

# THE GEORGE WASHINGTON PORTRAIT PROGRAM

## *Returning "The Father of Our Country" to Schools Across the Nation*

For years, older Americans have told us that when they attended school, George Washington was an enduring presence in the classroom. His portrait hung on the wall with pride, providing inspiration to the entire class.

Most of these portraits were placed in classrooms around 1932, the bicentennial of Washington's birth, so it is not surprising that 75 years later, they have disappeared. At the same time, the attention Washington receives in history textbooks has declined tremendously.

But one thing hasn't changed – Washington continues to this day to be the best example of character and leadership in American history. His life and legacies can still provide inspiration to each new generation.

In honor of Washington's 275th birthday, Mount Vernon is initiating an aggressive national campaign to return George Washington's portrait to its rightful place in schools across the nation. The details are as follows:

### **WHAT PORTRAIT HAS BEEN SELECTED?**

Rather than the standard Gilbert Stuart rendition, which doesn't flatter Washington and depicts him in his later years, Mount Vernon has selected the popular "porthole portrait" by Rembrandt Peale. The portrait will be reproduced on canvas and set off by an elegant black frame with a gold-leaf style inner border. A small bronze plate will note the subject and artist. The finished size is approximately 24 by 36 inches, large enough to make a strong impression, yet modest enough to be accommodated on a prominent wall in modern school designs.

### **HOW WILL SCHOOLS BE SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE PORTRAIT?**

Because many modern classrooms are not designed to accommodate large artworks, we will ask the principal of a school to select an important space in a lobby, reception hall, or assembly room to hang the portrait. In most cases, Mount Vernon will use its extensive contacts with educators throughout America to determine which schools want the portrait and can easily accommodate its scale. In some cases, donors can participate in the selection process. For a specific school to be considered, a written request from the principal must clearly state that the portrait will be used in a prominent position. A street address and telephone number must also be provided for UPS delivery. No portraits will be delivered to schools unless this confirmation has been received.

### **CAN LOCAL DONORS DELIVER PORTRAITS TO SCHOOLS?**

For safety and insurance reasons, all portraits will be sent by Mount Vernon directly to the school. However, the portrait will be accompanied by a simple "Celebrate George Washington" kit, which recommends ways to develop lesson plans, programs, and ceremonies surrounding the placement of the portrait. Donors are encouraged to play a role in the organization and implementation of these programs.

## **HOW MUCH DOES A PORTRAIT SPONSORSHIP COST?**

Your contribution of \$275 will make it possible for one school to receive, at no charge, this beautiful framed portrait and the "Celebrate George Washington" kit. A gift of \$2,500 will distribute 14 portraits, and \$5,000 will deliver portraits to 28 schools.

## **WHEN WILL SCHOOLS RECEIVE THEIR PORTRAITS?**

The portraits are being distributed in 2008, many in time for the celebration of George Washington's birthday on February 22.

## **HOW CAN MY GIFT BE MADE?**

Like any gift to Mount Vernon, your donation to the portrait program can be made by check, credit card, or the transfer of securities. All gifts are tax-deductible under the limits of the law.

## **WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS?**

Mount Vernon's Development Office is the headquarters for this creative outreach program. Please contact Ellen Smith at 703/799-8642, or email to [esmith@mountvernon.org](mailto:esmith@mountvernon.org)



*The famous porthole portrait of George Washington by Rembrandt Peale reveals the strength of his character. When elegantly framed, it will serve as a handsome and inspirational focal point in schools across the nation.*

**SAMPLE PORTRAIT ACCEPTANCE LETTER**

*(Please prepare on official stationery)*

To: Executive Director, George Washington's Mount Vernon

From: (Name and title of principal or responsible school official)

*(Name of Donor)* has informed us that they have made a donation to Mount Vernon to make it possible for our school to receive a framed portarit of George Washington.

Our school, *(name of school)*, in *(town, state)*, would like to receive this framed portrait. We agree to hang this portrait in a prominent place in our school. In all likelihood, this place would be *(location at school where portrait will hang)*.

The portrait should be delivered by UPS to the following street address:

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Attention: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Principal  
(or appropriate school official)*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Development Office  
Attn: Ellen Smith  
George Washington's Mount Vernon  
P.O. Box 110  
Mount Vernon, Virginia 22121