



Public Information Office  
**United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Idaho Federal Court Cosponsors Civics Contest for High School Students**

**BOISE** – A civics contest organized by the federal courts of the western United States offers high school students a chance to win cash prizes while learning more about constitutional conflicts that arose during one of the most momentous periods in our nation’s history.

“Not to Be Forgotten: Legal Lessons of the Japanese Internment” is the theme of the 2017 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest, an essay and video competition open to students in grades 9-12 in public, private and parochial schools and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status. The contest is sponsored by the U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho and the Courts and Community Committee of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit. The entry deadline is 11:59 p.m. on April 16, 2017. For more information visit <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>.

The district court is holding a local contest with cash prizes of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250 for the top three finishers in both the writing and video competitions. Local winners go on to compete in the Ninth Circuit contest, which offers prizes of \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500 for the top three finishers in each category. Local winners will be announced in May, circuit winners in June.

The contest theme relates to events occurring in 1942 following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Presidential directives authorizing the military to take steps to guard against enemy sabotage or espionage on the West Coast led to the forced relocation of some 100,000 persons of Japanese descent, many of them U.S. citizens. Students are advised to consider U.S. Supreme Court decisions in 1943 and 1944, which generally upheld the internment policy, along with lower court decisions in the 1980s, which resulted in exoneration for two Japanese-American men who had resisted relocation. The cases bring into focus the constitutional conflicts that can arise when national security and individual rights are both at stake. In studying the Japanese internment, students are asked to consider its relevance today as our nation seeks to protect against terrorism on American soil.

“The contest will uniquely add to the student’s knowledge and understanding of the Constitution, which is the basis of our democracy,” said U.S. District Judge Janis L. Sammartino of San Diego, chair of the Ninth Circuit Courts and Community Committee.

For more information about the contest, please contact Kirsten Wilkinson, (208) 334-9464 / [kirsten\\_wilkinson@id.uscourts.gov](mailto:kirsten_wilkinson@id.uscourts.gov).

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