

## Center for Civic Impact Spotlight

*Alecia Bryner is a Museum Educator at Morven Park. As a Museum Educator, she teaches our Center for Civic Impact K-12 programs, contributes to program development, and leads public tours in the historic Davis Mansion.*

When you stand on the portico of the Davis Mansion on an early spring morning, you can see the sun rising over the wide fields on the eastern side of Morven Park. Looking closely through the dewy, misty trees you might also see birds swooping between branches, deer roaming the front lawn, and families walking their dogs on paths and trails. Recently, that view was punctuated by Tuscarora High School Students marching through the fields, making their way to Morven Park to participate in one of our Center for Civic Impact's longest running programs, ***The Advocacy Game***.

*The Advocacy Game* is a day-long program for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students comprised of three rounds that walks students through the process of creating compelling campaigns about four separate Progressive Era topics: Labor Rights, Immigration, Pure Food, and Environmental Conservation. They explore these issues as Progressive Era citizens, and their teachers act as the elected officials.

In Round One, students are divided into four different teams with each team representing one topic. They must look through primary resources, and analyze the viewpoints of the many stakeholders who are impacted by the issues. Teams are rewarded after Round One if they include all the positive and negative sides of the stakeholder viewpoints, earning the right to spy on the other groups as they prepare for the next presentation.

For Round Two teams develop a solution to their focus issue that balances the needs of all constituents. They must create a presentation and poster to communicate a thoughtful and balanced solution to receive the support of the elected officials. The more factual, interesting, and passionate the presentation, the more the teams will be rewarded, earning the right to lobby their elected officials and lock in votes before the all-important last round.

In the last round students upped the ante by creating a compelling campaign, including either a banner, march, protest song, broadsides, soapbox speech, or come up with a unique combination of all the above! The creativity we see during this round is incredible - it's not surprising to see dancing, singing, and theatrics incorporated into their presentations.

At the end, everyone gets a chance to vote for the group that delivered the most persuasive advocacy campaign. Winning teams earn a coveted spot in our newsletter (see below) and usually earn a few bonus points with their teachers, and, of course, bragging rights.

Take a look at what the winning groups from both high schools came up with this year!

[Winning Team #1](#)

[Winning Team #2](#)

[Winning Team #3](#)

[Winning Team #4](#)

*The Advocacy Game* was developed to align directly with the Loudoun County Public School's 11<sup>th</sup> grade US and Virginia History curriculum. Learning skills like collaboration, decision-making, prioritization, and public speaking will help these students become the civic leaders of our future. If you would like to show your support for Morven Park and our youth civics programming, make a donation at [www.MorvenPark.org/DonateNow](http://www.MorvenPark.org/DonateNow).