



For Immediate Release

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Norwich Student's National History Day Project to be Displayed at Smithsonian Showcase

Hartford, Conn – Joseph Cook, a junior at Norwich Free Academy in Norwich, Connecticut, will join a select group of students across the country whose National History Day submissions will be displayed online in a Smithsonian Museum of American History showcase.

A cooperative exhibit sponsored by the Smithsonian Learning Lab and the Smithsonian Museum of American History, this online showcase will feature 53 exhibits designed by middle and high school students competing in the 2022 NHD National Contest. This year's showcase is available for view from June 13 - 27 at

<https://learninglab.si.edu/collections/national-history-day-at-nmaahc-student-documentary-showcase-2022/kIAzLJawrEuTd2GF>.

Joseph Cook's project, "**Duck Diplomacy: How Walt Disney Saved FDR's Good Neighbor Policy,**" examined the effects of "The Goodwill Tour" of South America undertaken by Walter E. Disney in 1941, a diplomatic trip he made for the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. Joseph's original research concluded that Walt Disney's diplomatic tour, unique for its hands-on approach to interacting with local citizens, did indeed contribute to the success of then-President Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy, helping the U.S. gain a foothold in South America and prevent further Nazi incursion in the area.

Joseph's project was honored with inclusion in this showcase for its excellent exposition of the 2022 NHD theme, "Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences." The exhibit won second place in the Senior Individual Exhibit category at Connecticut History Day in April. "Duck Diplomacy" is now one of 36 projects by Connecticut students in the running for National History honors this month.

"We are heartened to see that [students] continue to excel and innovate, learning about the past through deep research and expressing their arguments in such meaningful ways," shares Executive Director Cathy Gorn. "We are also very grateful that our partner, the National

Museum of American History, has shared their time and resources to showcase the stellar work of these history students.”

[Connecticut History Day](https://www.historydayct.org/) is one of 58 affiliate programs of National History Day. The program annually engages thousands of Connecticut middle- and high-school students in historical research, interpretation, and creative expression through project-based learning. The program seeks to bring students, teachers, museums, and scholars together to support young people as they engage in history. A program in residence at Connecticut’s Old State House, Connecticut History Day is presented with major funding and partnership support from CT Humanities. Program support given by the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area and New Haven Museum. More information is available at <https://www.historydayct.org/>

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