



THE HONORABLE ROBERT A. KATZMANN

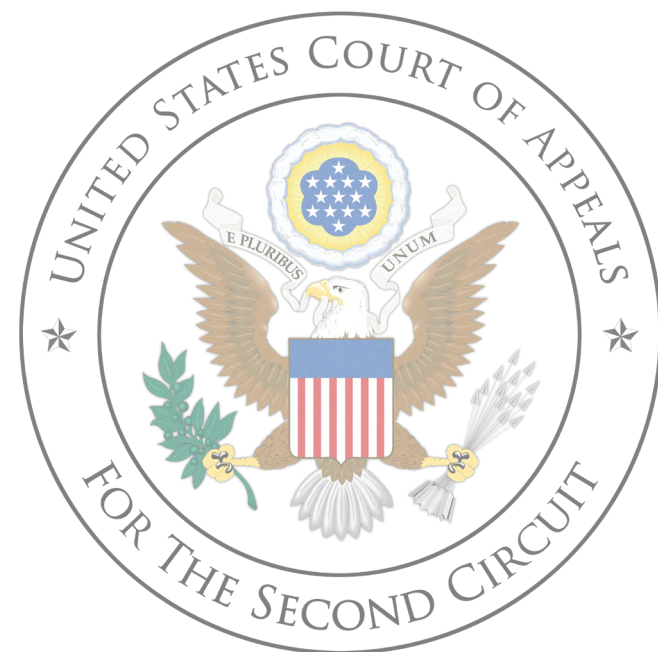
JUSTICE FOR ALL

COURTS AND THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The Civic Education Project of the Federal Courts of the Second Circuit

ANNUAL REPORT SEPTEMBER 2024



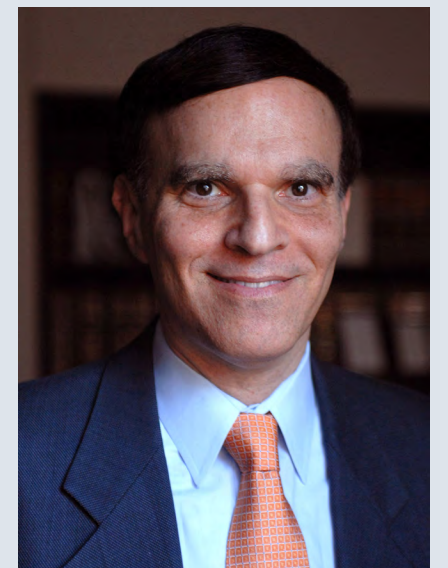


THE HONORABLE ROBERT A. KATZMANN JUSTICE FOR ALL: COURTS AND THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The pages that follow report on the wide-ranging activities during the preceding year of The Honorable Robert A. Katzmann *Justice For All: Courts and the Community Initiative*, a civic education project of the federal courts of the Second Circuit. In 2014, then-Chief Judge Robert A. Katzmann launched this circuit-wide project to increase public understanding of the role and operations of the courts and to bring courts closer to the community. Under Judge Katzmann's leadership, the *Justice For All* civic education initiative became a nationally-recognized model for other courts. In honor of Judge Katzmann, who passed away in 2021, *Justice For All* was renamed in 2022 as *The Honorable Robert A. Katzmann Justice For All: Courts and the Community Initiative*—a fitting name for a project conceived of by such a true champion of civic education. Under the leadership of Circuit Judge Joseph F. Bianco and Southern District of New York Judge Victor Marrero, co-chairs of the Second Circuit Civic Education Committee, *Justice For All* continues to pursue its mission "to seek to encourage, develop, and support programs in civic education for all members of the public, especially students, and to engage the community through outreach efforts."

Justice For All encompasses two principal approaches: we seek to bring the communities to the courts, and the courts to the communities. To that end, and with the active participation of judges, court staff, educators, members of the bar and community organizations, *Justice For All* encompasses a variety of programs including:

- Student and community field trips to courthouses
- Visits to schools by judges and lawyers
- Moot courts and mock trials for students
- Learning centers and library labs
- Curriculum support for law and justice system content
- Teacher professional development
- Constitution Day and Citizenship Day
- Law Day
- Summer court camp programs
- Virtual learning experiences
- On-demand educational resources
- Reenactments of historic cases.
- Financial literacy programs



This annual report describes the enormous efforts that so many have devoted to the project, and the impressive progress that the initiative has achieved in its activities to date. To develop and expand *Justice For All*, the Circuit's Civic Education Committee works through subcommittees, whose members include judges; representatives from the offices of circuit and district executives, clerks of court, probation and pretrial services, and circuit library; attorneys and educators; and professionals of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the Federal Judicial Center, and interested non-profit organizations. Many judges have substantially aided the *Justice For All* endeavor through their participation in our programs. *Justice For All* also partners with numerous civic and educational institutions within the Circuit, including bar associations, law firms, law schools, universities, government agencies, and private non-profit organizations, most notably the Justice Resource Center (JRC)¹. We also very much appreciate the contributions of Rebecca Fanning, National Outreach Manager for the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, and Russell Wheeler of the Brookings Institution and the Governance Institute.²

¹ JRC is a New York-based non-profit group funded by the New York City Department of Education that develops law-related curriculum and other programs for public schools and units of public education departments. <http://jrcnyc.org/>

² A grant from the Leon Levy Foundation has supported Russell Wheeler's contributions to *Justice For All*.

JUSTICE FOR ALL AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM



The students heard from Damian Williams, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, about his inspiring background and the day-to-day work of a federal prosecutor. In another class, the students had an in-depth discussion with Deirdre von Dornum of the Federal Defenders in the Eastern District of New York,

about defending the Constitution in the courtroom, and then heard from Larry Williams about his involvement in the criminal justice system as a defendant and his inspiring road to rehabilitation. A highlight of the program was a Zoom discussion with Mary Beth Tinker, who wore a black armband to school during the Vietnam War and was a plaintiff in the 1969 landmark Supreme Court case of *Tinker v. Des Moines*. The students also visited two Wall Street law firms and talked to attorneys about their careers and the fascinating work of the firm.

The students also received basic advocacy instruction from Nicole Maffei, Civic Education Director at the Supreme Court Historical Society, along with Michael Catapano, who pursued a career in the NFL before becoming an attorney at a major New York City law firm. After receiving instruction, students practiced their skills by arguing about who was the greatest sports franchise or musical performer. In later classes, the students received more specific instruction on how to argue a case before the Supreme Court from judges and attorneys. And, on the last day of the program, the students put those skills into action by participating in a moot court competition during which they fanned across the courtrooms of the federal courthouse and, with their family members and other supporters watching, presented arguments about the First Amendment rights at stake in the recent Supreme Court case of *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.*

The *Justice For All* after school program has received extremely positive feedback from students. One student stated that, "I enjoyed every aspect of this program to the fullest. Even though I was mostly nervous at first, I find this program as such a great way for me to

get outside during the school week. Also, I loved the speakers' insight into our world, ourselves, themselves; it was such a dream to talk to so many interesting people and get to see them in the flesh.... This program has encouraged me to have conversations with people, make friends with the right people, to persevere, to have courage in speaking up and speaking out about my passions. . . . This program has helped me learn about myself, about others, about the way I think, what I enjoy, what I find likings in. This program has done so much for me and it makes me very glad to have this opportunity to be here today."

Another student commented that, "This program is a great stepping stone for students to learn law or gain experience to further a career. All the amazing people I've met that have shared their stories have inspired me to be a lawyer. The courts have become more of a welcoming and less scary place for me."

Justice For All plans to offer this course each spring and hopes that the program will spread to other federal courthouses across the Nation.

Justice For All launched an innovative civic education program in the Spring of 2023, in which high school students across New York City were invited to participate at the federal courthouse in a law course taught by judges and attorneys. In the Spring 2024, *Justice For All* again offered a 12-week after school law program at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse for students throughout New York City.

As part of its effort to reach students across New York City, *Justice For All* partnered in this program with the Harlem Educational Activities Fund ("HEAF"), which is a non-profit organization that provides middle school and high school students from the City's underserved communities with academic enrichment, personal development, college preparation and career exposure.

Throughout the 12-week program, students came each week after school to the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse in lower Manhattan and, utilizing an interactive question-and-answer format, heard from judges and attorneys at the top of the legal profession who discussed their career and then immersed the students in an interesting legal topic.

LAW SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

Justice For All was excited to continue its partnership programs with the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University in White Plains and with Syracuse Law School in 2024.

The Haub Law program was a two-day event: a winter day at Haub Law and a spring day at the White Plains federal courthouse. Nearly 100 high school students from throughout Westchester County participated in the program. During the winter day at Haub Law School, students sat in one of the law school classrooms, just like law students—and heard from current law students, experienced a mock Constitutional Law with Professor Emily Gold Waldman, and toured the Law School. During the spring day at the White Plains courthouse, students heard from Southern District of New York U.S. Attorney Damian Williams, federal judges Joseph F. Bianco, Philip M. Halpern, and Kim P. Berg, a federal defender, a U.S. Marshal, Westchester District Attorney Mimi Rocah, and a member of the FBI.

The program at Syracuse, spearheaded by Professor Lauryn Gouldin, a member of the Second Circuit Civic Education Committee, was also tremendously successful – over 100 students from five schools in Syracuse and the surrounding areas came together at the Law School for a full day of programming, including a keynote address by Northern District of New York Chief Judge Brenda K. Sannes and a presentation from Northern District of New York Magistrate Judge Thérèse Wiley Dancks. The students also did a mock argument activity with Syracuse Law students.

Justice For All is eager to bring the law school partnership program to more law schools across the Second Circuit, and looks forward to continuing to partner with Haub Law and Syracuse Law in the coming year.



SUMMER JUSTICE INSTITUTE PROGRAM

In July 2024, *Justice For All*, in partnership with the Eastern and Southern Districts of New York and the District of Connecticut, welcomed over 300 students from across Long Island, New York City and the surrounding suburbs, and Hartford to one-week Justice Institute programs in the Central Islip, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Hartford courthouses.

The Justice Institute is open to high school students and consists of several components that allow the students to learn all about the legal system, including careers within that system, and to develop basic advocacy skills in a fun and interesting format. The students heard presentations from federal judges, FBI agents, Deputy U.S. Marshals, a U.S. Secret Service agent, federal prosecutors, criminal defense lawyers, law professors, and others about their respective roles within the court system. The students also observed naturalization ceremonies. Students were also taught basic advocacy skills in several sessions by experienced lawyers and, with the assistance of law students, used those skills to compete in a mock trial competition against other high school students.

Students provided extremely positive feedback about the Justice Institute programs, with one student commenting that, "the program was incredible. I've learned so many important things that I otherwise would never have the opportunity to learn.... I think this program has inspired and influenced me to learn more about the U.S. justice system, court system, the law, etc. I have learned many things about life in general and how to pursue a good and lawful life. So it was incredible to learn life lessons from the best of the best." Another student noted that, "this program has really encouraged and inspired me to learn more about law and become a lawyer. I have been amazed by this field and think that if I am passionate enough I can do something great in life. I loved all the judges and speakers. I learned so much and I am so grateful for being surrounded by amazing people."

The Justice Resource Center and the Federal Bar Council partnered with *Justice For All* on the Justice Institute programs.



CIVIC EDUCATION AROUND THE CIRCUIT

SPOTLIGHT ON THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK:

The Northern District of New York has been involved with many exciting civic education programs throughout the past year. The Northern District posts many of their civic education activities on social media: U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York ([Facebook](#)) and US District Court NYND (@[USDCNYND](#)) / X (Twitter).

The Northern District held many programs in celebration of Law Day/Month, including programs both in the courthouses and remotely for different school districts. As part of these programs, judges and attorneys discussed historical case law involving freedom of speech and voting rights with the students.

Throughout the past year, Northern District judges presided at nearly 50 naturalization ceremonies, including several that were held onsite at schools throughout the district. Additionally, students were welcomed to the Albany, Syracuse, and Utica courthouses throughout the year for courthouse visits, including observing proceedings, meeting with federal judges, and participating in mock trial activities. Judges also visited classrooms throughout the Northern District to meet with students and to educate them about the work of federal judges and the role of the federal courts.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE DISTRICT OF VERMONT:

Students in the District of Vermont had special opportunities to observe and participate in naturalization ceremonies held onsite at schools across the District. These ceremonies, held at Frederick H. Tuttle Middle School, Barstow Memorial School, and Milton High School, were meaningful events for the new citizens, students, teachers, and judges alike. Students served as greeters, gave readings, performed musical selections, set up a "Selfie Station" with patriotic decorations serving as the background for new citizens to take pictures in front of, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and more.

Additionally, the District of Vermont partnered with the Vermont Bar Association, the Office of the Federal Public Defender, the Office of the Vermont Attorney General, and the Vermont Law and Graduate School to organize the Vermont Statewide High School Mock Trial Program. Over 100 students participated in the program. Vermont federal judges participated as judges for the competition, which took place at Vermont Law and Graduate School in April 2024.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT:

Over the past year, District of Connecticut judges have engaged with a total of 2,209 persons through outreach events, including: 322 elementary school students, 361 middle school students, 634 high school students, 82 college students, 377 law students, and 433 members of the community. Students attended nine naturalization ceremonies in-person across the District, and participated in two remote naturalization sessions. Further, the District of Connecticut hosted the Hon. Warren W. Eginton Justice Institute at the Hartford courthouse and a mock trial and mock sentencing program at the New Haven courthouse. The District of Connecticut hosted 12 class visits to the District's courthouses to observe proceedings and meet with judges, and judges visited 24 classrooms across the state of Connecticut. Additionally, federal judges taught two law school classes and a high school course, and judges participated in a total of six panel presentations.



NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

Naturalization ceremonies are not only a transformative moment for new citizens, but can also be a transformative moment for the public, especially students who observe and are inspired by the ceremony.

Throughout the Second Circuit, judges have invited students to observe naturalization ceremonies at the federal courthouses, and have gone out into the community to perform naturalization ceremonies at special sites and events. In June 2024, the Eastern District of New York hosted a naturalization ceremony at the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in commemoration of Flag Day. On September 11, 2024, the Eastern District hosted a naturalization ceremony at the Fire Island Lighthouse, in honor of Fire Island Seashore's 60th anniversary and in commemoration of the September 11 attacks. During naturalization ceremonies, students participate by leading the Pledge of Allegiance and handing out American flags to the new citizens. On some occasions, student musicians and singers perform the "Star-Spangled Banner" or another musical number.

Inspired by the District of Connecticut's use of Zoom to livestream naturalization ceremonies to schools, Circuit Judge Joseph F. Bianco has implemented a program where schools send a small contingent of students to either the Brooklyn or Central Islip courthouses to observe a naturalization ceremony, and the ceremony is simultaneously live streamed to a larger group of students who remain at school and observe the ceremony from their classrooms or school auditorium. Judge Bianco engages with the students on Zoom before the ceremony and gives them a preview of what they will observe and follows up with an interactive question and answer session via Zoom after the ceremony. This model has enabled more students to access the naturalization ceremony experience and has been met with great enthusiasm by schools, teachers, and students.



COURTHOUSE VISITS



The *Justice For All* courthouse visit program continued to experience tremendous success during the 2023-2024 school year. Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, a total of nearly 180 school groups visited the Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Central Islip courthouses, including over 70 groups that visited the Learning Center at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse. The Manhattan and Brooklyn courthouses welcomed dozens of schools from throughout New York City and the surrounding suburbs, and the Central Islip courthouse welcomed schools from throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties.

In Manhattan, students had the opportunity to observe an oral argument session before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, and in Brooklyn and Central Islip, students had the chance to observe a naturalization ceremony. The program also includes a presentation about the federal courts, a discussion and question and answer session with an attorney, a conversation with a federal judge, and a mini mock trial activity in a district court courtroom. Dozens of circuit, district, magistrate, and bankruptcy judges volunteered their time to speak to student groups, along with many attorneys from the Southern and Eastern District United States Attorney's Offices, the Federal Defenders of New York, and CJA panel attorneys. The field trips were also supported by the Southern and Eastern District Executive's Offices, the Circuit Executive's Office, the Southern District Probation Office, and the United States Marshals Service.

Teachers and students expressed extremely positive feedback about the courthouse visit program. One teacher who brought his class to the Manhattan courthouse stated that, "I have been teaching for 18 years and have been on many field trips. This ranks as one my favorites." Another teacher who visited

the Brooklyn courthouse with her class stated that "the visit was PHENOMENAL. [The students] learned more in this one visit than in one week in a classroom. They were engaged and interested because of the captivating backgrounds and experiences of the speakers. The Naturalization ceremony that they sat in gave them exposure to how immigrants become citizens of the United States of America. The mock trial helped them actively get a feel of speaking and moving around in a courtroom. Overall, this experience gave them an insight into how the justice system is set up and helped them learn how to prosper in their future careers!"

The Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Central Islip courthouses are eager to welcome more student visitors and to continue this exciting program during the 2024-2025 school year. *Justice For All* is also excited to expand the courthouse visit program to the White Plains courthouse.

Additionally, over the past year, other courthouses around the Circuit also welcomed student groups for courthouse visits. Judges throughout the Circuit also visited elementary, middle, and high schools, fulfilling *Justice For All's* core mission to "bring the courts to the community."

MOOT COURTS & MOCK TRIALS



Throughout the Second Circuit, there have been long standing moot court and mock trial competitions operated through bar associations and non-profit organizations.

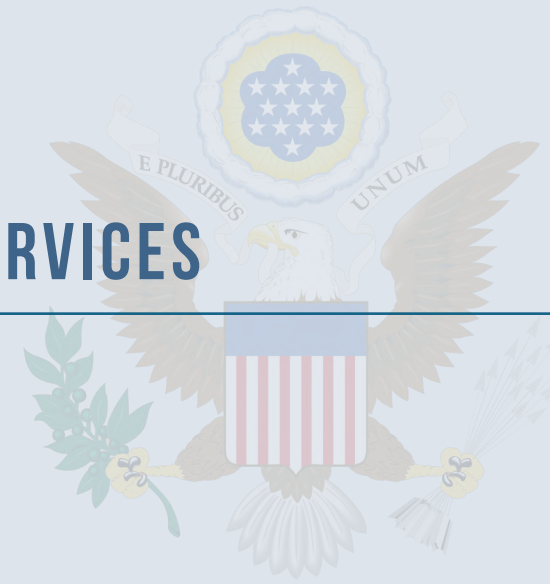
The New York City MENTOR Moot Court Competition is organized by the Justice Resource Center and Fordham Law School, in partnership with the Second Circuit. High school students from across New York City work with lawyer mentors and school coaches to prepare mock oral arguments before the Supreme Court. Federal judges preside over the semi-final and final rounds of the Competition, which are held at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse.

The New York State High School Mock Trial Program is a joint venture of the New York Bar Foundation, the New York State Bar Association, and the Law, Youth and Citizenship Program. The Justice Resource Center, in collaboration with the Second Circuit, facilitates the New York City competition. The semi-final and final rounds of the competition are held at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse.

Likewise, other courthouses throughout the district hosted local moot court and mock trial competitions, facilitated by bar associations, law schools, and other organizations. In 2024, the Southern District of New York federal courthouse in White Plains hosted the final round of the Westchester County Mock Trial Competition.

Through these programs, high school students have the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of civil/criminal law and courtroom procedures, and thousands of students participate each year. Objectives of the tournaments include: teaching students ethics, civility, and professionalism; furthering students' understanding of the law, court procedures and the legal system; improving proficiency in communication skills such as listening, speaking, reading and reasoning; promoting better communication and cooperation between the school community and members of the legal profession; and stimulating interest in law-related careers.

PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES



The Southern District of New York U.S. Probation Office is actively engaged with *Justice for All* programs.

Over the past year, the Probation Office participated in many *Justice For All* events, including courthouse visit programs for middle school, high school, and college students at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse. These visits included a visit from the Justice Ambassador program at Columbia University, a social action and life skills building program for justice-impacted young adults.

During presentations to students, a representative of the Probation Office shares a "day in the life" of a probation officer, including providing an overview of the day-to-day operations of the Presentence Investigation Division and Supervision Division. Officers also discuss special programs and the role of each division as it relates to the court and other stakeholders.

The Probation Office has also hosted field trips and presented at "career day" programs onsite at schools. The Probation Office looks forward to more visits to schools during the upcoming year.





LAW WEEK 2024

Justice For All facilitated multiple programs throughout May 2024 in celebration of Law Day. The 2024 national Law Day theme was: “Voices of Democracy.”

Schools participated in special in-person visits to the Brooklyn and Manhattan federal courthouses in commemoration of Law Day. As part of these programs, students had the opportunity to observe courthouse proceedings and to engage in learning opportunities focused on the Law Day theme of “Voices of Democracy.”

TEACHERS’ INSTITUTE

In June 2024, in collaboration with the Justice Resource Center, *Justice For All* presented a three-day summer Teachers’ Institute for New York City teachers. The Teachers’ Institute has been an integral part of the *Justice For All* initiative since 2016.

Southern District of New York Judge Mary Kay Vyskocil and Southern District of New York Magistrate Judge Sarah L. Cave coordinated the 2024 Teachers’ Institute, the theme of which was the inter-relationship between the First Amendment’s religion, speech, and assembly clauses, on the one hand, and public safety, on the other. Presenters included renowned scholars, government officials, and litigators, who discussed both First Amendment jurisprudence and legal process topics. With the support of Justice Resource Center staff, teachers worked on developing oral arguments and questions for a hypothetical legal question, in preparation for teaching the same exercise to their students during the 2024-2025 school year.

JUDICIARY AND THE ARTS



Twelve visual art educators from schools across all five boroughs were selected to participate in the 2023-2024 cohort of the Judiciary and the Arts program. These educators commit to helping their students create and produce artwork inspired by legal topics and actively engage with the judiciary as a civic institution. This program honors student voices and culminates in a visual portrayal of the students’ knowledge of the federal judiciary and the rule of law in the United States.

This year, students prepared a visual representation of one of four subjects:

1. “Fair use” in copyright law;
2. The benefits of jury service;
3. Becoming a U.S. citizen in the 21st century;
4. Courtroom and courthouses of the future

More than 100 students participated this year. An exhibition of the artwork was hosted at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse in Manhattan in May.

Judiciary and the Arts is a partnership with the Justice Resource Center and the New York City Department of Education Office of Arts and Special Projects. The Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation provided support to the Justice Resource Center for this project. The project is consistent with the pedagogical practices described in the New York City Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Visual Arts and the New York State Standards for the Arts.

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

Justice For All partners with local bar associations and community organizations to promote civic education programming for students across the Second Circuit. *Justice For All* is eager to continue to partner with community-based organizations to expand its reach and to bring the courts closer to the communities that the Second Circuit serves.



LEGAL OUTREACH

Justice For All hosted rising ninth graders participating in Legal Outreach's Summer Law Institute for in-person courthouse field trips to the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse. The visits included an introduction to legal research, learning about the judicial branch, and exploring interactive kiosks in the Learning Center.

Justice For All also hosted Legal Outreach's "Debater of the Year" competition May 2024 and the Summer Law Institute's culminating mock trial competition in August 2024, both at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse.

CELINA AND SONYA SOTOMAYOR JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Justice For All partnered with the Sonia and Celina Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program to host interns from the high school division of the program for courthouse visits and Library Labs. The 2024 Sonia and Celina Sotomayor Judicial Internship Program reception, featuring remarks by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and Circuit Judge Raymond J. Lohier, was held at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse. Over 170 program participants, alumni, family members, board members, judges, and program supporters attended the reception, which took place in the Learning Center and surrounding hallways in the Courthouse.

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

VIEWS FROM THE BENCH: AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE FEDERAL COURTS

Second Circuit Judge Joseph F. Bianco discussed the selection process for federal judges, cases and issues litigated on Long Island, and the challenges facing the criminal justice system in this program that has been offered at public libraries and senior living communities in Nassau and Suffolk Counties since June 2018.



FINANCIAL LITERACY

Credit Abuse Resistance Education (CARE) was founded by now-retired Bankruptcy Judge John Ninfo of the Western District of New York. It is a national non-profit financial education outreach program with which *Justice For All* partners.

For several years, bankruptcy judges from within the Second Circuit, attorneys, and financial experts have joined together with CARE to educate adults about financial responsibility and improve their financial literacy. Attendees include:

- Senior citizens
- Veterans
- Domestic violence survivors
- Students
- Individuals with intellectual challenges
- Individuals newly arrived in the United States

Members of the Subcommittee on Adult Education Programs/CARE also offer financial literacy programs for people living in a Syracuse halfway house and as a component to the Northern District of New York's re-entry program. The program focuses on budget, credit, and student loan obligations.

COMMEMORATING ...

... THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION*



In commemoration of the 70th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Justice For All* facilitated a special program with students from three high schools in underserved communities. As part of this program, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Damian Williams, Circuit Judge Joseph F. Bianco, and Circuit Judge Raymond J. Lohier met with the students to discuss the legacy of *Brown*.

Additionally, *Justice For All*, in partnership with the New York County Lawyers Association, facilitated an essay contest for high schoolers throughout New York State in honor of Second Circuit Judge Rosemary S. Pooler. The essay contest topic focused on the impact of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The contest received over 75 entries, and a special awards ceremony was held in September 2024 at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse for the first, second, and third place winners.



... HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Circuit Judge Myrna Pérez hosted a program for over 200 middle school students in October 2023 in the ceremonial courtroom at the Daniel Patrick Moynihan U.S. Courthouse to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. The students heard from several speakers, including Judge Pérez, and also watched a reenactment of *Mendez v. Westminster*, performed by Second Circuit law clerks.





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<http://justiceforall.ca2.uscourts.gov>