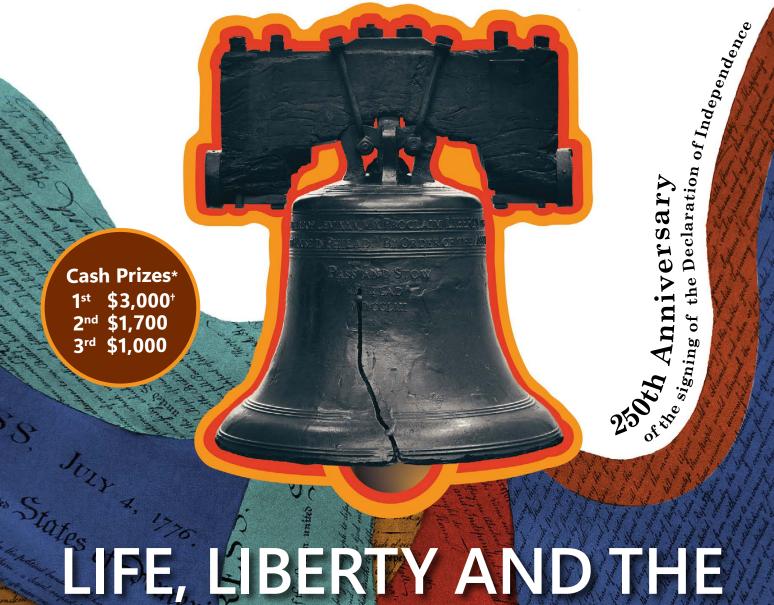
2026 NINTH CIRCUIT CIVICS CONTEST





Your Voice. Your Story. Your America.



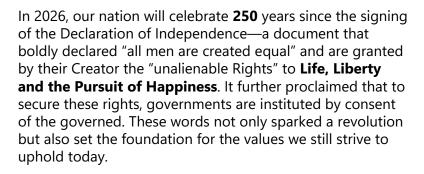
An essay and video contest for high school students in the western United States, Guam and Northern Mariana Islands. Contest rules and entry instructions will be available at: https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest

Entries accepted beginning **January 7, 2026**. Deadline for entries is **March 6, 2026**. Sponsored by the United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit.

LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT

OF HAPPINESS

Your Voice. Your Story. Your America.



Which of these rights sparks your interest to reflect on its meaning and impact?

The Ninth Circuit Civics Contest prompt challenges you to choose one of these enduring rights—Life, Liberty or the Pursuit of Happiness—and tell us: (i) why this right was essential in 1776, (ii) how this right impacts you, your family or your community today; and (iii) what should we do to protect or improve this right moving forward?

The 2026 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest is open to all students, grades 9-12, in public, private, parochial or charter schools, and homeschooled students of equivalent grade status in nine western states and two Pacific island jurisdictions.

Contest rules will be available at https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest. Essay and video entries can be submitted on the website starting Jan. 7, 2026. Deadline to submit entries is 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, March 6, 2026.

The contest is organized by the Ninth Circuit Public Information and Community Outreach ("PICO") Committee. For more information contact the Ninth Circuit Office of the Circuit Executive at civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov.



Western District of Washington Local Contest: The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington will conduct judging for this contest and select their top three essay and video winners who will receive \$1,000 for 1st place, \$750 for 2nd place and \$500 for 3rd place. If there is a tie, the court will award two duplicate awards in 1st, 2nd or 3rd place. A total of \$2,000 will be awarded to 10 Honorable Mentions, five essays and five videos. For more details about the local contest, contact: Chief Deputy Clerk Eric Smits – (206) 370-8434 / Eric_Smits@wawd.uscourts.gov or Executive Director Tracy M. Morris, Federal Civil Rights Legal Clinic, FBA, Western Washington Chapter – (206) 992-7594 / tracymmorris@comcast.net.

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