

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Sheila Smith

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Education is Key-Civics Education* Oral History project

Interview # ECE-A-L-2020-045

Sheila Smith, a career educator/college president's use of the Library of Congress Citizen U Primary Source Nexus in civics education, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key-Civics Education* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Jul 24, 2020      Location: Telephonic interview

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:07 / 1.12 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on November 10, 2020.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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## Abstract

### Sheila Smith, Education is Key – Civics, ECE-A-L-2020-45

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Sheila Smith was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1945, and graduated from Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart in Lake Forest, Illinois. Sheila obtained a BA in political science from Barat College in 1970 and a MA in political science and public administration from the University of Illinois-Chicago (Circle campus) in 1971. Upon graduating, Sheila worked in investment banking. In 1984, she helped create a multi-million dollar company, ARC Global Technologies Inc. In 1995, she served on the National Cooperative Bank and the NCB Development Corporation, which helped expand financing for cooperative businesses. From 2000 to 2012, Sheila served on the Board of Directors of Centers for New Horizons located in Chicago. As the chair and later chief executive office for the Barat College Board of Trustees in 2001, Sheila finalized a merger with DePaul University. In 2001 she became the president of Mount St. Clare College in Clinton, Iowa. At the time of the interview Smith served as the chair and CEO of the Barat Education Foundation, which works with teachers and students on American History, civics education and government courses. Other projects Sheila has been involved with include Kids Voting USA and Reading in Motion. Sheila also has run for political office including the US Congress and State Lt. Governor. Sheila is the President of Consult Ltd. Inc. a financial management consulting company serving small businesses, non-profits, and large public and private sector entities.

Sheila examines the role of the Barat Education Foundation and its work with teachers, school administrators, and students to promote civics education in Illinois through educational programs such as Our American Voice and Citizen U. In addition, Smith talks about the Foundation's relationship with the Library of Congress in promoting the use of primary sources through professional development and school curriculum projects. This includes the Primary Source Nexus website. She also discussed the support the Barat Education Foundation provides in a statewide semester high school-level civics course. Additional interview topics include media literacy, working with other non-profits on civics engagement, 'Kids Voting,' Reading in Motion, and the extensive CPDU professional development opportunities for teachers.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Barat Education Foundation; Barat-Citizen U; Our American Voice; Library of Congress primary source material; civics instruction for teacher training; remote learning during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic; League of United Latin American Citizens Council; Ill mandate for a high school & middle school civics course

**Notes to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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