

NEWS FROM THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

December 5, 2022

Philadelphia – The Courts, Community, and Rule of Law Committee of the Judicial Council of the Third Circuit announced today that it is hosting an essay contest for **5th and 6th grade classes** focused on civics, citizenship, and the concept of the “Right to Vote”. The essay prompt is: “Why the right to vote is important to me and to our country.”

The Third Judicial Circuit is comprised of the U.S. Court of Appeals as well as the Federal District Courts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The latter are trial courts, which include bankruptcy courts. Chief Circuit Judge Michael A. Chagares noted that “It is incumbent on us, as federal judges, to engage with our youth and to offer a robust civics education program.” The Committee and its members are partnering with bar associations, civic organizations, and educational institutions across the geographical reach of the Third Circuit to promote and oversee the essay contest.

This is a Class essay. One essay should be submitted on behalf of the Class. Class essays must be submitted on or before Friday, March 31, 2023. Classes submitting the best essays in each district (District of Delaware, District of New Jersey, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, Middle District of Pennsylvania, Western District of Pennsylvania, and the District of the Virgin Islands) of the Third Circuit will be invited to one of the nine courthouses in the Third Circuit to present their essays during the first

weeks of May, in celebration of Law Day. The essays and presentations will be evaluated based on focus, content development, organization, and style. Prizes will be awarded.

Judge D. Brooks Smith, who chairs the Courts, Community, and Rule of Law Committee overseeing the contest, stated “Over 102 million Americans voted in the 2022 elections. In the years ahead, young Americans who are now elementary and secondary school students will add to those numbers by exercising ‘the franchise’ that is vital to responsible citizenship. Our committee believes that now is the time to ask these voters of the future to think about what their votes will one day mean to their communities and to their country.”

For more information about the essay contest, please visit the Third Circuit Court of Appeals website at <https://www.ca3.uscourts.gov/> or contact 267-299-4306.