

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

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**Kansas Teacher Nathan McAlister
Named 2010 National History Teacher of the Year**

New York, NY (October 14, 2010)—Nathan McAlister, a history teacher at Royal Valley Middle School in Mayetta, Kansas, has been named the 2010 National History Teacher of the Year, announced the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. The National History Teacher of the Year Award (formerly the Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award), co-sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, HISTORY™ (The History Channel), and Preserve America, carries a \$10,000 prize. The winner was honored at a ceremony attended by retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in Washington, D.C. last night.

In her remarks, Justice O'Connor praised Nathan McAlister for...INSERT QUOTATION ABOUT NATHAN MCALISTER and HISTORY EDUCATION.

A thirteen-year veteran of the classroom, he holds a M.A. in teaching history from Emporia State University and a B.A. in history and education from Kansas State University. He has served on the Executive Board of the Kansas Council for History Education, developed lessons for the Kansas State Historical Society, and established many other history education initiatives connected to his classroom.

"McAlister's classroom has no walls when it comes to learning about American history," notes Edward DeKeyser, principal of Royal Valley. A prime example can be seen in McAlister's seventh grade classroom. There his students have researched local Underground Railroad history and petitioned representatives to push a bill—a bill they drafted in class—marking a portion of a nearby highway as an Underground Railroad trail. To the delight of the students, the Kansas state legislature passed the bill into law.

"Nathan McAlister's daily commitment and creativity in the classroom is essential to the livelihood of American history education," said James Basker, president of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. "Teachers are the lifeblood of the education system and the heroes of our culture. The Institute is proud to honor Mr. McAlister as part of our broader efforts to enrich and preserve quality history education at all levels."

Dr. Libby O'Connell, SVP Corporate Outreach and Chief Historian, HISTORY™ stated, "HISTORY is proud to join with the Gilder Lehrman Institute in recognizing Nathan McAlister as National History

Teacher of the Year. His expertise and dedication exemplify the qualities needed to inspire not only his students but teachers everywhere. We are honored to play a role in highlighting the work of Mr. McAlister and other outstanding history teachers throughout the country.”

All of McAlister’s students participate in primary document research, reenactments, simulations, and field trips to historic sites. In addition, McAlister developed a History Fair for Royal Valley Middle School and currently serves as advisor to the school’s history club.

“Authentic experience of place, use of primary sources and active participation by students are essential strategies for understanding history and gaining important perspectives on contemporary issues,” said Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. “We need to widely share Nathan McAlister’s efforts in encouraging similar place-based educational and involvement strategies across the nation.”

The panel of judges included Elaine Reed, former executive director of the National Council for History Education, Tim Bailey, the 2009 winner of the prize, and Clement Price, Rutgers University Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor of History and director of the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience.

Nathan McAlister was chosen as the 2010 National History Teacher of the Year from a pool of winners from each of the fifty states, Washington, D.C., U.S. Territories, and Department of Defense Schools. The National History Teacher of the Year Award recognizes the country’s most outstanding history teachers in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Each year, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History administers the award by seeking exemplary history educators who address literacy and content beyond state standards while utilizing primary documents, artifacts, historic sites, and other primary materials of history, including oral history. Each state honoree receives \$1,000 and an archive of books and resources from Gilder Lehrman and HISTORY™ (The History Channel)—co-sponsor of the award— for his or her school’s library.

Nominations Open for 2011

On November 1, 2010, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History will begin accepting nominations for the 2011 National History Teacher of the Year—to be given to the most outstanding history educators of grades kindergarten through six in each state, Washington, D.C., U.S. territory, Department of Defense and U.S. State Department Schools. For more information about the nomination process for 2011, visit www.gilderlehrman.org/nhtoy.

About Justice Sandra Day O’Connor

Sandra Day O’Connor (Retired), Associate Justice, was born in El Paso, Texas, March 26, 1930. She married John Jay O’Connor III in 1952 and has three sons - Scott, Brian, and Jay. She received her B.A. and LL.B. from Stanford University. She served as Deputy County Attorney of San Mateo County, California from 1952–1953 and as a civilian attorney for Quartermaster Market Center, Frankfurt, Germany from 1954–1957. From 1958–1960, she practiced law in Maryvale, Arizona, and served as Assistant Attorney General of Arizona from 1965–1969. She was appointed to the Arizona State Senate in 1969 and was subsequently reelected to two two-year terms. In 1975 she was elected Judge of the Maricopa County Superior Court and served until 1979, when she was appointed to the Arizona Court of Appeals. President Reagan nominated her as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and she took her seat September 25, 1981. Justice O’Connor retired from the Supreme Court on January 31, 2006.

About the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

Founded in 1994, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is a nonprofit organization improving and enriching American history education through a wide range of programs and resources for students, teachers, scholars, and history enthusiasts throughout the nation. In addition to administering the State and National History Teacher of the Year Award, Gilder Lehrman creates and works closely with history-focused schools; organizes summer seminars and development programs for teachers; produces print and digital publications and traveling exhibitions; hosts lectures by eminent historians; and offers national book prizes and fellowships for scholars to work in the Gilder Lehrman Collection as well as other renowned archives. Gilder Lehrman hosts www.gilderlehrman.org, serving as the gateway to American history online and featuring the quarterly online journal *History Now*, designed specifically for K-12 teachers and students.

About HISTORY™

HISTORY™ (The History Channel) and HISTORY HD™ are the leading destinations for revealing, award-winning original non-fiction series and event-driven specials that connect history with viewers in an informative, immersive and entertaining manner across multiple platforms. Programming covers a diverse variety of historical genres ranging from military history to contemporary history, technology to natural history, as well as science, archaeology and pop culture. Among the network's program offerings are hit series such as *Ax Men*, *Battle 360*, *How The Earth Was Made*, *Ice Road Truckers*, *Pawn Stars* and *The Universe*, as well as acclaimed specials including *102 Minutes That Changed America*, *1968 with Tom Brokaw*, *King*, *Life After People*, *Nostradamus: 2012*, *Star Wars: The Legacy Revealed* and *WWII in HD*. HISTORY has earned four Peabody Awards, seven Primetime Emmy® Awards, 12 News & Documentary Emmy® Awards and received the prestigious Governor's Award from the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for the network's Save Our History® campaign dedicated to historic preservation and history education. *Take a Veteran to School Day* is the network's latest initiative connecting America's schools and communities with veterans from all wars. The HISTORY™ web site, located at www.history.com, is the definitive historical online source that delivers entertaining and informative content featuring broadband video, interactive timelines, maps, games, podcasts and more.

About Preserve America

Preserve America is a national initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the program include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Detailed information on all aspects of this initiative can be found at www.preserveamerica.gov.