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**National Archives Hosts National Conversation on Rights and Justice:  
Educational Access and Equity in Dallas**

DALLAS – The National Archives and the National Archives Foundation held the fifth in its “National Conversations” series last night in Dallas, in partnership with the Perot Museum of Nature and Science.

This event focused on the most critical educational issues in front of our nation today with experts and activists discussing topics ranging from the modern American school system to equal access to education. The event featured panel discussions and remarks by national figures including **Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero** and author and journalist **Cokie Roberts**.

“As a longtime educator, and the first in my immediate family to graduate from college, I recognize and deeply value the importance of educational access and equity,” said **Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero**. “While our country’s founding documents, housed in the National Archives, underscore these principles, their application to education continues to be questioned and debated. I am glad we had the opportunity to discuss these issues today.”

Held from spring 2016 to early 2017, the “[National Conversation](#)” series explores topics related to the continuing and often complicated issues of rights in our modern era, including: immigration rights/reform, civil rights and individual freedom, and women’s rights and gender equality.

The National Archives Foundation has created an online portal where visitors can watch an archived video of the event and engage in discussions via social media. Follow the conversation using #RightsAndJustice and learn more at: [www.AmendingAmerica.org](http://www.AmendingAmerica.org).

*The “National Conversation on Rights and Justice” in Dallas is presented in part by AT&T, Ford Foundation, Seedlings Foundation, and the National Archives Foundation.*

“AT&T has evolved alongside the history of our great nation, and our 140 year history, much like our nation’s – is one of innovation, diversity, inclusion, equal opportunity, and of people committed to building great things” said **Nicole Anderson**, AVP, Social Innovation and President of the AT&T Foundation. “AT&T is committed to advancing education and improving lives through our community initiatives, and we are proud to be a part of this great cause, and excited to participate in this conversation and the nationwide tour of *Amending America*.”

**Mr. Ferriero**, National Archives Foundation Executive Director **Patrick M. Madden**, and **Ms. Anderson** provided opening remarks, followed by a keynote discussion between **Ms. Roberts** and President of the National Math and Science Initiative **Gregg Fleisher** entitled, “Quality Education for Everyone.”

The keynote was followed by a panel entitled “Continued Redefinition of Equal Access,” moderated by **Ms. Roberts**. Panelists included **Hector Flores**, League of United Latin American Citizens; **Sharon E. Shaffer, Ph.D.**, Early Learning in Museums, Inc.; **Michael J. Sorrell, Ed.D.**, Paul Quinn College; and **Todd A. Williams**, Commit!

The first “National Conversation,” held in Atlanta, focused on civil rights and justice and featured a Q&A between former **President Jimmy Carter** and CEO of the National Civil and Human Rights Center, **Derreck Kayongo**. The second “National Conversation,” held in Chicago, focused on the challenges to and future of civil and human rights for the LGBTQ community and featured a keynote by noted author and poet **Richard Blanco**. The third “National Conversation,” held in New York, focused on women’s rights, gender equality, and advocacy and featured panel discussions and remarks by national figures including **U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler**, New York City Council Speaker **Melissa Mark-Viverito**, and award-winning broadcast anchor and CEO of Starfish Media Group **Soledad O’Brien**. The fourth “National Conversation,” held in Los Angeles, focused on past and current immigration barriers, and featured panel discussions and remarks by thought leader **Julissa Arce**, President of the U.S.-Japan Council **Irene Hirano Inouye**, and author and cultural critic **Jeff Yang**. The final event on “Building a More Perfect Union” will be held in the spring in Washington, D.C. Archived video and further details on the series are available at: <https://www.archivesfoundation.org/amendingamerica/conversations>.

The “National Conversation” series is running in conjunction with *Amending America*, open now in the [Lawrence F. O’Brien Gallery](#) at the National Archives Museum in Washington, DC. The exhibition showcases both successful and unsuccessful attempts to amend the Constitution as part of the National Archives’ commemoration of the 225th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights.

**About the National Archives:** The National Archives and Records Administration is an independent federal agency that serves American democracy by safeguarding and preserving the records of our Government, so people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage. The National Archives ensures continuing access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government. From the Declaration of Independence to accounts of ordinary Americans, the holdings of the National Archives directly touch the lives of millions of people. The agency supports democracy, promotes civic education, and facilitates historical understanding of our national experience. The National Archives carries out its mission through a nationwide network of archives, records centers, and Presidential Libraries, and online at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov).

**About the National Archives Foundation:** The National Archives Foundation is an independent nonprofit that increases public awareness of the National Archives, inspires a deeper appreciation of our country’s heritage, and encourages citizen engagement in our democracy. The Foundation generates financial and creative support for National Archives exhibitions, public programs, and educational initiatives, introducing America’s records to people around the U.S. and the world. Learn more at [www.archivesfoundation.org](http://www.archivesfoundation.org).

**About the Perot Museum of Nature and Science:** The top cultural attraction in Dallas/Fort Worth and a Michelin Green Guide three-star destination, the Perot Museum of Nature and Science is a nonprofit educational organization located in the heart of Dallas, with campuses in Victory Park and Fair Park. With a mission to inspire minds through nature and science, the Perot Museum delivers exciting, engaging and innovative visitor and outreach experiences through its education, exhibition, and research and collections programming for children, students, teachers, families and life-long learners. The 180,000-square-foot facility in Victory Park opened in December 2012 and is now recognized as the symbolic gateway to the Dallas Arts District. Future scientists, mathematicians and engineers will find inspiration and enlightenment through 11 permanent exhibit halls on five floors of public space; a children's museum; a state-of-the art traveling exhibition hall; and The Hoglund Foundation Theater, a National Geographic Experience. Designed by 2005 Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate Thom Mayne and his firm Morphosis Architects, the Victory Park museum has been lauded for its artistry and sustainability. To learn more, please visit [www.perotmuseum.org](http://www.perotmuseum.org).