



Public Information Office
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NEWS RELEASE

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Ninth Circuit Civics Contest Focuses on Community

SAN FRANCISCO – “What Does Our American Community Ask of Us?” is the theme of the 2021 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest, which offers high school students in the western United States and Pacific islands an opportunity to win cash prizes while learning about the role of the federal judiciary in American democracy.

This year’s contest focuses on important events in American history and global events that have challenged us to find a balance between inalienable rights and collective responsibilities to each other. Students are asked, “How should we as a society strike the appropriate balance within the framework of our Constitution between safeguarding our rights and fulfilling our responsibilities to each other?”

The contest is open to young people in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington state, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Students in grades 9-12 in public, private, parochial, charter schools, and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status are invited to participate.

In addition to cash prizes, previous 1st place winners of the essay and video portion of the contest were invited to the annual Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference held in July. However, since the conference was cancelled for 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions, cash awards were increased. A total of \$11,400 in cash prizes will be awarded in the circuit-wide contest. The top three finishers in both the essay and video competitions will receive \$3,000 for 1st place, \$1,700 for 2nd place and \$1,000 for 3rd place. A commemorative prize also will be awarded to the top finishers at the circuit level. Many students also have a chance to win cash prizes in local competitions sponsored by the individual judicial districts to select finalists for the circuit-wide contest. The Ninth Circuit’s Public Information and Community Outreach (PICO) Committee hopes to resume inviting winners to the conference in 2022.

The contest is sponsored by PICO, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the federal district and bankruptcy courts in the 15 judicial districts that comprise the Ninth Circuit.

Contest rules and other information are available at <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest/>. Entries will be accepted starting February 1, 2021. The deadline for entries is 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time on April 1, 2021. Finalists will be announced in May and the winners in June.

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