



The *We the People* state champion team from Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies will compete at the national competition in April. With the team members are State Rep. Patricia H. Smith, Haynes Academy Principal Karla Russo and team teacher Chris Totaro.

## Haynes Academy Wins State *We the People* Event

**W***e the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* is one of the programs the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education utilizes to promote civic competence and responsibility among Louisiana's students. What makes this program successful is the design of its instructional program, including its innovative culminating activity, the simulated congressional hearing in which students "testify" before a panel of judges. At the state-level competition, students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and have opportunities to evaluate, take and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues.

This year's competition was held in Baton Rouge and teams from Central Private,

Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies, Helen Cox High School, John Ehret High School and Glenbrook School vied for the top spot. The Haynes Academy team, led by teacher Chris Totaro, emerged as the victor. Teachers Matthew Edwards, Alicia Ferguson, Jonetta Jackson, Bradley Kiff and Totaro are to be commended on the outstanding performances of their teams.

The distinguished panel of judges included State Rep. Julie S. Stokes; Superintendent (Ret.) Darryl C. Kilbert, Orleans Parish Public Schools; Louisiana *We the People* alumni representative Tyler Barker; Heather W. Angelico; Lloyd Bartolome; Jessica G. Braun; Matt Byrne; Belinda M. Cambre, JD, Ph.D.; Allison Clarke; Elizabeth A. Killian; Nahum D. Laventhal; Thuy Le; Philip Lundy; Ann Majeste; Ben R. Miller, Jr.; John North; Carla Powell; Charles P.

Regnard; Mary Jo L. Roberts; Shirley A. Snyder; and Betty W. Wilkerson.

Guests and participants on hand for the event were guest speaker State Rep. Patricia Haynes Smith, Haynes Academy Principal Karla Russo, Helen Cox Principal Mark Perry, Haynes Academy teacher Jamie Staub and Central Private cosponsor and school librarian Renee Martin.

Also present were John Alexander, Louisiana Project Citizen state coordinator; Carl Dermady, Jr., retired Jefferson Parish social studies consultant; and *We the People* District Coordinators Vickie Hebert, Michelle Molina and Robert Rome.

The Haynes Academy team will represent Louisiana at the National *We the People* Competition in late April in Washington D.C.