



Highlights



Since its inception in 2000, the National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ) has distinguished itself as a leader, to include recognition by the White House in its championship of federal investment in solid links with national initiatives. NAFJ has fulfilled priorities of multiple federal partners to include the **U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Education**, and served as a prior multi-year national intermediary for **Martin Luther King Day of Service** sub-awards for the **Corporation for National and Community Service**.

Since 2005, **PEN OR PENCIL™ (POP)** has been implemented through a growing and diverse nationwide network of autonomous affiliates who enter into Memorandum of Understanding with NAFJ (subject to appropriate review and screening of oversight coordinators and certifications) to introduce the evidence-based curriculum for classroom delivery, school- and/or community-based mentoring, professional development for educators, service learning, and as a prevention/intervention approach.

POP, by design, involves the robust use of history, to include, but not limited to the quest for freedom by the enslaved; from civil war to the ongoing struggle for civil and human rights; and contributions of African American history to help participants understand or connect with contemporary issues, such as the pursuit of justice in a civil society. POP curriculum activities uncover buried stories, present multiple points of view, and encourage inquiry and civic dialog as well as the use of social science research to maintain best practices in interpretation, education, and public engagement.

In 2006, **POP** received endorsement from the **National Council for the Social Studies**. The curriculum series uses eight of 10 thematic strands of the National Standards for the Social Studies.

In 2007, **POP** was identified as a national model for success and cited as an *Emerging Practice* by the **National Association of State Directors of Special Education** and the **National Disability Rights Network** as published in *Promoting Educational Success and Reducing Delinquency*, a toolkit resulting from a national policy initiative related to the educational needs of court involved youth.

In 2008, **POP** was a model featured by the **U.S. Department of Education Elementary and Secondary Education, Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs** in *Toolkit*



2.0: *Meeting the Educational Needs of Youth Exposed to the Juvenile Justice System.* The approach was cited as a social studies curriculum that teaches responsibility and good decision making.

Pursuant to Public Law 105-203 enacted July 1998, on August 21, 2012, NAFJ met the qualifications for **POP** and became an official program of the **National Park Service (NPS) Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.**

Supported by resources from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, from 2011-2014, NAFJ provided oversight for a three-year demonstration to increase the number of African American mentors available to age appropriate youth who were served by **POP** in 12 states. Under the demonstration, POP activities successfully served over 30,000 youth through group and peer mentoring.

- Pursuant to a three-year random study of 1930 African American youth who participated in POP during the demonstration, the Association of Black Psychologists published findings in a peer reviewed publication, *the Journal of Black Psychology*, providing data and supporting empirically evidence suggesting that enhancing cultural consciousness may support the positive development of African American youth, *Culture, Racial Socialization, and Positive African American Youth Development*, March 28, 2015.

In 2011, **POP** was expanded to affiliations with international partners to include the **John Freeman Walls National Historic Site** located in Ontario, Canada, and the pursuit of human rights in Trinidad/Tobago in partnership with the **National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice** and the **Ministry of National Security Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service.**

In keeping with efforts by NPS to develop new national partnerships as liaisons, in 2013, NAFJ entered into initial cooperative agreement with the agency and became a primary partner in the planning and coordination of the **NPS Civil Rights Commemorative events and activities** designed to engage youth civic engagement, cultural-based mentoring, volunteerism, and educational opportunities for diverse youth communities. NAFJ/POP served as lead partner in joint efforts to commemorate the **50th Anniversary of the March on Washington** by co-hosting the *POP March on Washington Youth Education and Mentoring Summit* at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. Excerpts from the event may be viewed on the **CSPAN** network in a segment called “**Civil Rights and Mentoring.**”

- Renewed by NPS for five additional years in July 2017, NAFJ entered into cooperative agreement to fulfill *Opportunities for Social Research on History; Youth Centered Education and Programming.*

More information can be found on our website, www.penorpencilmovement.org.

