



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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2022 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest Opens

SAN FRANCISCO – The 2022 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest began accepting entries on Jan. 17, 2022, with this year’s theme focusing on “**The First Amendment and the Schoolhouse Gate: Students’ Free Speech Rights.**” The contest offers high school students in the western United States and Pacific Islands an opportunity to win cash prizes while learning about what part the federal judiciary plays in safeguarding the rights of the American people guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution.

The contest asks students to address “**What are students’ free speech rights – and responsibilities – on and off campus?**” Participants are asked to consider what rights the First Amendment provides to students engaging in free speech, both inside and outside of school. Participants also should consider the responsibilities, if any, that students, schools, or the government have with respect to speech by students, including whether it may cause harm to others.

The contest is open to students in grades 9-12 in public, private, parochial, charter schools, and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status. Students 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 may participate in the contest.

In addition to cash prizes, the first-place winners of the essay and video portion of the contest at the circuit level will be invited to attend the 2022 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Big Sky, Montana. 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 first place, \$1,700 for second place and \$1,000 for third place. A commemorative prize also will be awarded to the top finishers at the circuit level. Many students also will have a chance to win cash prizes in local competitions sponsored by the individual judicial districts that will select their finalists for the circuit-wide contest.

The contest is sponsored by the Ninth Circuit’s Public Information and Community Outreach (PICO) Committee, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the U.S. district and bankruptcy courts in the 15 judicial districts that comprise the Ninth Circuit.

For more information visit <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest/>. Deadline to submit entries is 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time on March 18, 2022. Finalists will be announced in May and the winners in June.

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