



National Center for State Courts

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**NCSC names Arizona Bar Foundation  
as recipient of O'Connor civics award**

**Williamsburg, Va. (June 10, 2026)** – The Arizona Bar Foundation is the 2026 winner of the National Center for State Courts' Sandra Day O'Connor Award for the Advancement of Civics Education.

Presented annually to honor the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the award recognizes an organization, court, program, or individual who has promoted, inspired, improved, or led an innovation or accomplishment in the field of civics education related to the justice system.

"It is especially fitting to recognize the Arizona Bar Foundation with an award bearing Justice O'Connor's name," said NCSC President Elizabeth Clement. "For decades, the Foundation has carried forward her vision that civic knowledge should be accessible to everyone. By creating engaging resources, supporting educators statewide, and helping students connect constitutional principles to their daily lives, the Foundation has built one of the nation's most impactful civic education efforts. Its work not only honors Justice O'Connor's legacy but also helps ensure that future generations understand the vital role of courts, the rule of law, and civic participation in our democracy."

Among the Foundation's notable accomplishments is [LawForKids.org](https://www.lawforkids.org), a comprehensive online library featuring games, lessons, videos, and interactive tools designed to support civic education. During the 2025 school year, the website received more than 1.5 million page views.

Justice O'Connor, a lifelong Arizonan, founded iCivics in 2009 to advance civic learning. In the 2025 school year, Arizona's iCivics program — supported by the Foundation — engaged 196,909 students through competitions, classroom instruction, and online activities. The Foundation also serves as the state's central educator support system for civics. Initiatives include classroom visits, educator training, publications, and other educational resources.

"For more than two decades, the Bar Foundation has advanced Justice O'Connor's vision that every young person — and the adults who guide them — should have access to clear, engaging, and inclusive civic learning connected to our justice system," said Chief Justice Ann Scott Timmer of the Arizona Supreme Court. "Its programs have become a trusted, statewide backbone for civics education in Arizona, continually innovating while remaining free and accessible regardless of geography, income, language, or background."

Arizona Bar Foundation CEO/Executive Director Kevin Ruegg, Ph.D., emphasized the significant role of the Arizona Supreme Court and volunteers in making the Foundation's programming a success.

"Receiving the Sandra Day O'Connor Award for Civic Advancement is a humbling honor as Justice O'Connor has been a long-time hero and model for the Foundation. We must acknowledge, too, that it is only through the support from the Arizona Supreme Court and the multitude of volunteers' efforts that we are able to provide these civic engagement programs and activities across the great state of Arizona," Ruegg said.

The Arizona Bar Foundation will receive the award this summer at the annual meeting of the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators.

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*The [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) is a nonprofit court organization dedicated to promoting just, free, and safe communities by driving innovation and advancement in courts and justice systems. Founded in 1971 by the Conference of Chief Justices and Chief Justice of the United States Warren E. Burger, NCSC provides education, training, technology, management, and research services to the nation's state courts.*