____

P.O. Box 2753, Lakeland, FL 33806
(863) 398-7272

The Randy Roberts Foundation works to cultivate Florida's future leaders through public service, civic engagement & providing scholarships to students who excel in those areas.



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Congressional Classroom Application

STUDENT: The first four pages of this application packet must be completed and returned to your High School Coordinator by _____ in order for you to be considered for selection.

SCHOOL COORDINATOR: Applications must be received by the Randy Roberts Foundation by **January 28, 2020, before 4pm.**

Please mail them to **P.O. Box 2753, Lakeland, FL 33806** or scan to **RRfoundation@icloud.com**. Questions? Email RRF at rrfoundation@icloud.com or call 863-398-7272

Required Program Dates

INTERVIEWS – Wednesday, February 5, Polk County Schools Early Release Day

Interviews for up to 3 students from your high school. Location: City of Lakeland, 3rd Floor City Hall, Wednesday, February 5, between 1-4pm.

CONGRESSIONAL CLASSROOM ORIENTATION – Saturday, August 22, 2020

Attendance is mandatory for participant & parent(s)/guardian. Location: Florida Southern College, 9a.m. - noon

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Tentatively, Saturday, September 12 through Wednesday, September 16, 2020

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Name of School: _____
First Name: _____ Middle: _____ Last: _____
Name you prefer to be called: _____ Social Security #: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____
Physical Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
E-mail: _____ Cell Phone: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Father: _____ Mother: _____
Address: _____ Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____ City/State/Zip: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
E-mail: _____ E-mail: _____

**Please affix a current
school photo of
yourself.**

**Be sure to write your
name on the back of
the photo.**

Congressional Classroom

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I am a U.S. citizen and attend a school within Polk County, Florida, or Plant City, Florida. If I am selected to participate in this program, I agree as requested, at the conclusion of my trip, to visit clubs and other groups to share my experiences as participant of the Congressional Classroom of Polk County or Plant City, Florida.

If I am selected, my parents/guardian and I agree to ensure my attendance at scheduled events, including the interview, orientation meeting, and Washington, D.C. trip.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____



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**2020 Congressional Classroom
ESSAY RESPONSE**

Candidate's **FIRST** name only

Name of School

Why I would like to participate in Congressional Classroom:

(Please attach a typed copy of your essay that is 300 words maximum. This page is evaluated and scored by the judges. Anonymity is an essential part of the judging process. Please do not include any information in your essay which would allow an interviewer to identify you.)



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2020 Congressional Classroom

PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT FORM

PARENT/GUARDIAN: PLEASE READ THIS IN ITS ENTIRETY BEFORE SIGNING

- **WINNER MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF MEDICAL INSURANCE PRIOR TO ORIENTATION.**

- **WINNER MUST ATTEND A SCHOOL WITHIN POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA, or PLANT CITY HIGH SCHOOL.**

- **COORDINATORS KNOW THAT OUTSTANDING STUDENTS SOMETIMES HAVE OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT CONFLICT WITH THE DATES AND TIMES OF THE INTERVIEW, ORIENTATION AND TRIP. HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONGRESSIONAL CLASSROOM PROGRAM, IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE STUDENT:**
 1. To attend the interview at the appointed time.
 2. To attend the orientation accompanied by a parent or guardian.
 3. To reserve time for departure from and return to the airport.
 4. To obey all rules regarding safety, dress and behavior.

We agree to keep the dates listed above for the interview, orientations and trips, available in order to ensure my student's full participation in each portion of the Congressional Classroom Program. We further understand that no special arrangements will be made to accommodate different arrival/departure dates, interview opportunities or orientation session.

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian

Signature: _____

2nd Parent/Guardian (optional)

Signature: _____

Student

(NOTE: Application will not be considered without the Parent/Guardian Agreement Form completed.)



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2020 Congressional Classroom Application PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

Congressional Classroom is a once in a lifetime opportunity for interested and motivated high school students to visit the U.S. Capitol for an insider's view of the democratic process. The students have the opportunity to see "first-hand" our Government in action, interact with government leaders, and tour points of interest in the Capitol area.

SELECTION PROCESS

The guidelines established by the Board of Directors of the Randy Roberts Foundation are similar to those who are seeking election in public office. All interested high school juniors who attend a high school within Polk County, Florida, or Plant City High School must complete an application form provided to the school by the Congressional Classroom Coordinator. A school committee reviews the completed applications for eligibility and eliminates any students who would not qualify for the program due to academic hardship and/or supervision difficulties. The remaining students campaign for votes and an election is held by the junior class. The three students with the highest number of votes are the candidates eligible to compete for the trip. Any less than three applications submitted by schools for the interview process will be placed in an at-large group. All candidates are individually interviewed by a panel of judges composed of business and community members. The candidates are judged on knowledge of history, government, current events, candidate's essay, as well as poise and leadership qualities. Tie-breaker questions are asked of each candidate, but these questions are only considered when candidate scores are equal in total. One student from each of the groups will be selected for the honor of representing their school in the Congressional Classroom program. All candidates will be notified of interview results by email listed on the application within two weeks after the interview. Schools will be notified by email at the same time.

PROGRAM

Upon selection, students and their parents/guardian are required to attend an orientation meeting where they will receive detailed information about the trip to Washington. The Randy Roberts Foundation pays expenses for students and the chaperones that accompany and supervise these trips. Airfare, hotel accommodations, transportation, and meals are included. Money for souvenirs is optional. Arriving on Saturday the students will start with touring Washington. Meetings are arranged with key Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate and sessions are scheduled for the opportunity to meet members of the executive cabinet agencies. Speakers from the private sector and news media personalities are invited to visit with students. Each year the itinerary varies. Chaperones will give the students daily briefings on what they will be seeing and the issues of the day. Tours of different points of interest are planned, such as the Library of Congress, the Capitol, Supreme Court and various other monuments and museums. Visits are arranged for the students to see the House and Senate in session as well as attend legislative committee meetings of major importance.

For more information, please contact our office at (863) 398-7272 or email
sara@randyrobertsfoundation.org

REQUIRED PROGRAM DATES

APPLICATIONS DUE – Tuesday, January 28, 2020 by 4pm

School Coordinators should submit completed application packet via postal service to Randy Roberts Foundation, PO Box 2753, Lakeland, Florida 33806 or email packet as pdf to RRfoundation@icloud.com.

INTERVIEWS – Wednesday, February 5, 2020

Interviews for up to 3 students from your high school.

Location: 3rd Floor, City Hall at City of Lakeland, appointments will be assigned January 31 and take place between 1-4pm. The earlier student applications are received at the RRF office the sooner the appointment times will be assigned.

SELECTIONS – Friday, February 21, 2020

School Coordinator will be notified of student selections on or before this date.

CONGRESSIONAL CLASSROOM ORIENTATION – Saturday, August 22, 2020

Attendance is mandatory for participant & parent(s)/guardian

Location: Florida Southern College, Lakeland, FL, Room TBA, 9a.m. - noon

WASHINGTON, D.C. – TENTATIVELY. Saturday, September 12 through Wednesday, September 16, 2020.



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2020 Congressional Classroom Sample Interview Process

The interview process for Congressional Classroom is non-partisan and anonymous. All candidates are individually interviewed by a panel of judges composed of business and community members residing in Polk County and surrounding areas. Candidates are judged on poise and leadership qualities, as well as knowledge of history, government, and the essay.

All government and history questions are taken from Ben's Guide to Government, <http://bensguide.gpo.gov> (Ages 14+ section) and iCivics, <http://icivics.org>. Tie breaker questions are asked of each candidate, but these questions are only considered when candidate scores are equal in total. Below is a list of sample questions which will be similar to the questions that will be asked on the day of the interview.

Candidates' essays will be evaluated for writing ability, neatness, reason for applying, and overall impression. Judges will also consider a candidate's appearance (professional dress), leadership qualities, ability to articulate, self-confidence, and poise. Candidates should be prepared to discuss community involvement, school activities, travel experiences, and other related subjects. Interviews are conducted in a conversational manner. Candidates without prior interview experience may wish to practice interviewing with a partner.

Sample Congressional Classroom Interview Questions

1. Can you name the U.S. Senators from the State of Florida?
2. How many representatives represent you in the U.S. House of Representatives?
3. What cable television system broadcasts the U.S. House of Representatives and the US Senate in session?
4. What new U.S. Department was created in response to 9/11 and is focused on protecting the American people and their homeland?
5. Who would become president should the President and the Vice-President die?
6. Who was appointed in 2006 to serve as a Supreme Court Justice?
7. What are the first ten amendments to the Constitution called?
8. How many times may a U.S. Senator or Representative be re-elected?
9. Who is the commander in chief?



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**2020 Congressional Classroom
SCHOOL CERTIFICATION FORM**

Please return this form, with the three applications, by **Tuesday, January 28, 2020.**

Please mail the forms to the address below or scan entire packet to RRfoundation@icloud.com :

**Randy Roberts Foundation
Congressional Classroom
P.O. Box 2753
Lakeland, FL 33806.**

Name of School: _____

This is to certify that the following students were elected as candidates eligible to compete for the honor of representing the aforementioned school in the final interview process of the Randy Roberts Foundation, Inc. Congressional Classroom.

Student 1: _____

Student 2: _____

Student 3: _____

The following criteria were met for their selection:

1. Completed Application Form
2. Screened by School Application Review Team
 - Student is doing creditable work in all classes.
 - Student has shown interest in government or political science courses and is active in school activities (to show leadership abilities).
 - Student does not have a history of behavioral concerns.
3. Elected by the junior class to determine the top three applicants.
4. Confirmed students are U.S. citizens and attend a school within Polk County, Florida, and Plant City High School.

If modifications or deviations were made to the above guidelines, please indicate below.
Please contact the Randy Roberts Foundation at (863) 398-7272 if you have any questions.

Principal's Name

School Coordinator's Name

Principal's Signature

School Coordinator's Signature

Date

Date