



Public Information Office
United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference Returns to San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO – The 2017 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference will be held July 17-20, 2017, at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in downtown San Francisco. The conference is authorized by law “for the purpose of considering the business of the courts and advising means of improving the administration of justice within the circuit.” 28 U.S.C. § 333.

The conference provides an exceptional educational program and facilitates circuit governance through more than 30 business meetings. Conferees include judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the U.S. district courts and U.S. bankruptcy courts of the circuit, along with lawyers practicing in these courts, court staff and special guests. For space and security reasons, attendance is by invitation.

The theme of the conference, which was last held in San Francisco in 1973, is “Law, Society, and Technology: The Challenges and Opportunities Ahead.” Inspired by the city’s proximity to Silicon Valley, the program includes several sessions focusing on how technology is shaping our future, our rights and the law. Also prominent on the agenda are civil rights, civic education and citizenship, election law and the media.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the presidential directives which led to the unjust internment of tens of thousands of Japanese-American citizens at the outset of World War II. A first-day program will focus on the extraordinary search for justice by three of those citizens - Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui - who waited four decades to be exonerated of criminal convictions for violating government policies later proved to be unwarranted. In addition to historical accounts, the discussion focuses on the imperfect balancing of civil rights and national security during a period of national uncertainty.

Civics education is the topic of discussion when United States Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy chats on with director Thomas Kail and producer Jeffrey Seller of the hit historical musical, “Hamilton,” which has achieved critical acclaim and box office

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success. Also planned is a supplemental program for judges, court staff and others who are or want to become active in civics education; presentation of the winning essay and video from this year's Ninth Circuit Civics Contest, which also focused on the Japanese-American internment; and a naturalization ceremony for 20 new citizens.

Later in the week, conferees will discuss the future of scientific evidence in the courtroom; learn about the recent report by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology; and consider how artificial intelligence can become a powerful force that reshapes our thinking and our lives. In addition, general counsels from four technology companies will talk about the most pressing issues facing high-tech today.

Two other programs feature experts focusing on the state of public confidence in the election process and the alarming growth of "fake news" in the Internet age. In addition, separate meetings focusing on civil, criminal, appellate and bankruptcy practices will help judges and lawyers to develop solutions to new or difficult issues.

The final day of the conference includes a look back at the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, which took the lives of four young African-American girls. Two former Alabama prosecutors will provide a moving account of the crime and how the perpetrators were brought to justice.

The conference concludes with the traditional "Conversation with the Justice" in which Justice Kennedy will be back on stage to share his observations on matters of interest to the circuit.

Presenters and panelists at the conference include a number of federal appellate, district, bankruptcy and magistrate judges from the Ninth Circuit and elsewhere; well-known practitioners; members of the academia; and leading scientists and researchers. On Monday, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee is tentatively scheduled to make remarks at the opening session, while former San Francisco mayor and California Assembly speaker Willie L. Brown, Jr., will welcome conferees at an evening reception.

The U.S. Courts for the Ninth Circuit consists of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the federal trial and bankruptcy courts and related court units in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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