

POLK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
625 East Court Avenue, Suite 100, Des Moines, Iowa 50309
Law Day Committee
2012 LAW DAY STUDENT COMPETITION

Dear Educator:

The time has again come for the annual Law Day competition to give your students a chance to showcase their creative talents, learn about the importance of courts in our country, and perhaps take home some prizes for their efforts. In 1958, President Eisenhower established May 1st as Law Day, an annual event to celebrate and strengthen the American heritage of liberty, justice, and equality under the law. This year, the Polk County Bar Association is sponsoring a competition with visual arts; music and performing arts; essay; and poetry categories for 6th through 12th grade students in the Polk County area.

The Law Day competition theme for 2012 is “No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom,” and is intended to underscore the importance of the courts and their role in ensuring access to justice for all Americans. American Bar Association President Wm. T. (Bill) Robinson III described the importance of protecting the courts as follows,

“All of us must have and protect our right and our freedom to use courtrooms when we need to. That courtroom must be open to protect families. That courtroom must be open to validate and protect contracts for business. That courtroom must be open to keep the wheels of justice turning. That courtroom must be open to defend our individual rights to prove again and again that we continue to be a free society. All of that takes more money . . . not less and less money for our courts.”

Students will be encouraged to express, through poetry, essay, visual arts, or music and performing arts, the importance of ensuring that the courts remain open and operational in order for every American to enjoy the freedoms protected by this nation’s judicial system and to ensure that justice is always served. The following site has links to articles further explaining this topic: www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/initiatives_awards/law_day.html.

The essay, art, poetry, music or performing arts submission must reflect the student’s view or impression of the theme as described above. In addition, each work of art, performing arts or music entry must include a title and a short caption that describes or explains the student’s reasons for choosing the subject and its relationship to the theme. Winning entries may be published or displayed. A group of students may collaborate and submit a group entry for the music or performing arts competition.

The enclosed packet includes contest materials and the contest rules. Attorneys who are also artists, musicians and poets will judge the entries and choose this year’s winners. **The competition deadline is April 16, 2012.** We would be happy to arrange to come to your school and pick up your students’ entries for this year’s competition if you would like.

Winning students (and their teachers and parents) will be honored at the PCBA Annual Meeting luncheon on May 8, 2012. We will publish and display the winning entries at the luncheon.

We encourage you to give the contest materials to your students and to highlight, where possible, these important issues as you continue to provide essential educational instruction and guidance. Members of the Law Day Committee will also be available to speak to your class on this subject, if you so desire. **Please contact Tara Hall at tara.hall@davisbrownlaw.com or 288-2500 or Dan Saar at daniel.saar@iowacourts.gov or 281-7218** with any questions or concerns about the competition, and/or to schedule an attorney to speak with your class regarding this year's theme.

Thank you for your participation! We would also appreciate feedback about increasing student participation and the quality of educational experience that this contest provides.

Sincerely,

Tara Hall and Dan Saar, Co-Chairs
Polk County Bar Association Law Day Committee

Visual Arts Competition

NO COURTS, NO JUSTICE, NO FREEDOM

LAW DAY 2012

Sponsored by the Polk County Bar Association

WHAT IS THIS COMPETITION ABOUT?

Law Day celebrates the American heritage of liberty, justice, and equality under the Law.

The courts play a vital role in protecting the rights and liberties that each American holds dear. Without the judicial system, there would be no checks on the other two branches of government, and the people of this nation would be unable to protect their personal and property rights. American Bar Association President Bill Robinson III described the importance of protecting our courts as follows,

“All of us must have and protect our right and our freedom to use courtrooms when we need to. That courtroom must be open to protect families. That courtroom must be open to validate and protect contracts for business. That courtroom must be open to keep the wheels of justice turning. That courtroom must be open to defend our individual rights to prove again and again that we continue to be a free society. All of that takes more money . . . not less and less money for our courts.”

Students are invited to explore the importance of maintaining an independent judiciary and how important such a task is to preserving the rights and liberties of all Americans. Students should take time to consider the impact that budget cuts and reduced public funding to courts would have on Americans' ability to access the courts. They can imagine a system where justice is delayed and where individual and group rights are put on hold. Finally, they can take this opportunity to creatively express possible solutions to the problem of limiting access to the courts. The Law Day Committee is looking for creative expression that demonstrates understanding of the theme and its main concepts.

WHY SHOULD I ENTER THIS COMPETITION?

- To express your creative ideas
- To have your art publicly displayed
- You may win a monetary prize or a gift certificate
- Winning artists will be invited to the May 8, 2012 Polk County Bar Association meeting to be honored for their work

WHAT FORM OF ART MAY I SUBMIT?

- Any original two or three-dimensional medium, including painting, sculpture, graphic design and photography
- An original video production of no more than three minutes in length, playable on Windows Media Player

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN MY ART?

- Evidence you are curious, critical, serious or humorous, but most of all, be creative!

HOW DO I ENTER?

- See the attached general contest information

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Poetry Competition

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WHY SHOULD I ENTER THIS COMPETITION?

- To express your creative ideas
- To have your poetry publicly displayed
- You may win a monetary prize or a gift certificate
- Winning poets will be invited to the May 8, 2012 Polk County Bar Association meeting to be honored for their work

WHAT FORM OF POETRY MAY I SUBMIT?

- Any traditionally recognized form: epic, blank verse, sonnets, haiku, etc.
- Consider use of figurative language, imagery, pun, oxymoron, and personification
- One page limit

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN MY POETRY?

- Evidence you are curious, critical, serious or humorous, but most of all, be creative!

HOW DO I ENTER?

- See the attached general contest information

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Music and Performing Arts Competition

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WHY SHOULD I ENTER THIS COMPETITION?

- To express your creative ideas
- To have your music or film publicly performed, displayed or published
- You may win a monetary prize or a gift certificate
- Winners will be invited to the May 8, 2012 Polk County Bar Association meeting to be honored for their work
- You may work with your friends on an interesting project

WHAT FORM OF MUSIC COMPOSITION MAY I SUBMIT?

- An original musical composition recorded in a format playable on Windows Media Player
- An original video production, such as a documentary or original drama recorded in a format playable on Windows Media Player
- Your entry may be shorter than 3 minutes in length, but should not be longer than 3 minutes
- Your composition or production may be created individually or as a group

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN MY COMPOSITION?

- Evidence you are curious, critical, serious or humorous, but most of all, be creative!

HOW DO I ENTER?

- See the attached general contest information

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Essay Competition

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WHY SHOULD I ENTER THIS COMPETITION?

- To express your creative ideas
- To have your essay publicly displayed
- You may win a monetary prize or a gift certificate
- Winning artists will be invited to the May 8, 2012 Polk County Bar Association meeting to be honored for their work

WHAT FORM OF ESSAY MAY I SUBMIT?

- All essays should be between 200 and 500 words with standard formatting

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN MY ESSAY?

- Evidence you are curious, critical, serious or humorous, but most of all, be creative!

HOW DO I ENTER?

- See the attached general contest information

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POLK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
2012 LAW DAY COMPETITION
GENERAL CONTEST INFORMATION

DEADLINE: All entries must be delivered or ready for pick-up on or before April 16, 2012. Each teacher with any students participating in the contest should contact Tara Hall at tara.hall@davisbrownlaw.com or 288-2500 or Dan Saar at daniel.saar@iowacourts.gov or 281-7218 by April 13, 2012, to arrange for pick-up or delivery of the entries from that school. Law Day Committee members can pick up the entries from each participating school.

THEME: Each entry will be judged for the student's creative use of the theme in relation to the importance of keeping the courts fully operational so that Americans can continue to enjoy the freedoms, liberties, and rights that we all hold in such high regard. **Each entry in the Visual Arts Competition and Music and Performing Arts Competition must include a paragraph describing the entry's relation to the theme.**

ELIGIBILITY: All students in grades 6-12 in the Polk County area are welcome and encouraged to participate in the contest. The entries will be judged in two classes: (1) Grades 6, 7, and 8 and (2) Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. Each category will be evaluated separately. Students may submit a group entry for the music and performing arts competition, if desired.

HONORS AND AWARDS: The winners in each category and each of the two grade levels **will be honored at the Polk County Bar Association luncheon on May 8, 2012.** Gift certificates will also be granted to the first place entry in each category and each of the two grade levels. Other awards will be given at the discretion of the committee. Winning essays and poetry may be published in the Polk County Bar Association newsletter. It is anticipated that winners will be contacted by May 1, 2012.

JUDGING: A team made up of Polk County attorneys who are also artists, musicians, and poets will judge the entries, as appropriate.

GENERAL CONTEST RULES: Each entry must be signed by the student. The attached entry form must also be completed, including the release form. **A parent, guardian or teacher must also sign the entry form.** The entry form should be attached to the entry, if possible. All video entries must be submitted on disc and playable in Windows Media Player. All audio entries (music competition) must be submitted on a disc playable in Windows Media Player.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS: Tara Hall at tara.hall@davisbrownlaw.com or 288-2500 or Dan Saar at daniel.saar@iowacourts.gov or 281-7218 with any questions or concerns about the competition.

ENTRY FORM, RELEASE AND CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY
2012 LAW DAY COMPETITION

First and Last Name (Please Print or Type)

Grade Level

School

Home Address (Street, City, State and Zip Code)

Home Telephone Number

E-mail Address

CONSENT AND RELEASE

I, _____ (print name), agree to allow the Polk County Bar Association's Law Day Committee to use and display my artwork, music, video, essay or poetry entry wherever, whenever and however it sees fit to do so, including, but not limited to, display in various public places in and around Polk County and publication in a newsletter or other printed or electronic medium. I release the Polk County Bar Association and its officers, employees, agents, volunteers or others associated with this competition, from and against any liability for any damages that may occur in connection with this competition.

Signature of Student Entrant: _____

I agree and consent to the above.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY

I/We certify that this entry is the original work created by:

(Name of Student Artist or Writer)

(Student's Signature)

(Signature of Teacher, Parent or Guardian)

Name of Teacher, Parent or Guardian (Please Print or Type)

Teacher's Telephone number

Teacher's E-mail Address