



EIGHTH CIRCUIT PUBLIC OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

4th Quarter - 2024

2024: By the Numbers

NATURALIZATIONS

12 NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

WELCOMING **671** NEW CITIZENS IN
THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

17 NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

WELCOMING **825** NEW CITIZENS IN
THE DISTRICT OF NORTH DAKOTA

17 NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

WELCOMING **699** NEW CITIZENS IN
THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA

16 NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

WELCOMING **533** NEW CITIZENS IN
THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA



THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MISSOURI WELCOMED 4,144
PEOPLE AS PART OF 158
TOURS AND PROGRAMS



THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
MISSOURI HELD A
NATURALIZATION CEREMONY
AT THE NELSON ATKINS
MUSEUM OF ART



THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA
HOSTED THE 2024
MINNESOTA STATE HIGH
SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL
CHAMPIONSHIPS



THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH
DAKOTA HELD A NATURALIZATION
CEREMONY AT MOUNT RUSHMORE
NATIONAL MEMORIAL



DID YOU HEAR ABOUT?

- EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE LEE P. RUDOFISKY HELD A SPECIAL CIVIL MOTION HEARING AT CABOT HIGH SCHOOL.
- DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE BRIAN C. BUESCHER TALKED WITH 40 STUDENTS FROM OMAHA CREIGHTON PREP HIGH SCHOOL'S INTRODUCTION TO LAW CLASS.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Brown Bag Learn at Lunch Series
- Mock Trials Held in Fort Smith
- Second Cohort of The Supreme Court and My Hometown
- Civil Discourse Class at University of Iowa
- U.S. Probation Officers Attend Events at University of Nebraska Campuses
- I AM Reception Held at Duluth Courthouse
- Outreach Event Held at Cheyenne River Indian Reservation
- Bill of Rights Day Highlights

...and more!

Eastern District of Arkansas



Naturalization Ceremony Held in Helena



Image courtesy of the Eastern District of Arkansas.

On October 18, 2024, U.S. District Judge Brian S. Miller presided over a Naturalization Ceremony in the Jacob Trieber Federal Court House in Helena, Arkansas. Students from DeSoto High School and Marvell Academy were invited to be a part of the ceremony.

Judge Miller, along with Federal Public Defender Lisa G. Peters, Chief U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services Officer G. Edward Towe, U.S. Marshal Cory Harris, U.S. Attorney Jonathan Ross, and Clerk of Court Tammy Downs, spoke to the students prior to the ceremony.

Brown Bag Learn at Lunch Series

The fall session of the Eastern District of Arkansas's Brown Bag Learn at Lunch Series for law clerks and externs began on October 30, 2024. Chief U.S. District Judge Kristine G. Baker focused this session on Arkansas history.

The presenters included Senior U.S. Circuit Judge Morris S. Arnold, who spoke on Arkansas Post, the first and most significant European establishment in Arkansas; U.S. District Judge Brian S. Miller, who spoke on the Elaine Massacre of 1919 in Helena; U.S. District Judge D.P. Marshall Jr., who spoke on the *Cooper v. Aaron* case, and included a tour of the 1957 Era-Faithful Courtroom in the Little Rock courthouse; U.S. Magistrate Judge Joe J. Volpe, who spoke on the Rohwer Internment Camp in southeastern Arkansas; and Clerk of Court Tammy Downs, who spoke on the history of the courthouse in the Eastern District of Arkansas.



U.S. District Judge Brian S. Miller (left) and U.S. District Judge D.P. Marshall Jr. (right) speaking to law clerks and externs during the fall session of the Eastern District of Arkansas's Brown Bag Learn at Lunch Series. Images courtesy of the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Western District of Arkansas



Mock Trials Held in Fort Smith

The Western District of Arkansas hosted two mock trials in October. On October 22, 2024, 7th and 8th grade student groups from Darby Honors Classes participated in a mock trial using *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* in Fort Smith. On October 29, 2024, 7th and 8th grade students from Darby Health Science Academy also engaged in a mock trial using the *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* in Fort Smith. In total, over 150 students participated in these events.



U.S. Magistrate Judge Christy Comstock speaks with students. Image courtesy of Western District of Arkansas.

Naturalization Ceremony Held in Fayetteville



Image courtesy of Western District of Arkansas.

On November 15, 2024, a Naturalization ceremony was held at the John Paul Hammerschmidt Federal Building in Fayetteville, presided over by U.S. Magistrate Judge Christy Comstock. Fifteen people from seven different countries were naturalized. In addition, a group of about 80 English as a Second Language students from Rogers High School attended the ceremony and then received more information from USCIS representatives. The students also met with U.S. Probation Officers, the U.S. Marshals Office, and heard more from guest speaker Mauricio Herrera who is a Criminal Justice Act panel attorney for the Western District of Arkansas.

Eastern District of Missouri

Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals



Second Cohort of The Supreme Court and My Hometown

In the fall of 2024, the Courts in St. Louis, Missouri, hosted another term of *The Supreme Court and My Hometown*, the national civics program of the Supreme Court Historical Society. This initiative engages high school students in a thorough study of the process and substantive issues of a case decided by the Supreme Court of the United States in a unique and personalized way. Participants learn how the Judicial Branch interacts with the other two branches of government and their roles and responsibilities as active citizens. A distinguishing feature of this program is the focus on Supreme Court cases that originated in the students' hometowns and local courts.

Twenty high school students were selected for the after-school program which featured *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*, a landmark First Amendment student speech case. The program began with a 2-day orientation in July and continued after school on most Tuesdays throughout the fall semester.

Working with local attorney mentors, the students studied First Amendment law and every aspect of the case – from its trial in the Eastern District of Missouri, to oral arguments in the Eighth Circuit, to analyzing the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States. Participants learned from first-person case participants and legal experts throughout the term and were able to demonstrate new skills through realistic courtroom simulation activities.

Chief U.S. District Judge Stephen R. Clark, Eastern District of Missouri, presided over a courtroom simulation during which the student teams presented evidence and mock closing arguments in a trial courtroom.



Mock trial closing arguments before Chief U.S. District Court Judge Clark. Image courtesy of the Eastern District of Missouri.

U.S. Circuit Judge Raymond W. Gruender, Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, coached the student-justices and presided as Chief Justice during the moot court of *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*.

For the capstone project, the students conducted oral history interviews with participants in the case, including the three plaintiffs, as well as local and national experts, to develop an archive of voices discussing the significance of the case. Short sections of the interviews will become permanent additions to the *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier* exhibit created by the 2023 cohort of *Hometowns* students, currently on display in the Judicial Learning Center. The student groups presented their capstone projects to the court family on December 10, 2024, at the closing celebration.



Capstone project recording session with original plaintiff Cathy Kuhlmeier. Image courtesy of the Eastern District of Missouri.

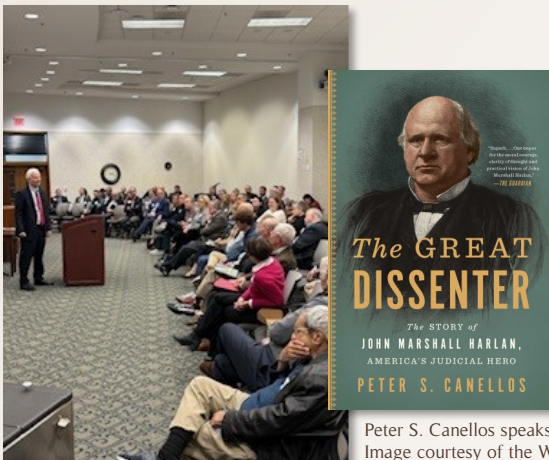
Western District of Missouri



Historical Society Hosts Author Visit

On November 15, 2024, the Western District of Missouri Historical Society hosted a lecture and luncheon featuring author Peter S. Canellos. Approximately 65 people attended the presentation about Canellos' latest book, *The Great Dissenter: The story of John Marshall Harlan, America's Judicial Hero*.

Peter S. Canellos is an award-winning writer, former editorial page editor of *The Boston Globe*, and is currently a managing editor at *Politico*. He is also the editor of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Last Lion: The Fall and Rise of Ted Kennedy*.



Peter S. Canellos speaks with attendees (left). Cover image of Canellos' book (top). Image courtesy of the Western District of Missouri.

Northern District of Iowa



Northern District of Iowa Hosts Multiple Groups at Courthouse



Chief U.S. District Judge C.J. Williams and his law clerks speak with high school students from the Kirkwood Community College Learning Center during Fall Legal Day. Image courtesy of Hilary Naab, U.S. Courts Library-8th Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Northern District of Iowa hosted four tours during the fourth quarter of 2024 with about 100 participants in total. Clerk of Court Paul DeYoung hosted a courthouse tour for Boy Scout Troop 68 as part of their Citizenship in the Nation badge. The U.S. Marshals Service offered high school government students from Marion High School the opportunity to learn about their profession with a demonstration of their equipment.

During a Fall Legal Day, high school students from Kirkwood Community College's Learning Center spent the afternoon meeting and talking with professionals from different legal fields. Finally, high school juniors from Youth Leadership for Five Seasons spoke with a U.S. Attorney and two U.S. Probation Officers about federal legal professions.

Southern District of Iowa



Civil Discourse Class at University of Iowa



Students attending Civil Discourse Class at University of Iowa. Image Courtesy of U.S. Magistrate Judge Helen Adams.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Helen Adams taught a first-time class on Civil Discourse in October 2024 at the University of Iowa College of Law. Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge Stephen Jackson attended the last class to offer input and feedback to the students.

Naturalization Ceremony at Des Moines Public Library

On November 22, 2024, U.S. Magistrate Judge Helen Adams presided over a Naturalization ceremony at the Des Moines Public Library that welcomed 78 new citizens from 37 countries. Dakota Keninger, law clerk to Chief U.S. District Judge Stephanie Rose, sang the National Anthem.



U.S. Magistrate Judge Helen Adams with new citizens at Naturalization ceremony. Image courtesy of Southern District of Iowa.

District of Nebraska



U.S. Probation Officers Attend Events at University of Nebraska Campuses

On October 2, 2024, U.S. Probation Officers participated in a criminal justice panel specifically for criminal justice students. Chief U.S. Probation Officer Doug Steensma, Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer Kimi Camacho, Assistant Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer Aaron Kurtenbach, and Human Resources Supervisor Stacy Graham all participated in the panel at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. On October 9, 2024, U.S. Probation Officers Avi Perez and Dylan Rotert participated in a career fair at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. On October 30, 2024, U.S. Probation Officers Megan Davis and Courtney Schoneweis participated in a career fair at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. Finally, on October 31, 2024, Chief U.S. Probation Officer Doug Steensma spoke to students in Professor Laramie Sproles' Survey to Criminal Justice class on the federal probation/pretrial system.

District of Minnesota



Official Grand Opening of the Justice & Democracy Center of Minnesota

On October 21, 2024, the court held the official grand opening of The Justice and Democracy Center of Minnesota with honored guest Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. The event began with a student interactive session with Justice Sotomayor. Over two dozen middle and high school students from across Minnesota had a question and answer session with Justice Sotomayor, followed by a tour of the center. Questions ranged from what career the Justice would have chosen if not the law, to what she wished she could tell her 14-year-old self.

The evening then moved to a reception attended by many judges of the Eighth Circuit, the District of Minnesota, and many supporters of the center from the legal, corporate, and philanthropic communities. Chief U.S. District Judge Patrick Schiltz, Senior U.S. District Judge John Tunheim, Federal Bar Association representatives Vildan Teske and Dan Hedlund, and Justice Sotomayor all addressed the crowd of over 250 attendees.



Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court addresses the attendees.
Image courtesy of the District of Minnesota

U.S. Courts News recently profiled the new center. To read the article, please [click here](#).

I AM Reception Held at Duluth Courthouse

On October 9, 2024, the *I AM* public reception was held at the Duluth Courthouse. Chief U.S. District Judge Patrick J. Schiltz, Senior U.S. District Judge Donovan W. Frank, U.S. Magistrate Judge Leo I. Brisbois, and retired U.S. Magistrate Judge Becky R. Thorson hosted a wonderful evening highlighting the importance of the exhibit: *An Unfinished Journey: Civil Rights for People with Developmental Disabilities and the Role of the Federal Courts*.

The evening included original poetry and artwork curated by the Fresh Eye Studio. Attendees also enjoyed original music from BOLD-choice Theatre's original musical "Sundown on the Jasper County Jewel." BOLD-choice Theatre is a community theatre company that creates original, fully staged productions that seek to align artistic expression with civic engagement. This program is a place for artists to explore their craft and realize the power of artistic expression. The company seeks to entertain and engage the community, leading to dialogue around the issues of inclusivity, individuality, and social responsibility.

Attendees included representatives from the Executive Director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, MSS, BOLD-choice Theatre, Fresh Eye Studio, CHOICE Unlimited, the Federal Bar Association, and attendees from the St. Louis County Health and Human Services Conference.



U.S. Magistrate Judge Leo I. Brisbois addresses the reception.
Image courtesy of the District of Minnesota.

District of South Dakota



Outreach Event Held at Cheyenne River Indian Reservation



Image courtesy of the District of South Dakota

On November 14, 2024, employees from the District of South Dakota and attorneys from the South Dakota Indian Country Bar Association and the South Dakota State Bar Association travelled to Cheyenne-Eagle Butte Schools on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

In the morning, third and fourth grade students participated in a mock trial based on “Goldie Locks and the Three Bears.” In the afternoon, the entire high school student body participated in a mock trial based on the landmark 1883 Supreme Court case *Ex Parte Crow Dog*. Following the mock trials, a question and answer session was held for students to learn more from the legal professionals present about their professions.

The trip was organized by Seth Pearman, member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Attorney General for the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe and president of the Indian County Bar Association. The event was sponsored by the South Dakota Indian Bar Association, the National Native American Bar Association, University of South Dakota School of Law, and the South Dakota Bar Association.

The following day, Mr. Pearman guest lectured in Myah Red Horse’s tribal government class. He noted that the students were “incredibly engaged because of the Crow Dog trial the day before.” In an interesting historical note, Myah’s husband, Gayvn Spotted Tail, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, is a descendant of the victim, Spotted Tail, in the *Ex Parte Crow Dog* case.



Image courtesy of the District of South Dakota

District of North Dakota



Sheyenne High School Students Visit Fargo Courthouse

On December 4, 2024, students from Sheyenne High School’s Law and Justice class and a Social Studies class of English language learners visited the Fargo courthouse.

In addition to a tour of the courthouse, students heard about the Clerk of Court’s office, the U.S. Probation Office, the U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, and U.S. District Court.



Bankruptcy Judge Shon Hastings speaks with students. Image courtesy of District of North Dakota.

Bill of Rights Day Highlights

What is Bill of Rights Day?

Bill of Rights Day is celebrated each year on December 15th to commemorate the ratification of the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, also known as the Bill of Rights.

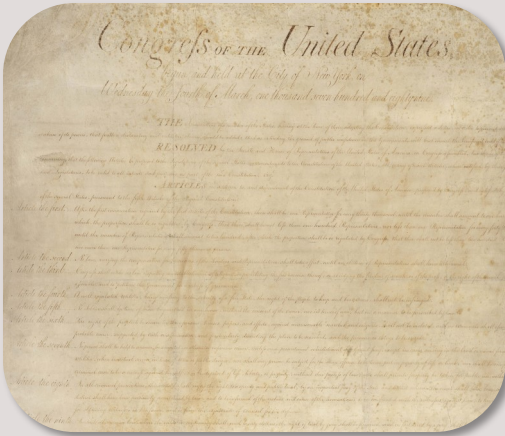


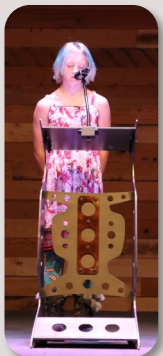
Image courtesy of the National Archives.

Bill of Rights Day Programs in North Dakota



Class from LaMoure High School.
Photo courtesy of the District of North Dakota.

On December 10, 2024, U.S. Magistrate Judge Alice R. Senechal and other court staff visited a high school class in LaMoure, North Dakota, and presented a Bill of Rights Day program. Additional staff from the court presented at Alexander High School in Alexander, North Dakota, and Shaley High School in Fargo, North Dakota.



On December 17, 2024, Bill of Rights Day Contest finalist Aubrie Myrmoe from the Self Directed Academy read her contest entry at the Naturalization ceremonies in Fargo, North Dakota.

Girl Scouts Democracy Badge Workshop



Girl Scouts participating in an activity for their Democracy Badge. Image courtesy of the District of Minnesota.

The United States District Court of Minnesota held a Girl Scouts Democracy Badge workshop on December 15, Bill of Rights Day, at the Justice & Democracy Center of Minnesota for 80 girls and troop leaders. The 4-hour workshop for girls in grades 8th through 12th included meet and greets with U.S. District Judge Eric Tostrud and U.S. District Judge Laura Provinzino, a bomb dog demonstration, courthouse tour, scavenger hunt, Bill of Rights discussion with Senior U.S. District Judge John Tunheim, and a fundamental human rights activity.



On December 3, 2024, U.S. Magistrate Judge Joe J. Volpe of the Eastern District of Arkansas spoke on the Bill of Rights to students at the Catholic High School for Boys in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Image courtesy of the Eastern District of Arkansas

Fifth Annual Bill of Rights Day Contest

In celebration of the anniversary of the Bill of Rights, district courts of the Seventh and Eighth Circuits collaborated to offer the fifth annual contest and virtual event. Students in grades 5-12 were encouraged to submit artwork and essays that identified a right that exists for people in other nations that they want to see added to the U.S. Constitution. In total, 319 students submitted 288 works of art and essays. The grand prize winners were announced during a live webinar on December 4, 2024, during which three federal judges spoke about their work and its relation to the Bill of Rights, and then took questions from the audience. U.S. Circuit Judge Jane Kelly, Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, U.S. District Judge Andrea R. Wood, Northern District of Illinois, and U.S. Magistrate Judge Veronica Duffy, District of South Dakota, participated. Approximately 220 people participated in the webinar.

See the winning entries here: <https://judiciallearningcenter.org/bill-of-rights-day/>