



STAR-SPANGLED 200, INC.

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PRESS RELEASE

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ONLINE WAR OF 1812 TEACHING TECHNOLOGY LAUNCHED AT CHARLESMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Baltimore, MD (Sept. 14) Today, fifth grade students at Charlesmont Elementary School were among the first Maryland students to receive a Star-Spangled experience with the newly-launched War of 1812 virtual resource center, warof1812.thinkport.org. Taking a “first-person” approach to the War of 1812, students dove into a modern-day history lesson featuring *Hold the Fort*, an interactive game about the bombardment of Fort McHenry and other engaging classroom resources. Sen. Ben Cardin and representatives from Maryland Public Television, the National Park Service, the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission, and the Fort McHenry Guard joined students and educators to recognize the debut of the new suite of classroom resources on Thinkport.org.

“Thinkport is an exciting project because it demonstrates how students will learn in the future using interactive techniques that will help them understand and experience what the War of 1812 was really like and why it was so important to our nation,” said U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin. “This new learning tool is funded by the Department of Education as a way to help history come alive for our students.”

“I see students who are excited because the lessons are interactive and fun,” said Charlesmont Fifth Grade Teacher Kelly Martin. “Everything I need to teach is right here in one place, including primary resource documents like letters or journals from the war.”





To support the three-year bicentennial commemoration and to ensure that every student has a Star-Spangled experience, Maryland organizations joined together to create this online gateway of free resources spotlighting the people, places and events significant to the War of 1812.

“We are delighted to be part of this important education collaborative and bring Maryland’s proud history to classrooms across the state,” said Larry Unger president and chief executive officer at MPT. “MPT continues to provide War of 1812 content and programming to educate and entertain our audience.”

A favorite activity for the students was playing “*Hold the Fort*,” an interactive game on the site that invites students to relive the Battle of Baltimore and the bombardment of Fort McHenry. “It’s important that we commemorate Maryland’s contributions to the defense of a nation during the War of 1812,” said Bill Pencek, executive director of the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission. “The interactive nature of the game makes this period in history relevant for today’s youth.”

“This Thinkport resource significantly advances the National Park Service mission to educate with leading-edge technologies,” said John Maounis, superintendent of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. “And it’s exciting to partner with MPT, Fort McHenry, and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority to accomplish something so valuable for educators everywhere.”

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About Star-Spangled 200, Inc.

Star-Spangled 200, Inc. is the non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that supports the fundraising goals of the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission and is charged with helping to ensure the realization of successful programs, events, and community investment during the three-year commemoration period. For more information: visit www.starspangled200.com.





About the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission

Established by Governor Martin O'Malley, the commission is staffed by the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Division of Tourism Film and the Arts. The bicentennial period runs from June 2012 through February 2015. It commemorates Maryland's unique contributions to the defense and heritage of the nation, including the pivotal battle that led to an American victory and the birth of "The Star-Spangled Banner." For more information: visit www.starspangled200.org.

About the War of 1812 Virtual Resource Center on Thinkport

The War of 1812 Virtual Resource Center on Thinkport.org offers Maryland educators, students and families the opportunity to learn about the people, places and events surrounding this epic event. The site's rich education resources include interactive games, activities, lessons, multimedia and field trips. In support of the bicentennial, The War of 1812 website is a production of Maryland Public Television/Thinkport in collaboration with the Friends of Fort McHenry and the National Park Service. The content of this website was supported in part by the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, the National Park Service and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, and developed with the support of the Living Classrooms Foundation and the Friends of Fort McHenry. For more information, please visit: warof1812.thinkport.org.

About MPT

Launched in 1969 and headquartered in Owings Mills, Maryland, Maryland Public Television is a nonprofit, state-licensed public television network and member of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). MPT's six transmitters cover Maryland plus portions of contiguous states and the District of Columbia. Frequent winner of regional Emmy® awards, MPT creates local, regional, and national television shows. Beyond broadcast, MPT's commitment to professional educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is manifest in its year-round instructional services and super-website *Thinkport* which garners in excess of 1.4 million visits annually. MPT's community engagement connects viewers with local resources on





significant health, education, and public interest topics through year-round outreach events, viewer forums, program screenings, and phone bank call-in opportunities. For more information, please visit: www.mpt.org.

About the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

The trail commemorates the War of 1812 and its legacy in the Chesapeake region. Over 560 miles of land and water routes in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia follow movements of British and American troops during a period of political and social turmoil that forever changed a young democratic nation. For more information: visit www.starspangledtrail.net.

