

2016 NINTH CIRCUIT CIVICS CONTEST

50 YEARS AFTER

THE MIRANDA DECISION

*How Federal Courts Defined the
Rights of the Accused*

Hello. My name is Sandra Klein and I am a United States Bankruptcy Judge in Los Angeles. And, my name is John Kronstadt and I am a United States District Judge in Los Angeles. We are writing to ask that you encourage students to participate in the 2016 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest (Ninth Circuit Contest). The Ninth Circuit Contest, which is sponsored by the federal courts, is an essay and video competition for high school students in the Western U.S. Its purpose is to help inform young people about the Constitution and why it matters. Student winners will receive cash prizes and other recognition.

The theme of the Ninth Circuit Contest is the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Miranda v. Arizona. In that 1966 case, the Court ruled that someone taken into police custody must be informed—prior to being questioned—of his or her Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. The Miranda decision requires police to advise a person in custody of his or her right to remain silent and to be represented by an attorney, which is now referred to as a “Miranda warning” or recitation of the “Miranda rights.” Students may write an essay and/or produce a video about how Miranda rights were determined and defined, how they are safeguarded by the courts, and why they are so important to our system of justice.

For a chance to compete in the Ninth Circuit Contest, students must enter a local contest sponsored by the Central District of California (District Contest). The District Contest will be judged by judges and lawyers in the Central District and winners will receive cash prizes of \$1,000 for first place, \$750 for second place, and \$500 for third place. First place winners of the District Contest and a parent/guardian will also receive round-trip airfare and one night’s lodging to attend the July 2016 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Big Sky, Montana, where the Ninth Circuit Contest winners will be announced.

Cash prizes for the Ninth Circuit Contest—which are in addition to the prizes for winners of the District Contest—are as follows: \$2,000 for first place, \$1,000 for second place, and \$500 for third place. If a student wins the first prize in both the District Contest and the Ninth Circuit Contest, he or she will receive a total of \$3,000.

We would greatly appreciate you forwarding the attached PDF flyer announcing the contests to school principals, district curriculum coordinators, teachers and student counselors. It would be particularly helpful to reach those educators teaching Civics, Social Studies, English, American History, and the Video Arts.

Questions and requests for additional information may be directed to Blake Francois at (213) 894-2766 or blake_francois@cacb.uscourts.gov. A contest website is also available at <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>.

Thank you very much for considering our request.