



# WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION EVALUATION BRIEF



## SELECTED FINDINGS FROM THE DECEMBER 2007 RMC RESEARCH STUDY

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution promotes understanding of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and American democracy. The We the People program, developed by the Center for Civic Education, is implemented in all fifty states. In 2006–2007, the RMC Research Corporation conducted a quasi-experimental study to examine the effects of the We the People program on high school students' political knowledge, civic skills, and civic attitudes. The study included 822 program participants who were compared to 735 students in high school government classes with similar demographics. In addition, We the People students' post-survey scores were compared with the scores of 119 political science students at two universities.

## MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS

Participating students made significantly greater gains than comparison students in their understanding of the following:

- Core values and principles of democracy
- Constitutional limits on governmental institutions
- Rights and responsibilities of citizenship

Participants also improved their civic skills, including their abilities to analyze issues, debate, persuade, and achieve group consensus.

### WE THE PEOPLE STUDENTS SCORED 36% HIGHER THAN THEIR PEERS AND 30% HIGHER ON AVERAGE THAN COLLEGE STUDENTS ON A COMPREHENSIVE TEST OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE.

