



NATIONAL  
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# PRESS RELEASE

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## 583 SCHOOLS IN CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS SYSTEM RECEIVE NEH'S PICTURING AMERICA AWARDS

### Free Education Initiative Brings Great American Art Directly to Chicago Classrooms and Libraries

Chicago, IL (May 29, 2008) – Today at the Chicago History Museum, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) will announce that **583 schools in the Chicago Public Schools system** will receive Picturing America. Picturing America is a free initiative that helps teach American history and culture by bringing some of the country's great art directly to classrooms and libraries.

"The Endowment believes that Picturing America should be in every school and public library in the United States," said NEH Chairman Bruce Cole. "As a result of the strong support of the Chicago community during our first application period, I'm pleased to announce that **583 schools in the Chicago Public Schools system** will receive Picturing America, as part of **26,320 successful school and public library recipients across the country** that will have a chance to learn from this wonderful education resource."

"Picturing America is an incredible learning resource for students and teachers in the Chicago Public Schools system," said Arne Duncan, Chief Executive Officer for Chicago Public Schools. "By bringing American art into hundreds of Chicago classrooms and school libraries, this initiative will educate our students about the great people, places, and moments in our history using the masterpieces that depict them."

Of the over **1,500 pilot schools** currently participating in the nationwide Picturing America pilot program, **nineteen Chicago schools** have begun implementing the materials in libraries and classrooms. Feedback from local educators has been tremendous.

"The detail on the prints is really amazing," said Patti Foerster, Librarian for Vaughn Occupational High School in Chicago. "All of our students have special needs and really struggle with reading. It absolutely helps them to have clear images they can view up close. We've been able to use the prints to spark some fun and interesting lessons!"

#### Today's Award Announcement

In the **state of Illinois, 1,527 schools and public libraries** have been awarded Picturing America including **617 institutions in city of Chicago** (see [http://picturingamerica.neh.gov/public\\_awards.php](http://picturingamerica.neh.gov/public_awards.php) for a full listing of recipient schools and libraries). These local recipients are part of the **26,320 schools and public libraries across the country** that will participate in the program. Successful applicants will receive forty large, high-quality reproductions of great American art and a comprehensive teachers resource book to assist educators using the works of art in core subjects. Delivery of these materials is scheduled for August 2008. Additional education resources are also available through the Picturing America Web site ([PicturingAmerica.neh.gov](http://PicturingAmerica.neh.gov)).

The NEH will offer Picturing America to more schools and libraries through a future enrollment opportunity beginning in August 2008. All eligible schools and public libraries in the U.S. and its territories who have not previously received Picturing America may apply for the program **from August 4 through October 31, 2008** at [PicturingAmerica.neh.gov](http://PicturingAmerica.neh.gov).

#### Partnership with Head Start

In addition to schools and libraries, through an interagency agreement, NEH and the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Head Start will work together to make Picturing America available to the **20,000 Head Start centers** around the nation. This partnership will provide for the development of materials to supplement Picturing America and ensure that the program will enhance early childhood development and family literacy.

"We are thrilled to be collaborating with the National Endowment for the Humanities on Picturing America. These images will be a valuable tool for the Head Start community," said Daniel Schneider HHS' Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families. "Children and low-income families will soon have access to great arts and humanities – and the lives of those enrolled in Head Start will be enriched as a result of this program."

### **Today's Event at the Chicago History Museum**

Educators and students from some of the participating pilot schools in Chicago will attend today's event at the Chicago History Museum, where several of the Picturing America images will also be on display. During the event, remarks will be given by:

- **The Hon. Bruce Cole**, Chairman of the NEH
- **The Hon. Thomas K. Lindsay**, Deputy Chairman of the NEH
- **Daniel Schneider**, Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Arne Duncan**, Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Public Schools
- **Sarah A. Long**, Past President, American Library Association and Executive Director, North Suburban Library System

The NEH wishes to thank the following organizations: the American Library Association, Office of Head Start, Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Park Service, The History Channel, and the National Trust for the Humanities. The NEH is grateful for the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Smith and, in addition, wishes to thank the JM Freedom Foundation (a private foundation of the Jack and Goldie Wolfe Miller Family), the Terra Foundation for American Art, and the Illinois Humanities Council for local support, as well as the Chicago History Museum for hosting today's event.

Picturing America is distributed by the NEH in cooperation with the American Library Association (ALA). For information about the ALA, please visit [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org).

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### *About Picturing America*

Public, private, parochial, and charter and home school consortia (K-12), as well as public libraries in the US and its territories, are eligible to receive Picturing America materials. Interested schools and public libraries will be able to apply through the NEH for the second round of Picturing America awards, beginning August 4 through October 31, 2008 for receipt of the materials in spring 2009. Detailed instructions for submitting an application can be found in the 'Apply Now' section of the Picturing America Web site, [PicturingAmerica.neh.gov](http://PicturingAmerica.neh.gov).

Picturing America comes with a comprehensive package of materials that includes:

- Forty large, high-quality color reproductions of the selected masterpieces (24" x 36")
- A comprehensive teachers resource book providing a wide range of ideas and background information to support educators using the works of art in core subject areas
- Additional resources and lesson plans available through the Picturing America Web site, [PicturingAmerica.neh.gov](http://PicturingAmerica.neh.gov)

### *About the National Endowment for the Humanities*

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. The study of the humanities — history, literature, philosophy, and the arts — helps us explore what it means to be human. The humanities enable us to understand the world and our place in it.

Because "democracy demands wisdom," NEH serves and strengthens our Republic through promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. Through its programs, NEH provides opportunities for all citizens to embrace the humanities and benefit from their wisdom. For more information about NEH, visit [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov).