

The Echo Foundation

NEWS RELEASE

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Youth Engage! Applications Now Being Accepted The Echo Foundation Footsteps Global Initiative Election Year Program

Deadline for Student Applications is May 24, 2012

Charlotte, N.C., May 10, 2012 –The Echo Foundation is now accepting applications for the 2012 *Footsteps Global Initiative: Youth Engage!* part of The Echo Foundation's election year series: *We the People. The Voices and Vision of Democracy*. The Footsteps Global Initiative is an opportunity for students to explore leadership and global citizenship through intensive study, travel and service. Previous programs have taken students to classroom libraries in Lexington, NC, a clinic and primary school in Rwanda, and to Europe to trace the life path of Nobel Peace Laureate and Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel. More information on past programs, including videos, can be found at www.echofoundation.org.

This year's program harnesses the mounting excitement of the 2012 presidential campaigns and national election. Coordinating with GenerationNation, an affiliate of Kids Voting USA, Youth Engage! brings together students from Charlotte, NC, and Tampa, FL, to participate in a nonpartisan, educational, leadership initiative focused on civic responsibility. This year's program offers student participants a front-row seat to our country's democratic process at the Republican and Democratic conventions. As the national election unfolds into the fall, student participants will use The Echo Foundation's curriculum guide *Democracy, Responsibility, & Civic Engagement* to engage their schools and communities with a student designed learning experience focused on civic duty. Students will learn about education, community-building, personal responsibility and teamwork while making a difference in the greater Charlotte region and in their own communities across the country.

All public and private school students who are in grades 10-11 during the 2011-2012 school year are welcome to apply. There is no cost to apply. [Applications](#) and supplemental materials must be received by the Echo office no later than **5:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 24, 2012.**

About The Echo Foundation

[The Echo Foundation](#) was founded in 1997 to carry on the message Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel brought to Charlotte that year – a call to action for human dignity, justice and moral courage. The

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mission of The Echo Foundation is to “promote justice and inspire hope through education, creative acts of service and the development of leadership for a more humane world.” This mission is realized through five core initiatives: *Voices Against Indifference*, *Footsteps Global Initiative*, *Books Beyond Borders*, *Forum for Hope* and *Living Together in the 21st Century*.

As Charlotte plans for the Democratic National Convention this September, The Echo Foundation presents our 2012 Convention Series: **We the People. The Voices and Vision of Democracy**. A three-part series that builds on past Echo successes, **We the People. The Voices and Vision of Democracy** includes our **15th Annual Echo Award Dinner**, a **Photojournalism Project**, and the **Footsteps Global Initiative: Youth Engage!**, and brings together political and business leaders from across the country in celebration of renowned humanitarians whose work responds to the question, “What can one person do?” With a series of events and programs designed to engage the leaders of tomorrow, we leverage this historic opportunity presented by the Convention to teach and celebrate the best that America stands for: freedom, opportunity, and self-determination.

For more information about The Echo Foundation, visit www.echofoundation.org and www.inthefootstepsofeliewiesel.org.

About GenerationNation

GenerationNation (formerly known as Kids Voting Mecklenburg) is a nonprofit (501c3) organization educating and engaging K-12 students to succeed and lead in their schools, communities and nation. Through a combination of classroom activities and experiential learning, GenerationNation educates students learn about government, civic participation and leadership. Programs help students in school, build civic literacy and develop young people as effective citizens and leaders. Current programs include K-12 civic education, Youth Civics, Youth Voice Leadership Alliance, Kids Voting and #k12in2012, among other initiatives.

For more information about GenerationNation, visit www.generationnation.org.