Law Day 2015 Outstanding Activity Award Winners

The Law Day 2015 Outstanding Activity Awards promote public understanding of law by integrating the 2015 theme “Magna Carta: Symbol of Freedom” into innovative activities that serve the community. The competition finalists are listed below.

The award finalists showed excellence in their programming and deserve acknowledgement and recognition. The Law Day 2015 Outstanding Activity Award finalists are as follows:

- Long Beach Branch NAACP and Keesal, Young & Logan
- Luke Air Force Base, 56th Fighter Wing Legal Office
- Orange County Bar Association

Keesal, Young & Logan Hosts 15th Annual Law Day With Judge Kelvin Filer

Judge Kelvin Filer was the Keynote Speaker at the Long Beach Branch NAACP and Keesal, Young & Logan Law Firm’s 15th Annual Law Day, April 30, 2015 at the Law Firm of Keesal, Young & Logan. Judge Filer is a Los Angeles Superior Court Judge born and raised in Compton, California. He emphasizes representing his city because historically we tend to hear negative things about the city.

The Award-Winning Law Day Program has eight components: Law Day study guide for students and teachers, legal career and law materials; mentoring, meeting, and shadowing lawyers, judges, and other legal professionals; courthouse and law school visitations, and Law Day speakers, panels, and discussions. Maria Livingston, Attorney, Superior Court of California, County of Orange, will conduct a special session for educators teaching about the law.

The closing ceremony included a keynote speaker and student up-close and personal discussion with lawyers and legal professional participants. The purpose of the Long Beach Branch Law Day program is to introduce local 8th, 9th, and 10th grade students of color to law as a career.

The event also included local university, community college, NAACP youth and college members, and home school students. The program is a partnership with the Long Beach Bar Association, Los Angeles County Bar Association, and Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Los Angeles County, the Langston Bar, Long Beach City Attorney and Prosecutor with support from the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office. Over forty lawyers and judges will serve as program participants and eight Law Firms this year.

Law Day was created in the late 1950’s by the American Bar Association to draw attention to both the principles and the practices of law and justice. The 2015 Law Day theme is Magna Carta has come to embody a simple but enduring truth: No one, no matter how powerful, is above the law. In the eight centuries that have elapsed since Magna Carta was sealed in 1215, it has taken root as an international symbol of the rule of law and as an inspiration for many basic rights Americans hold dear today, including due process, habeas corpus, trial by jury, and the right to travel.

Click Here: To Read More About the 2015 American Bar Association Law Day Program Winners and Finalists
Purpose of the Competition

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BEST STUDENT PROGRAM

Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse

The staff and volunteers with the Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse taught rule of law principles of Magna Carta and showed its relevance in today’s technological world. Focusing on individual rights and freedoms of Magna Carta, court staff composed a resource packet for high school teachers in Ferguson and St. Louis Public Schools with details on how to educate students about privacy and free speech, via lesson plans and activities. The court crafted a mock trial involving peer threats against a track team, and students were given the case information to prepare. On April 30, 80 students from two area high schools toured the court, observed a real case proceeding, and had the opportunity to hold their mock trial in the court. Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse staff also created Magna Carta fact sheets, lesson plans and resource packets for elementary and middle schools, which was disseminated to various Missouri school districts in April and May. To reach the post-secondary audience, the court held a program on Magna Carta at Saint Louis University School of Law.

BEST PUBLIC PROGRAM

Guam Bar Association, Judiciary of Guam, and District Court of Guam

The collaboration between Guam’s Bar Association, Judiciary, and District Court produced a week of diverse activities that engaged a wide audience. Law Week focused on Magna Carta principle the right to trial by jury, due to over 20,000 residents reporting for jury duty over the last three years to accommodate the record number of trials that have occurred on the island. Nightly mock trials carried on the jury theme, as nearly 500 elementary and middle school students participated in classic trial reenactments. Over 150 high school students took part in an essay contest that explained how Magna Carta tenants still apply today. The high school students also studied a case summary and took part in an oral argument session with the Supreme Court, with a question and answer opportunity afterwards with the attorneys. Over 400 elementary students learned about Magna Carta and expressed the understanding of it through art contests. University level students participated in the launch of Through the Door, which was a first time drug offender re-entry program through the District Court. Additionally a naturalization ceremony was conducted, a Colors of Law 5K was had with over 1,500 participants, and a Law Fair held at Guam’s largest mall. The Law Fair informed the public about available services and programs through local courts, law-related community organizations, and law enforcement agencies.
MOST INNOVATIVE PROGRAM

Marshall County Bar Association

Marshall County Bar Association, led but a small but mighty contingent of bar members, set out to educate the public about Magna Carta and the law with a lasting impact beyond Law Day. Therefore the bar association in partnership with the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services, unveiled the Help Button, a touch screen laptop kiosk that provided access to free and reliable information. The Help Button launched at the courthouse on Friday, May 1 at 12:15 pm (a nod to the year 1215 when Magna Carta was first sealed). The kiosk offered legal, bankruptcy, housing, custody, and debt service information and even access to court approved forms, and local and pro bono attorneys in the area. Marshall County Bar Association members also partnered with the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency to honor the Charter of the Forest, which acknowledged hunting and fishing rights for the common man; a charter that was established in 1217 with a reissuance of Magna Carta. The wildlife event showed an educational trailer outside the courthouse and displayed animals that are indigenous to the area. An additional Marshall County Bar Association Law Day activity included a Symbol of Freedom discussion with high school students on Magna Carta. Visit the Tennessee State Courts website for more information.

BEST THEME INTERPRETATION

Wahab Public Law Library and Virginia Beach Public Libraries

The Wahab Public Law Library collaborated with Virginia Beach Public Schools to educate Legal Program students and high school World History, English, and Government students about Magna Carta. With the assistance of Virginia Beach Court docents, Wahab staff created Legal Bingo and Legal Jeopardy games to be played during classroom instruction. Game categories included Magna Carta, U.S. Constitution, Law Day, Wahab Public Law Library, and Legal Terminology. An event was held with the high school students at the Circuit Court where a judge spoke with students on the importance of Magna Carta. Students were interviewed by a local television station about their thoughts on Magna Carta, which ran locally as well as featured online. Wahab Public Law Library hosted an essay contest for students to explain why Magna Carta is a symbol of justice, fairness, and human rights.

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