



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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## National Park Service News Release

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### Lincoln Home National Historic Site joins with PEN OR PENCIL™ to Inspire Children through “Journey to Greatness: Character Lessons from the Past”

**SPRINGFIELD** – Lincoln Home National Historic Site is pleased to announce a cooperative effort with the National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ) PEN or PENCIL™ initiative to present a “Journey to Greatness: Character Lessons from the Past.” The program will provide students with encouraging lessons and positive role models from the Civil War to Civil Rights era. The Journey to Greatness program is set to launch during the fall of 2012.

“Journey to Greatness: Character Lessons from the Past” is an on line interactive lesson that will provide insight into the stories of Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Martin Luther King, Jr. “Journey to Greatness” does not teach about the greatness that these historic characters achieved as adults, but stands as an example to students on the positive choices that these heroes made as children.

“Journey to Greatness” will be used in all PEN OR PENCIL™ sites and in collaborative locations by the National Alliance of Faith and Justice and its partner, the National CARES Mentoring Movement, as a mentor-assisted orientation to the PEN OR PENCIL™ curriculum to help students discover how challenges, such as fear; prejudice; poverty; not fitting in; or, anger, can be overcome by demonstrating how heroes from our past made difficult but positive choices as children, thereby allowing students to reflect on their own challenges while also “helping” the historic characters solve the challenges they faced.

“Journey to Greatness” will inspire new skills and will help students and their families to learn more about the National Parks and other historic sites and museums through PEN OR PENCIL™ that are dedicated to the stories of these and other heroes. At these places, students and families can experience Lincoln's humble beginnings while surrounded by the hills and forests that he knew growing up; they learn about the life of a former slave turned abolitionist at the Frederick Douglass home; they can learn about the fear of slavery and hope of freedom along the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom; and they can learn how the past can inspire our future at Martin Luther King, Jr.'s boyhood home. These places and stories support educational standards, personal empowerment, and can change children's lives today as furthered by PEN or PENCIL™.

“Journey to Greatness: Character Lessons from the Past” was produced by Lincoln Home National Historic Site through a grant from the Fetzer Institute. “Journey to Greatness” was developed by Teleologic Learning Company with considerable in-kind time donated to the project. Springfield Public School teachers and others provided valuable comments. “Journey to Greatness” addresses a variety of the newly adopted “Common Core” state educational standards initiative and provides lesson plan ideas and links to additional web resources. “Journey to Greatness: Character Lessons from the Past” will be located on the World Wide Web at [www.teleologic.net/Journey/html/index.html](http://www.teleologic.net/Journey/html/index.html). Information on PEN or PENCIL is available at [www.penorpencilmovement.org](http://www.penorpencilmovement.org)

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*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 395 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*