



Media Contact:
Alexandria Moreland, Communications Associate
(202) 639-1586
amoreland@fords.org

Ford's Theatre
511 Tenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
www.fords.org

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Ten Schools Selected to Participate in the Lincoln Online Oratory Project, A National Initiative from Ford's Theatre

Program Cultivates Deeper Appreciation for Lincoln's Leadership

Schools Selected from California, Delaware, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina and Wisconsin

Washington, D.C. – Ten schools from 10 states were selected to participate in the 2020 **Lincoln Online Oratory Project (LOOP)**, a national initiative from Ford's Theatre. The Lincoln Online Oratory Project is designed to help educators introduce Abraham Lincoln's leadership and the fundamentals of public speaking into their classroom and provides an opportunity for students to put these skills into practice.

Classrooms taking part in the Lincoln Online Oratory Project during the current school year will participate in three virtual lessons with a Ford's Theatre Teaching Artist via video conference. In a culminating project, students will work together to perform and video record one of Abraham Lincoln's speeches. These videos will be shared with a national audience on the official Ford's Theatre YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/fordstheatre. Classrooms will share their experience with Ford's Theatre on Twitter during a **"Virtual Festival"** on **Wednesday, April 15, 2020**.

The 2019-2020 participating classrooms are (alphabetical by state):

- **San Pascual STEAM Magnet Elementary School** in Los Angeles, California
- **Odyssey Charter High School** in Wilmington, Delaware
- **Rich South High School** in Richton Park, Illinois
- **South Livingston Elementary School** in Smithland, Kentucky
- **Cahlan Elementary School** in North Las Vegas, Nevada
- **Toms River High School South** in Toms River, New Jersey
- **Anson County Early College High School** in Polkton, North Carolina
- **St. Peter's Catholic School** in Olney, Maryland
- **R.E. Davis College Preparatory Academy** in Sumter, South Carolina
- **Viroqua Middle School** in Viroqua, Wisconsin

Through oratory education programs like LOOP, teachers are better able to address the often-overlooked speaking and listening components of the Common Core and state-specific standards in literacy. Additionally, through the study of President Lincoln's oratory, students learn the valuable life skill of confident and effective public speaking, develop a sense of civic responsibility, and build a broader understanding of President Lincoln's historical significance.

"The Lincoln Online Oratory Project is an exciting opportunity for Ford's Theatre to support students, no matter where they are located," said **Ford's Theatre Associate Director for Arts Education Cynthia Gertsen**. "LOOP allows students across the country to share their public-speaking skills and demonstrate the far-reaching and long-lasting power of President Lincoln's oratory."

Schools and teachers interested in learning more about the Lincoln Online Oratory Project should visit www.fords.org/for-teachers/programs/oratory/lincoln-online-oratory-project or reach out to education@fords.org.

Videos from previous LOOP participants can be found at www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLK40ConphajsvobllT7ZjRuzKMswcfRPP.

Ford's Theatre education programs are supported by Lead Education Sponsor **BP America** with additional support from **Bloomberg Philanthropies, Comcast NBCUniversal, Southern Company, United Airlines** and **Visa Inc.**

Ford's Theatre Society

The Ford's Theatre Society was founded under the guidance of executive producer Frankie Hewitt, who, during her 35-year tenure, established Ford's as a living, working theatre producing performances that highlighted the diversity of the American experience. Since the arrival of Paul R. Tetreault as Director, critics and the theatregoing public have recognized Ford's for the superior quality of its artistic programming. With works from the Tony-nominated *Come From Away* and nationally acclaimed *Big River* to the world premieres of *Meet John Doe*, *The Heavens Are Hung In Black*, *Liberty Smith*, *Necessary Sacrifices*, *The Widow Lincoln* and *The Guard*, Ford's Theatre is making its mark on the American theatre landscape. For its accomplishments, the organization was honored in 2008 with the National Medal of Arts. For more information, visit www.fords.org. In the past decade, the mission of Ford's Theatre Society expanded to include education as a central pillar. This expansion led to the creation and construction of the Center for Education and Leadership, which opened in February 2012. Currently, under the leadership of Board Chairman Phebe N. Novakovic, Ford's Theatre Society is advancing the unfinished work of Abraham Lincoln by creating a vibrant, accessible Ford's Theatre campus that cultivates civic discourse, supports our nation's educators and engages the community with our history.

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