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While politics divide us, core values can connect us.

America is at a crossroads. Ironically, our democracy's foundations – holding elections and legislating laws – have turned into machines that are splintering our country apart. Constant partisanship, negative campaigning, gerrymandering and unlimited campaign donations have polarized Americans more than ever; according to a major study from the Pew Research Center.

Declining civic knowledge and engagement compound this problem, as new reports from the Educational Testing Service and Xavier University reveal.

When the votes are counted and the work of governing must resume, our nation lacks the structural tools needed to restart a productive dialog, heal partisan fractures, and reconnect citizens and elected officials on a common ground where we can work together.

Partnering with the National Education Association and its 3.2 million educators and Grandparents.com and its one million members, Purple America® believes the time is right to develop leaders who can reconnect Americans through helping them recognize and act on twelve intrinsic American values.

Discovered through 1,000 in-person interviews conducted nationwide, these values are not political – they are foundational. The twelve ideals that Americans have treasured since our nation's founding and still hold dear are: **Equality, Faith, Family, Freedom, Love and Respect, Self-Expression, Doing the Right Thing, Community, Giving Back, the Good Life, Opportunity and Success.**

Mission and Strategy:

Purple America's mission is to foster a widely understood, cohesive American identity deeply rooted in these shared values that will counter the forces that divide us and empower Americans to participate in respectful dialogue on key issues, envision a more positive future, and work together to resolve our nation's challenges.

To achieve these goals, Purple America will provide educators, parents and grandparents, business leaders and elected officials with tools they need to become 'Nation-Builders' - Americans who:

- Seek a cohesive American identity over partisan bickering and personal or regional agendas;
- Commit to build on our strengths through civil and productive dialog and action, and
- Serve as advocates for national healing.

To empower and train each group, Purple America will work with other partners and experts to create and publicize online and printed Engagement Toolkits that offer tools specific to each group's needs, enabling them to engage their constituencies in civil dialog and positive action around shared values.

Over the next two years:

- **Educators, parents and grandparents, and business leaders** will facilitate discussion with America's students, families and employees about who we are and what we stand for -- and find ways to put our values-in-action in schools, businesses and communities;
- **Elected officials** will be trained in Appreciative Inquiry skills to give them effective tactics for working together to tackle our nation's problems; and
- **Media, financial, religious and political leaders** will model respectful, outcome-driven dialog in critical areas of American life through taking part in several televised and streamed "Values Forums" that will be edited and repurposed for radio, podcasts and classroom use.



Stuart Muszynski, Rep. Tim Johnson (R-Il 15) & Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-Mo 5), "Getting to Common Ground" Values Forum

In addition, Purple America will launch annual media-worthy events to encourage and showcase civic engagement, co-market with major brands, involve thought leaders and celebrities, air PSAs, and mount an aggressive public relations, advertising and social media campaign.

Tying events to the election and inauguration will highlight the need to reconnect and find common ground.

Objectives and Results:

Through these efforts, Purple America will engage 1,000,000 or more active participants in schools, homes, businesses and communities from 2012 to 2014 and reach at least 60 million Americans from all walks of life, especially in the top 20 U.S. markets.

The initiative will create lasting change by engaging Nation-Builders to work with young people to seed a widely understood American identity deeply rooted in America's shared values, sparking a new commitment to dialog and civic involvement nationwide.

Program Partners:

The NEA, Institute for American Values, Gordon Heffern Institute and Grandparents.com will help our team of seasoned professionals and exceptional advisors to execute our detailed action plan. Our parent organization, Project Love[®], is uniquely qualified to implement this project, having produced dozens of high profile events for 18 years. The group has trained over 60,000 teens and 2,300 educators to create a culture of kindness, caring, and respect by putting their values-in-action wherever they go. (Learn more at <http://www.projectlove.org>.)

The \$3.5 million program budget will be funded by foundations, corporate partners, associations and individuals. \$448,000 in corporate, association and individual support has funded the program so far.

To measure program success, Purple America will track and report numbers of event and program participants, web visitors, engagement toolkits distributed and downloaded, values forum viewers, social media activity and online trending through keyword alerts.

Additional materials including in-depth profiles of Project Love, the NEA and key personnel; timeline and action plan; values forum descriptions, and more detailed evaluation measures, are available on request.

Will You Join Us?

Will Americans continue to be sucked in a descending spiral of negative partisanship that drives us further apart as the challenges we face grow more daunting each year?

Within every crisis lies an opportunity: By supporting Purple America's Re-Imagine America campaign, you can help reverse this negative trend by creating a foundational change in America--engaging new leaders, creating new forums for civil productive dialog and action, and fostering a cohesive American identity deeply rooted in our positive shared values that will enable us to work together to solve our problems.

Contact us at 216-650-0463 to learn how to get involved. Visit <http://www.purpleamerica.us> and <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stuart-muszynski/> to learn more. Look for our new website by August.