You Can Make a Difference

“SOMETHING THAT’S IMPORTANT to you—just fight for it.”
With that attitude, Andrew Holleman became the youngest winner of a Regional Merit Award from the Environmental Protection Agency, the federal agency that guards the nation’s air, land, and water. At age 12, Andrew began a campaign to save a local wetland in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, from a developer’s bulldozer. He studied geology, collected neighbors’ signatures on a petition, spoke at meetings, and wrote to State and local officials. At last, the Zoning Board turned down the development. Andrew carried his activism on into high school, with plans to study environmental science in college.

SECTION 1
The Federal Bureaucracy (pp. 414–418)
★ The federal bureaucracy is a large, highly organized group that carries out the work of the Federal Government.
★ The names given to agencies, including commission, administration, and corporation, may indicate an agency’s nature.
★ Agencies include line agencies, which operate programs, and staff agencies, which support the line agencies.

SECTION 2
The Executive Office of the President (pp. 419–422)
★ The Executive Office of the President includes several important agencies staffed by the President’s closest aides.
★ The White House Office is the “nerve center” of the Executive Office of the President.
★ Other units of the Executive Office advise the President on domestic affairs and foreign policy.

SECTION 3
The Executive Departments (pp. 424–429)
★ Each of the 15 executive departments manages federal policy in a broad field of activity, such as education, labor, or defense.
★ The heads of the departments meet with the President and other advisors in a group called the Cabinet.
★ The President chooses his nominees to lead the executive departments, subject to approval by the Senate.
★ The President decides how often the Cabinet meets.

SECTION 4
Independent Agencies (pp. 430–435)
★ Independent agencies are not part of any of the executive departments.
★ The independent agencies are of three types: independent executive agencies, independent regulatory commissions, and government corporations.
★ Independence gives these agencies some freedom from political pressure.

SECTION 5
The Civil Service (pp. 437–440)
★ The people who work in the federal bureaucracy make up the civil service.
★ Early on, the spoils system infected the civil service.
★ Corruption was a serious problem until reformers began to reshape the civil service in the 1880s.
★ Today, the vast majority of federal employees are hired and promoted on the basis of merit, not party membership.