



A Word from the Chair



Janis L. Sammartino
District Judge

This is an exciting time for the Courts and Community Committee. For the past two years, the committee has cosponsored a civics contest in conjunction with the annual Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. The cosponsors were the host districts for the conferences, the Northern District of California in

2014 and the Southern District of California in 2015. Beginning next year, we plan to make the contest an annual circuit-wide event open to high school students throughout the western United States!

The 2016 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest will include essay and video competitions. The theme is “50 Years After the Miranda Decision: How Federal Courts Defined the Rights of the Accused.” Rules and judging criteria will be announced in December. The contest will begin January 1, 2016, and end on April 15, 2016, with winners announced in June. Monetary prizes will be awarded for first-, second- and third-place winners.

Organizing a circuit-wide contest is an ambitious undertaking requiring a collaboration between the circuit and the district and bankruptcy courts. We anticipate that a number of districts will organize their own local contests to select finalists for the circuit-wide competition. In other districts, the circuit will conduct the preliminary judging. The goal is to have all of the districts represented among the finalists in each contest. Circuit judging panels will then select the ultimate winners.

(continued on page 4)



Civics contest winners included Martha Elva Rodriguez, left, winner of the video competition, and Johannah Whitelock, who finished third. Teacher Patrick Goddard, at rear, read the winning essay penned by one of his students. Chief Judge Sidney R. Thomas was present to congratulate the winners.

Civics Education Gets Big Boost at Circuit Conference

Civics education was given its due and then some at the opening session of the 2015 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in San Diego.

Conference organizers allocated substantial time to the subject, featuring remarks by federal and state court judges and presentations of the winning essay and video from the 2015 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest, cosponsored by the Courts and Community Committee and the United States District Court for the Southern District of California.

Speakers included Senior Circuit Judge Raymond C. Fisher of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and Presiding Justice Judith D. McConnell of

(continued on page 2)

Also in This Issue:

Federal Court in Sacramento Hosts Teachers
In Praise of the Constitution and Citizenship

page 3
page 3

the California Court of Appeal. Judge Fisher sits on the Judicial Branch Committee of the Judicial Conference of the U.S. and serves as the co-chair of that committee's new Civic Engagement Subcommittee. Justice McConnell is closely involved in the California judiciary's effort to reintroduce civics into the state's high school curriculum.

District Judge Janis L. Sammartino of the Southern District of California, who chairs the Courts and Community Committee, read off the names of the contest winners and runners-ups. The winning essay by Lucile Vigouroux, a graduating senior who was unable to attend, was read by her teacher, Patrick Goddard. The video created by sophomore Martha Rodriguez also was shown.

Both the essay and video winners along with a third-place finisher in the video contest were students of Mr. Goddard, who teaches at the San Diego High Educational Complex's School of International Studies. He is one of two instructors for the legal pathway program, a curriculum that provides students with an in-depth examination of the legal system and its industry.

Also on the opening day of the conference, the Courts and Community Committee hosted a reception for the contest winners, their parents and other companions. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy and Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Sidney R. Thomas were present, making remarks and chatting informally with the visitors. A number of other judges and court staff from around the circuit also attended.

All told, more than 300 students from 45 high schools in the greater San Diego area participated in the 2015 civics



Teacher Patrick Goddard, top, accepts the first-place award for essay winner Lucile Vigouroux, one of his students at the San Diego School of International Studies. Essay runner-up Gavin Jackson, above, chats with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy

contest, which featured the theme “The Constitution: What the American Dream Means to Me.” Students were challenged to write an essay or produce a brief video focusing on how the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments make possible the American Dream.

The 2016 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest will be a circuit-wide competition open to high school students throughout the western United States. The theme is “50 Years After the Miranda Decision: How Federal Courts Defined the Rights of the Accused.” Rules and judging criteria will be available in December. The contest will begin January 1, 2016, and end on April 15, 2016, with winners announced in June. □

Federal Court in Sacramento Hosts Teachers

Offering professional development in the summer for teachers who traditionally enjoy the summer break from their K12 obligations can be a tough sell. But 15 committed teachers did just that recently, completing a week-long Teachers Institute at The Justice Anthony M. Kennedy Library and Learning Center in the Robert T. Matsui United States Courthouse in Sacramento, California.

They walked away with a new perspective on local cases combined with a deeper appreciation for the work of the federal judiciary. The only tough sell for this group was deciding which of our noteworthy cases they wanted to focus on during the week. The institute supports not only the local community outreach efforts but also the national community engagement initiatives for all courts.

Chief District Judge Morrison C. England of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California kicked off the event along with Andrew Stroud, Esq., incoming board president for the Sacramento Federal Judicial Library and Learning Center Foundation, both expressing the important collaboration between educators and the courts. District Judge Kimberly

(continued on page 4)



In Praise of the Constitution and Citizenship

Circuit Judge Jacqueline H. Nguyen of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit contributed to a nationwide effort by the federal courts effort to recognize Constitution Day and the importance of citizenship. Judge Nguyen, who is a member of the Courts and Community Committee, penned an essay entitled “The Joys of Citizenship,” which was published by the San Jose Mercury News.



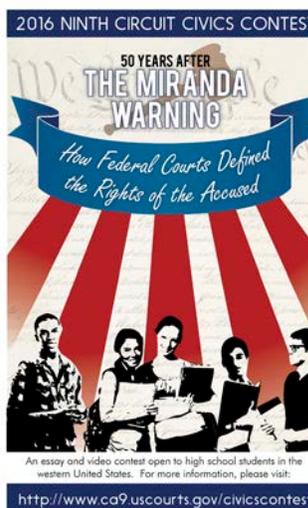
*Jacqueline H. Nguyen
Circuit Judge*

In the piece, the first Asian-American woman to sit on a federal appellate court recounted her personal history as a teenager fleeing with her family to the U.S. at the end of the Vietnam War and shared how that experience gave her a greater appreciation of the Constitution and being a citizen.

The essay is available at:

http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_28838026/jacqueline_h_nguyen_joys_citizenship □

We think contest winners will continue to be recognized in some fashion at the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, which next year will be held in Big Sky, Montana. We are also considering hosting an event at the conference for Montana teachers in recognition of their critical contributions to civics education.



Over the last several years, we have noted the growing emphasis within the judicial branch of the need for better civics education. Having all of the courts in the nation's largest circuit join together in this event will be an impressive example of the Ninth Circuit's commitment to this cause.

Before wrapping up, I should note that the Courts and Community Committee is in transition. We have seven new members, while four current members have rotated off at the end of their terms. Those leaving the committee are Senior District Judge Ron Lew and Bankruptcy Judge Deborah Saltzman, both from the Central District of California, and District Judge James Robart and District Clerk Bill McCool, both from the Western District of Washington. Each has made important contributions to the success of the committee and it has been my pleasure to work alongside them for the last several years.

Newly appointed to the committee are Chief District Judge Ralph Beistline of the District of Alaska; District Judge William Orrick III of the Northern District of California; District Judge John Kronstadt and Bankruptcy Judge Sandra Klein of the Central District of California; Magistrate Judges Bridget Bade of the District of Arizona and Ronald Bush

of the District of Idaho; and District Clerk Sean McAvoy of the Eastern District of Washington. A warm welcome to all of them. Finally, our faithful attorney members, Dan Eaton of San Diego, Kelli Sager of Los Angeles and Martha Sheehy of Billings, Montana, have all been reappointed. □

TEACHERS *continued from page 3*

Mueller, Senior District Judge William Shubb and Magistrate Judge Allison Claire participated extensively throughout the week as well as providing a constant touchstone on how the court functions.

Working groups of three, teachers created relevant curriculum based on their case choice for their school and grade level. As a guide, the entire group heard from all sides of the Newdow v. Elk Grove Unified School District case. Learning from both Michael Newdow, Esq., who argued in front of the U.S. Supreme Court, what his stand was on the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance as well as his counterpart in the case, Terrance Cassidy, Esq., representing the school district stirred emotions and questions about the law.

Rounding out the perspective was a former law clerk to the late Senior District Judge Lawrence Karlton, Quyen Ta, Esq., who provided the judicial backstory. Associate Dean Vikram Amar from University of California, Davis, School of Law, shared the legal summary of the case and its historical importance. As this case touched every teacher in the audience, the question-and-answer sessions with each speaker proved energetic and enlightening as the speakers heard how this case impacts educators as well as students. □



Office of the Circuit Executive

Cathy A. Catterson, Circuit & Court of Appeals Executive
P.O. Box 193939, San Francisco, CA 94119-3939
Ph: (415) 355-8900, Fax: (415) 355-8901
<http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov>

Courts & Community Newsletter Staff:

David Madden, *Editor, Asst. Circuit Executive for Public Info*
Katherine M. Rodriguez, *Communications Asst. for Public Info*
Alex Clausen, *Graphic Artist for Public Info*