

PROSPECTUS

CWRT CONGRESS



CWRT CONGRESS

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A 501(c)(3) nonprofit that promotes the sustainability
of Civil War Round Tables.



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

January 2024

On behalf of the CWRT Congress, thank you for taking the time to review this Prospectus, and consider making an investment in the mission of our organization.

Throughout the last few years, we have found that many are looking for ways to enhance their personal knowledge of American history despite the failure of history-related organizations. The CWRT Congress is positioned to influence leaders to adopt practices that will help to ensure the sustainability of Round Tables.

Thus, we seek to enhance the study of the Civil War era of American history, and to provide resources that can assist Civil War Round Tables around the world in better serving not just the Civil War community, but also their home communities.

We would be honored and grateful if you or your organization would consider becoming a philanthropic partner. Your support will help to continue telling the story of the most important chapter of American history.

Sincerely,

Mike Movius
President
CWRT Congress

www.cwrtcongress.org



MISSION

The MISSION of the CWRT Congress is to inspire Civil War Round Table leaders to adapt, adopt, and maintain strategies for sustainability.

VISION

The vision of the CWRT Congress is to foster relationships amongst the numerous Civil War Round Table Congress organizations, and to promote the study of the American Civil War. Through dialogue and sharing of knowledge related to the Civil War, advocating for the preservation of places connected to the Civil War, disseminating the factual history of the Civil War, the promotion of civics education, and advocacy for history and the humanities, we seek to advance the understanding of the Civil War by the people and communities we serve.

STRATEGIC GOALS

STRATEGIC GOALS	GOAL PURPOSE
1. To continue to identify and connect with Civil War Round Tables and their leaders.	<i>Grow, expand, and scale or increase access to Congress' existing programs and services.</i>
2. To encourage and develop a network of Civil War Round Tables that share proven practices.	<i>Focus on core programs to achieve mission and scale back on programs not core.</i>
3. To inspire Civil War Round Tables to become active in their communities and become attractive to greater diversity.	<i>This goal reflects our commitment to further advocacy for our organization and/or public history.</i>



CORE VALUES

INTEGRITY

- Speaking truthfully, acting with honesty and fairness, and behaving professionally.
- Doing the right thing every time.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Taking the long view of the life of the organization.
- Having the ability and willingness to change when circumstances change.

RESPECT

- Valuing everyone for their time, views, and contributions.
- Exhibiting total commitment to the individual, the organization, and the community.

INNOVATION

- Being curious, adventurous, and creative when challenging the status quo.
- Displaying excitement about ingenuity and continuous improvement.

ATTITUDE

- Living fearlessly with humility, gratitude, and appreciation.
- Recognizing and rewarding success.

COLLEGIALITY

- Interacting with colleagues with respect, honesty, teamwork, and collaboration.
- Exhibiting camaraderie and displaying commitment for our common purpose and goals.

CODE OF ETHICS

We, as professionals (volunteers and board members), dedicate ourselves to carrying out the mission of this organization. We will do the following:

1. Recognize that the chief function of CWRT CONGRESS is to serve the best interests of our constituency.
2. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
3. Respect the structure and responsibilities of the board, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for their making policy decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the board.
4. Keep the community informed about issues affecting it.
5. Conduct our organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
6. Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to carry out the mission of the organization.
7. Serve with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness in carrying out the organization's mission.
8. Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our activities to inspire confidence and trust in our activities.
9. Avoid any interest or activity that conflicts with the conduct of our official duties.
10. Respect and protect privileged information to which we have access in the course of our official duties.
11. Strive for personal and professional excellence and encourage the professional developments of others.

VALUE STATEMENT

The relevance and complexity of the Civil War era, including the events leading up to the War and the Reconstruction/Jim Crow era following it, has never been more apparent to the public at-large. Thus, Civil War Round Tables (CWRT) have a wonderful opportunity to be constructive centers of education, activities and dialogue among members and the public.

SUSTAINABILITY

The decision to launch the CWRT Congress was galvanized when CWRTs were closing their doors after years of devoted study and preservation. The Congress is dedicated to sustainability and the long-term benefits of CWRTs.

SERVICE

The CWRT Congress is committed to generating, communicating, and collaborating about ways of seizing opportunities, sharing those ideas with CWRTs worldwide, and forming a network to allow great ideas to spread throughout the CWRT community.

ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY

The CWRT Congress respects the diversity of CWRTs, their various structures and history, their community role, and the direction of each local organization. The CWRT Congress assists those interested in organizing new or renewing formerly closed CWRTs by sharing resources and mentoring to new leaders.

INNOVATION and NETWORKING

Recognizing that CWRTs are facing both similar and unique challenges, the CWRT Congress links CWRTs that are inventing and testing new approaches, collecting and sharing success stories, celebrating leaders who adopt a long-term perspective and have incorporated proven practices into their operations, and network with other CWRTs to ease isolation.

EDUCATION

The ideas, skills and concepts provided by the CWRT Congress are advisory. They have been designed to assist CWRTs in meeting their organizational challenges and to meet the needs of leaders.

COMMUNITY

The CWRT Congress seeks to connect CWRTs with non-CWRT organizations that share an interest in American history. The CWRT Congress provides information about and access to such organizations so that CWRTs may extend their programs and member expertise to schools and other local community institutions.

STEWARDSHIP

The CWRT Congress is a careful and responsible manager of the historical, organizational, and human resources entrusted to its influence. Stewardship extends to all the gifts received including financial donations, an acquired reputation, and the good-will of the Civil War community.



HISTORY OF CWRT CONGRESS

While seeking to learn how other Civil War Round Tables were organized, their program differences, community partners, marketing and fundraising efforts, Mike Movius, the newly elected vice president of the Puget Sound CWRT was surprised to learn many round tables had ceased to exist.

Further examination of the reasons why so many failed revealed that few community members knew of their existence and, as their members aged out, fewer and fewer supported their organizations until they ultimately dissolved.

Of course, there were other associated causes including a reluctance to change their operational perspective, too few community partners, not recognizing that print media marketing was ineffective, and the general decline in knowledge about U. S. history.

Recognizing the importance of the mission of the CWRT movement, Mr. Movius sought out those who might assist in reversing that trend. He subsequently engaged others who were similarly inspired including Dr. John Bamberl, Wally Rueckel, Jay Jorgensen, and Matt Borowick.

Collectively, they decided to host a conference to talk about the strategies they employed to make their CWRTs successful. The first conference was held in Centreville, Virginia in 2017 and the CWRT Congress was born.

Since that time, the Congress has hosted other conferences, developed a following and provided numerous resources to CWRTs and their leaders.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Michael Movius
Olympia, Washington
Olympia CWRT

Vice President – Dr. John Bamberl
Scottsdale, Arizona
Scottsdale CWRT

Secretary– Andrew Mizzak
Bedford, Ohio
James A. Garfield CWRT

Vice President – Carol VanOrnum
Minnetonka, Minnesota
Twin Cities CWRT

Treasurer – William Miller
Yorktown, Virginia
Williamsburg CWRT

Director – Mary Koik
Washington, DC
American Battlefield Trust

Director – Steven Rauschkolb
Leland, NC
Brunswick CWRT

Director – Craig Apperson
Tumwater, WA
Olympia CWT

Director – Curt Fields
Crossville, TN
Cumberland Mountain CWRT



ADVISORY COUNCIL

Kim Brace

Bull Run CWRT
Manassas, Virginia

Peter Carmichael

Civil War Institute
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Doug Dammann

Kenosha Civil War Museum
Kenosha, Wisconsin

David Dixon

Author/Historian
Santa Barbara, California

Robert Ford

Baltimore CWRT
Baltimore, Maryland

Cheryl Gooch

State University of New York
Wilmington, Delaware

Michael Kirschner

Roanoke CWRT
Blacksburg, Virginia

James Knights

Western Pennsylvania CWRT
Evans City, Pennsylvania

Chris Kolakowski

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Madison, Wisconsin

Ed Lowe

Chickamauga-Chattanooga CWRT
Ooltewah, Tennessee

Ashley Whitehead Luskey

Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Chris Mackowski

Emerging Civil War
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Rosemary Nichols

Capital District CWRT
Waterviet, New York

Jonathan Noyalas

Shenandoah University
Winchester, Virginia

Gerald Prokopowicz

East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina

Ted Savas

Savas Beatie Publishers
El Dorado Hills, California

Janet Whaley

Pasadena CWRT
Pasadena, California

SERVING OTHERS

Information Sharing: By sharing data, news of common interest, ideas, and best practices, the CWRT Congress aims to build open communication among round tables to promote the issues and topics of common interest, and to be a voice for one another. That voice can preserve and share the story of the American Civil War and build a system of support that benefits all whom we serve.

Programming: The CWRT Congress seeks to provide round tables and their partners the education and training necessary to maximize the potential of CWRTs to enhance learning and discourse, communicate with each other, and maximize opportunities for education and partnerships.

Advocacy: The CWRT Congress aims to be a unifying vehicle for the Civil War Community, and a way for CWRTs and allied organizations to help each other elevate their respective voices as it relates to issues of importance, and to assist each other, when possible, with the bringing of those issues to the forefront and before appropriate audiences.

Training: The CWRT Congress works with others to create educational opportunities that lead to best practices, spurs dialogue about how to build and maintain sustainable organizations and opens possible new opportunities to provide a knowledge base about the Civil War to a next generation.

Event Advertisement and Support: Based upon our shared interests, the CWRT Congress and round table organizations should work together to promote the artistic, cultural, and educational programs provided by round tables to the greater Civil War Community. This effort will help build a network of subject matter experts, presenters, artists, and others who are part of the event and programmatic framework

CWRT CONGRESS INITIATIVES

Sister Round Tables

The establishment of the Sister CWRT concept was developed as an opportunity for round tables to connect, network and work together based on shared experiences, challenges, make up, or interest. The relationship can be local, regional, nationally or around the world. Leaders and organizations that seek others out gain the advantages of the practices, resources, and connections.

Speaker Registry

One of the most important functions of Civil War Round Tables is to offer the opportunity for their members to hear from scholars about their most recent research. Attendance to CWRT meetings is noticeably improved when notable speakers are scheduled.

To help program directors, the CWRT Congress established a listing of 5-Star speakers and their contact information. CWRTs are encouraged to recommend the best speakers whose approval secured before listing.

The Light Post

This quarterly newsletter is designed with the purpose of highlighting successful CWRTs and their initiatives, collaborations, best practices, and accomplishments. It shares challenges some CWRTs face and the solutions they have found to succeed. It also highlights CWRTs around the U.S. and world.

Online Classroom

The willingness of CWRT leaders to learn better techniques for success spawned the online classroom concept. In 2021 and 2022, we conducted twenty-one classes ranging from good governance practices to member retention and marketing strategies to succession planning. Every class resulted in lively discussions and thoughtful insights.

Community Interviews

To encourage Civil War enthusiasts to continue to support preservation and history organizations, the CWRT Congress hosted interviews with leaders of the American Battlefield Trust, the Emerging Civil War, Civil War Trails, the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, the Society for Women and the Civil War, among



others. They were largely successful in reminding participants that despite the lack of travel opportunities, those entities needed their financial support.

Congress Awards

Recognizing that incentivizing round tables to initiate change is an effective way to rejuvenate local organizations, the CWRT Congress established two annual awards in 2022 and added a third for the 2023 season. The awards include

- *Dr. John A. Bamberl Phoenix Award* for those organizations that were on the brink of extinction and resurrected themselves.
- *Wallace L. Rueckel Innovation Award* for those round tables leading the way into the future through organizational innovation.
- *Matthew Borowick Marketing Award* for those organizations that are exceedingly adept at marketing their round table. Each includes a trophy and monetary award.

Sustainability Challenge

This program is designed to provide every local CWRT and its leader with useful tools for planning and implementing a well-rounded series of activities to engage every member to improve mission accomplishment. Self-guided activities challenge the round table to become more vibrant and engaged. This Sustainability Challenge is broken into ten modules which cover the full scope of organizational improvement, from Membership Retention and Education to Philanthropy and Public Image, and more.

When all ten modules are completed and submitted to the CWRT Congress, the CWRT will receive a Congratulatory letter from the CWRT Congress President, a certificate of achievement, and a Lapel Pin for each leadership team member.

Skills Inventory

One of the challenges that CWRTs face is an insufficiency in leaders. Many organizations are unfamiliar with the skills their members possess. To assist them in determining who has what skills, CWRT Congress developed a skills inventory. The inventory was designed to determine which members can either lead or advise others in operations that include planning, marketing, fundraising, and technology use.

TEAM CWRT

TEAM CWRT is an online members-only group that is all about providing leaders with a forum to discuss challenges they are facing and to seek advice from others who have addressed those same issues. This forum is managed directly by CWRT Congress.

Ambassador Program

The Ambassador Program connects with round tables on-line, by phone and with in-person visits. The contacts are to stay current on developments and activities of the group. The Ambassador Team maintains contact and meeting data for round tables to encourage interaction.

Knowing the challenges allows the Congress to plan training and develop further opportunities to connect round tables. Open lines of communication are vital to the mission of growth and sustainability.

Proven Practices

CWRT Congress operates on the premise that we do not have all the answers and that the best way to solicit best-practices is to survey CWRTs and their leaders. We have conducted innumerable online surveys to that have resulted in some inspired advice. Moreover, survey results are published on our website and available to every CWRT.

White Papers

The CWRT Congress has prepared several documents designed to assist round tables and their leaders to understand that their challenges are neither unique nor unassailable. Those papers included the following titles: *Why CWRTs Fail; A Sustainability Blueprint:*

Annual Report

Our annual report is visually compelling, underscore our commitment to transparency, and explains our mission, progress, and outcomes. In addition, it explains our impact, thanks volunteers and supporters, and make a case for donating to the organization. The report also focuses on two compelling issues:

- Our audience
- What we need to accomplish

Although the report outlines what has been accomplished in the past year, it includes a vision of what lies ahead. Our report is an opportunity to be candid about our finances and outcomes and seeks to build trust with our audience.

Emerging Civil War Blog

The CWRT Congress contributes a monthly article to the on-line *Emerging Civil War* publication. It addresses various issues that CWRTs face and offers suggestions on resolving or improving those situations.

