AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW: WHY EVERY VOTE MATTERS

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S 2014 LAW DAY THEME

SPARTANBURG COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST
2014 PACKET

SOUTH CAROLINA BAR SENIOR LAWYERS DIVISION
LAW DAY ESSAY STATEWIDE AWARDS

LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST 2014 PACKET American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters

THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S LAW DAY 2014

American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters

One of our most cherished national ideals, expressed eloquently by Abraham Lincoln, is "government of the people, by the people, for the people." It is a principle enshrined in our Nation's founding documents, from the Declaration of Independence's assurance that governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed, to the opening three words of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, "We the People."

The right to vote is the very foundation of government by the people. For this reason, striving to establish and protect every citizen's right to vote has been a central theme of American legal and civic history. Much of the struggle on voting rights began decades ago, but the work is far from complete, and a citizen's right to cast a ballot remains at risk today.

As we approach the 50th anniversaries of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the 2014 Law Day theme, *American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters*, calls on every American to reflect on the importance of a citizen's right to vote and the challenges we still face in ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to participate in our democracy.

WHAT IS LAW DAY?

Established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958, Law Day celebrates the American heritage of liberty, justice and equality under the law. In 1961, Congress issued a joint resolution designating May 1 as the official date for celebrating Law Day. Every year, Law Day provides legal professionals and others with opportunities to help students and the public understand how the law protects our freedoms.

2014 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC INTRODUCTION

In April of 1918, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted the following as the official creed of the United States of America:

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose Just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

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I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies."

The 2014 Law Day Essay Contest presents an opportunity to reflect upon the right to vote and the responsibility to vote.

2014 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC

Each student participant must write an essay of 1,000 words or less on this topic:

Why should every American vote?

The following discussion points have been provided as a suggested approach; however, they are not mandatory, and creativity is encouraged:

- 1) Discuss how voting secures and protects other constitutional rights.
- 2) Discuss what challenges may exist in 2014 that prevent every American from having the opportunity to participate in our democracy by voting.
- 3) With only an estimated 58% of Americans voting in the 2012 presidential election, discuss what can be done to increase voter participation.
- 4) Discuss how voting in 2014 supports the sacrifices made by those who worked to establish the 15th and 19th amendment to the Constitution.

ESSAY DIRECTIONS

Each essay writer is required to adhere to the following:

- 1) Submit a typewritten essay in a 12-point font and include all attached documents:
 - The student's name, home address, home phone number, and grade level
 - School name, address, phone number, and educator's name (if applicable)
 - Name of local newspaper(s)
 - Documentation of all research on the enclosed Works Cited page or an attached sheet (if applicable).
- 2) Forward all to an English Language Arts (ELA) or Social Studies (SS) teacher to submit the given essays and application forms.
- 3) DO NOT PUT THE STUDENT'S NAME ON THE ESSAY ITSELF.

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SELECTION CRITERIA

Each English Language Arts and/or Social Studies teacher may submit only two (2) essays per grade level from his or her respective school for consideration for the preselection judging. These essays will then be read and assessed by Judge Hayes and members of the Spartanburg County Bar Association. Winners from each grade will be invited to a special reception. The overall winner will be announced at that reception.

All public school or home-schooled participants' essays must be submitted to Judge Mark Hayes by **noon** on **Friday**, **April 11**, **2014**. All essays along with the appropriate cover sheets are to be submitted to the following address:

Judge J. Mark Hayes, II Spartanburg County Courthouse 180 Magnolia Street Spartanburg, SC 29306

Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142

AWARDS

9 ^{tn} Grade	\$100
10 th Grade	\$100
11 th Grade	\$100
12 th Grade	\$100
Overall Winner	\$500

Cash awards, medals and certificates will be presented to the recipients and their parents at the reception. Winning essays may be submitted to the local newspaper for publication and also to other organizations for possible publication and release to the general public.

SENIOR LAWYERS DIVISION STATEWIDE AWARDS

The Senior Lawyers Division of the South Carolina Bar is sponsoring a statewide Law Day Essay Contest. Each local overall and grade winning essay will be regarded to determine statewide essay winners. The Senior Lawyers Division will then make the following awards to the essays with the highest scores:

Statewide Best 9 th Grade Essay	\$500
Statewide Best 10 th Grade Essay	\$500
Statewide Best 11 th Grade Essay	\$500
Statewide Best 12 th Grade Essay	\$500
Statewide Best Overall Essay	\$1,000

All local winning essays must be submitted to Judge Mark Hayes by **noon** on **Friday**, **June 6**, **2014**. All local winning essays along with the appropriate coversheets are to be submitted to the following address:

LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST 2014 PACKET American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters

Judge Mark Hayes
180 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg County Courthouse
Spartanburg, SC 29306

Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142

ESSAYS FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Students from participating schools will submit essays to a school official (teacher, administrator, etc.) for pre-selection. EACH SCHOOL WILL SUBMIT NO MORE THAN TWO (2) ESSAYS PER ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND/OR SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER DIVISION FOR EACH GRADE DIVISION.

School submissions should include:

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A list of all other students who prepared essays for this contest. (Judge Hayes would like to recognize the efforts of all participants.)

ESSAYS FROM STUDENTS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE NOT PARTICIPATING OR WHO ARE HOME-SCHOOLED

Students whose schools are not participating or who are not affiliated with a school may send entries directly to Judge Hayes for consideration.

- 1) A student in this category must indicate in the appropriate space provided on the entry form that he or she is not affiliated with a school;
- 2) A student who is affiliated with a non-participating school must provide the school's name, address, telephone number, and indicate on the form that the school is not participating. (Note: if more than one entry is received from a non-participating school, that school may be contacted for pre-selection.)

LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST 2014 PACKET American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters

Grade Level:	
Entry #:	
2014 Law Day Essay Contest Judging Criteria	
ESSAY THEME: American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters	
In applying the following criteria, the student's grade level should be taken into account Assign a point value $(1 - 10)$ to each of the following questions. One point indicates the lowest mark and 10, the highest.	
Structure/Content	
Does the essay contain an introduction, a descriptive body and a conclusion?	
Is the data correct and in a clear and logical and/or sequential order?	
Does the essay exhibit good language skills: proper spelling, syntax and	
grammar?	
Are the references to sources (Constitution, Bill of Rights, cases, etc.) correct?	
Creativity/Originality	
Does the essay have some sense of originality and creativity?	
Are the ideas good and well-developed?	
Does the essay creatively develop the theme and does not deviate?	
Does the essay contain the writer's personal views and comments?	
Conovel Annoovenee	
General Appearance	

_____ Is the format neat/typed or written legibly?

_____ Is the cover sheet attached and correct?

COVER SHEET

2014 Law Day Essay ContestDEADLINE: APRIL 11th, 2014 AT 12:00 NOON

	et must accompany each on this sheet must be co			/ Contest. All		
Entry Number:	(will be a	(will be assigned by Law Day Essay Contest Committee)				
Please PRINT all	information in blue ink					
Grade Category:	Grade 9 Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12			
Student's Name: _						
	(Street/P.O. Box)			Zip		
Student's Phone N	lumber: ()					
School:						
School Address: _	(Street/PO Box)	City	State	Zip		
Name of Teacher	Submitting Essay:					
Teacher's E-mail:						
Name of Local Ne	wspaper:					
Number of Words:		_ (not to exceed 1,000)			

Mail the completed cover sheet ATTACHED to your essay to:

Judge Mark Hayes 180 Magnolia Street Spartanburg County Courthouse Spartanburg, SC 29306

Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142