



EIGHTH CIRCUIT PUBLIC OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

1st Quarter - 2024

Supreme Court and My Hometown Reception



The inaugural class with original plaintiff Cathy Kuhlmeier (top). United States Chief District Judge Stephen Clark, Eastern District of Missouri, gives remarks (left). Students speak with Nicole Maffei, Education Director of the Supreme Court Historical Society (right). The capstone posters that students wrote and designed (bottom).
Images courtesy of Molly Rach, United States Courts Library-Eight Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Supreme Court and My Hometown reception was held at the Judicial Learning Center in the Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse. The unveiling of the students' capstone poster project about the case *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* was the final event of the inaugural program.

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Major Community Outreach Event Held at Minneapolis Courthouse



Tommy Barabarella with his daughter Mariella and friends at the evening reception. Image courtesy of the District of Minnesota.



Reception attendees view juried public art exhibit / AM. Image courtesy of the District of Minnesota.

The District of Minnesota sponsored a community outreach event aimed at those with developmental disabilities called *The Unfinished Journey: Civil Rights for People with Developmental Disabilities and the Role of the Federal Courts*.

The event included a sold-out CLE, followed by an evening public reception that unveiled a set of 20 educational banners on the history of disability rights legislation in Minnesota. Also at the evening reception was the opening of *I AM*, the court's newest juried public art exhibit by artists with intellectual disabilities.

The evening also included spoken word pieces by authors Alex Junge and Ethan Bussiere, and a performance of the song "You Need a Friend" by world-renowned musician Tommy Barabarella (a former member of Prince's recording and stage band), his daughter Mariella (who lives with Williams Syndrome), and a group of Mariella's friends.

The CLE and reception were projects of the Court's Public Outreach Committee and were co-sponsored by the Minnesota Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Minnesota Disability Bar Association, and the non-profit organization MSS.

Naturalization Ceremony at the Des Moines Public Library

United States Chief Magistrate Judge Helen Adams presided over a Naturalization ceremony at the downtown Des Moines Public Library in Des Moines, Iowa, on March 29, 2024. In a full circle moment, Immigration Services Officer Nenad Garton presented the 78 candidates to Judge Adams, who also presided over Garton's own naturalization ceremony five years ago.



United States Chief Magistrate Judge Helen Adams with Immigration Services Officer Nenad Garton at the March 29th ceremony. Image courtesy of the Southern District of Iowa.

Naturalization Held in Little Rock

In conjunction with President's Day, United States District Judge James M. Moody Jr. swore in 38 new citizens from 21 countries during a Naturalization ceremony at the William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas. Former President Bill Clinton delivered remarks at the ceremony.



New citizens with Former President Bill Clinton. Image courtesy of the William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum.

Moot Court Competition Held in Omaha

United States Magistrate Judge Susan Bazis*, United States District Judge Brian Buescher, and Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Steven Grasiz judged the Thomas Stinson Allen Moot Court Competition on March 27, 2024, at the Omaha District Courthouse. The law students participating in the competition were from the University of Nebraska College of Law.

*Judge Bazis was elevated to United States District Judge on April 10, 2024



Students from the University of Nebraska with the participating judges. Image courtesy of the District of Nebraska.

Students Visit Sioux Falls Courthouse

The District of South Dakota welcomed 40 political science students from South Dakota State University in March. United States Magistrate Judge Veronica Duffy, United States Attorney Alison Randall, and Clerk of Court Matthew Thelen met with students and spent about an hour discussing careers in the legal field.

Eastern District of Arkansas Hosts State High School Mock Trial Competition

In March 2024, the Eastern District of Arkansas hosted the State High School Mock Trial Competition at the Richard Sheppard Arnold United States Courthouse in Little Rock. Fifteen teams from eleven high schools in Arkansas competed. The final round concluded with the scoring judges announcing Har-Ber High School as the winner to represent Arkansas in the National High School Mock Trial Competition in Wilmington, Delaware, in May.



Arkansas High School Mock Trial Champions, Har-Ber High School. Image courtesy of the Arkansas Mock Trial Foundation.

Women's History Month Celebrated in Fargo

In March 2024, United States Magistrate Judge Alice Senechal participated in a Women's History Month celebration at Touchmark at Harwood Groves, a senior living complex in Fargo, North Dakota. Judge Senechal spoke with residents about women in the legal profession and the judiciary.

Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals Holds Special Session at University of North Dakota with Jurist-in-Residence

North Dakota Law - The University of North Dakota School of Law welcomed United States Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Ralph Erickson as its 2024 Rodney S. Webb Distinguished Jurist-in-Residence. The highly anticipated visit marked the return of the jurist-in-residence program after an eleven-year hiatus.

During the two-day visit, Judge Erickson visited the Intellectual Property and Federal Indian Law classes, engaged with members of the North Dakota Law Review and the Student Trial Lawyers Association, attended a breakfast with students and a celebratory luncheon in his honor, and participated in a federal clerkship panel with United States Bankruptcy Judge Shon Hastings, United States Magistrate Judge Alice Senechal, and United States District Judge Daniel Traynor.

The highlight of the visit was a special session held by the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit in the School of Law's newly remodeled VandeWalle Courtroom with United States Eight Circuit Court of Appeals Judges Ralph Erickson, L. Steven Grasiz, and Jonathan A. Kobes presiding. The special session heard three oral arguments and were open to law students and the public.

Judge Erickson capped off his visit to University of North Dakota Law with a reception at the school of law co-hosted by the State Bar Association of North Dakota and the Federal Practice Committee.



United States Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Ralph Erickson gives remarks at a luncheon in his honor (top). The United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit hear oral arguments in the VandeWalle Courtroom on March 1, 2024 (bottom). Images courtesy of University of North Dakota School of Law. Used with permission.

AP Government Students Visit Fargo Courthouse

AP Government students from Sheyenne High School in West Fargo, North Dakota, visited the Fargo courthouse for a program prepared by the AO regarding the case of *Elonis v. United States*. The Federal Practice Committee's Subcommittee on Civic Engagement recruited volunteer attorneys to assist the students. United States Chief District Judge Peter Welte and United States Magistrate Judge Alice Senechal presided over the program.



Students with United States Magistrate Judge Alice Senechal (top) and students with United States Chief Judge Peter Welte (bottom). Images courtesy of the District of North Dakota.

Civics Event Held in Fort Smith

The Western District of Arkansas hosted 80 students and 15 instructors and administrators from Fort Smith schools at a civics event and mentor/student lunch on Thursday, January 25, 2024. Also included were eight local judges, members of the local bar association, and representatives from the district United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Public Defender's Office, and the United States Probation Office.

The event was held at the Isaac Parker Federal Courthouse in downtown Fort Smith, Arkansas. Participants took part in a mock trial followed by lunch in which students got to meet and collaborate with federal and state court judges, attorneys, and other court professionals.



Participants taking part in the mock trial. Image courtesy of the Western District of Arkansas.

Sioux City Hosts Criminal Justice Students

On January 4, 2024, the Northern District of Iowa hosted students from a Newell–Fonda High School criminal justice class at the Sioux City Courthouse. The students were able to watch a sentencing hearing and then had the opportunity to speak with United States District Judge Leonard Strand, Assistant United States Attorney Kraig Hamit, Assistant Federal Public Defender Timothy Herschberger, Pro Se Law Clerk Matt Winter, Legal Advisor to Judge Strand Audrey Felderman, two United States Marshals, two United States Probation Officers, and Court Reporter Shelly Semmler. Students were then treated to lunch in the jury assembly room of the courthouse.

Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri Host Annual Street Law Teacher Workshop

The Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri partnered with The Missouri Bar to host the annual Street Law Teacher Workshop on February 28-29, 2024. Since 2015, the Eastern District of Missouri and The Missouri Bar have co-hosted the Street Law program each spring in St. Louis. This high-quality professional development opportunity brings high school teachers in contact with judges, attorneys, law professors, and skilled presenters to learn effective strategies for teaching about the courts and the law.

The 2024 edition was special because it represented the first time the Western District of Missouri joined the collaboration, hosting the program at the Christopher S. Bond Courthouse in Jefferson City, Missouri's capital. It was also significant because of the return to an in-person, two-day format, after online one-day programs in 2021-23.

The theme of the 2024 program was "The First Amendment and Social Media." Facilitators from Street Law guided the teachers through sessions on fundamental rights, the First Amendment, and classroom strategies of deliberation and inquiry. The program culminated in a moot court activity during which the teachers filled the roles of justices, petitioners, and respondents after being coached by judges and attorneys. Participating teachers had the opportunity to work with Chief United States Magistrate Judge Willie J. Epps, Jr. of the Western District of Missouri and Judge Paul C. Wilson of the Supreme Court of Missouri.



Street Law Teacher Workshop participants engaging in a legal exercise. Image courtesy of the Eastern District of Missouri.