2017 NINTH CIRCUIT CIVICS CONTEST

An essay and video contest open to high school students in the western United States and Pacific Islands. Entries accepted beginning February 1, 2017. Deadline for entries is April 16, 2017. Contest rules, entry instructions and more information will be available January 1, 2017, at

http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest

CASH PRIZES *for Essay and Video Contests*

1st place: $2,000 2nd place: $1,000 3rd place: $500

2017 NINTH CIRCUIT CIVICS CONTEST

Not to be Forgotten: Legal Lessons of the Japanese Internment

To combat terrorism, some have called upon our government to turn away immigrants and visitors who come from particular countries or are followers of certain religious faiths. Others have urged imposing restrictions on such persons already in this country. To students of history, this approach is reminiscent of what occurred 75 years ago as the United States entered into World War II following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Presidential directives issued in February 1942 led to a curfew for people of Japanese descent followed by the forcible relocation of more than 100,000 people of Japanese descent from the West Coast to internment camps in remote areas of California, Idaho and Arizona.

USS Shaw exploding during the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Two young Japanese American men who defied the curfew and relocation policies were criminally prosecuted. In those cases – Hirabayashi v. United States, 1943, and Korematsu v. United States, 1944, – the U.S. Supreme Court upheld their convictions and the underlying government actions. The decisions in these cases, which required the court to weigh national security against individual rights, were difficult ones and there was strong disagreement at the time over the outcomes. In a third case, Ex parte Mitsuye Endo, also decided in 1944, the court ruled that "citizens who are concededly loyal" could not be held in internment camps. The decision resulted in the immediate release of an interned Japanese American woman and led eventually to the closure of the internment camps.

A grocery store owned by a Japanese American in Oakland, California. Photographed by Dorothea Lange in March, 1942.

Front image: Manzanar War Relocation Center in California photographed by Dorothea Lange on July 3, 1942.

The topic for the Ninth Circuit Civics Contest is as follows:
Consider and describe the relevance of the Japanese internment today as our nation combats terrorism.

The contest has two components: **1)** Individual students can express their thoughts and ideas in an essay of between 500 and 1,000 words; and **2)** Individuals and teams of up to three students can produce a 3-5 minute video on the theme. A student may submit both an essay and video. A student may submit only one essay and be involved in the production of only one video.

Your essay or video should: **1)** Demonstrate an understanding of the history of the internment and its aftermath; **2)** Explain what constitutional powers and rights were brought into conflict by the Hirabayashi, Korematsu and Endo cases; and **3)** Discuss the important role of the Judicial Branch – then and now – in resolving constitutional conflicts involving national security and individual rights.

The Ninth Circuit Civics Contest is open to high school students at all grade levels and to home-schooled students of equivalent grade status. Students from public, private, parochial and charter schools may enter. The contest is organized by the Ninth Circuit Courts and Community Committee and cosponsored by the federal courts within the Ninth Circuit. Circuit contest winners will be announced in June. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three finishers in both the essay and video competitions.

For more information, contact the Ninth Circuit Office of the Circuit Executive, **(415) 355-8973** / **civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov**.

To learn about past Ninth Circuit Civics Contests, visit the "Event Highlights" page at
http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest