



Outreach 2023

CIVICS In the First Circuit

The courts of the First Circuit have long offered a variety of engaging civics education programs, and in 2023, the goal was to build upon the success of these programs through a circuit-wide initiative.

This newsletter provides an overview of the efforts over the last year to educate the public about the work of the courts in our Circuit.

District of Maine

Maine’s celebration of Constitution & Citizenship Day is a very popular annual event. This past year, Judges Lipez and Walker presided over a naturalization ceremony at the University of Maine, where students and community members shared in the experience of civics in action.

Chief Judge Cary welcomed a group of international students from the Greenheart Exchange Program to attend chapter 13 proceedings, after which he hosted a question and answer session about the courts and democracy.

District of Massachusetts



Elementary through law school students participated in Law Day activities at the Moakley Courthouse in May. Events included meetings with

Magistrate, District, and Court of Appeals judges and staff, scavenger hunts, courthouse tours, and courtroom simulations. This was one of many events hosted in the District throughout the year.

Once again, the U.S. District Court hosted the Nelson and Lindsay Fellowship programs aimed at providing high school students, college seniors, and recent graduates hands-on experience and access to the federal court system.

2023 By the Numbers

- ◆ Over 2,500 students met with a First Circuit Court of Appeals, District, Magistrate or Bankruptcy Judge
- ◆ Over 50% of judges and staff across the circuit participated in civics activities
- ◆ 70 + events were hosted across the five districts
- ◆ Law Day events were hosted in all five districts for the first time

District of Puerto Rico

In addition to welcoming students of all ages to both the Hato Rey and Old San Juan courthouses, the judges in the District of Puerto Rico work closely with the U.S. Probation Office on a re-entry program that was a tremendous success. Additionally, the District Court works with the University of Puerto Rico's Law School to host a summer camp program for high schoolers in the area each year. More than 400 students and visitors were welcomed this year.

District of Rhode Island

The judges and staff in Rhode Island are committed to civics education and participate in numerous outreach efforts. From their work with "Princes to Kings" to the RWU Law L.E.A.D program, the RI court



family actively supports students’ and community members’ civic engagement. Judges and staff also go out to Providence schools on Law Day each year.

Relationships Initiated in 2023

- ◆ iCivics
- ◆ The Case Method Institute
- ◆ The Appellate Project
- ◆ The Social Law Library
- ◆ The Boston Children's Museum
- ◆ The Edward M. Kennedy Institute
- ◆ The Supreme Court Historical Society
- ◆ The Supreme Court Curator
- ◆ Civics Coordinators from each district's Supreme Judicial Court

District of New Hampshire

Chief Judge McCafferty provides opportunities for students to learn about the federal courts throughout the year. In the “You be the Judge” program, students are provided with a sentencing scenario to discuss with the Judge and share how they might act in the Judge’s role. After the exercise, the students observe a sentencing hearing.

In the “Naturalization plus Education Outreach” program students participate in a Naturalization Ceremony at the courthouse, leading the new citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem. After the ceremony, students participate in a full day of civics education that includes an exercise led by U.S. Probation related to cyber bullying. The students also participate in a mock criminal trial and appellate oral argument.

Chief Judge McCafferty and Judge Elliott hosted separate Naturalization Ceremonies in two New Hampshire high schools. The Hanover and Concord high school students engaged in the events by acting as hosts to the new citizens and provided music. At Hanover High School, Supreme Court Chief Justice McDonald was invited to co-preside over the event. The judges then met with the students to discuss the experience and other future opportunities in the legal field.



In February, the First Circuit Court of Appeals joined the District of Massachusetts in partnering with Discovering Justice to promote civics education and outreach, and to aid in programming for the new Breyer Center.

"Justice Breyer has deep ties to this Circuit and to the Moakley Federal Courthouse. He also has long emphasized the important role that courts play in making our democracy work."

Breyer Center Established

In April of 2023, Chief Judge Barron announced the creation of the Stephen G. Breyer Community Learning Center on Courts and the Constitution. The 2,800 square foot Center will be housed in the First Circuit library on the ninth floor of the John J. Moakley United States Courthouse in Boston. It will include a 1,000 square foot glass-enclosed multi-purpose training room with adjacent areas for group visits and exhibition space.

The Breyer Center will host education civic engagement activities for learners of all ages and backgrounds through interactive exhibitions, speaker programs, teacher institutes, classroom space, and displays of First Circuit historical information. The center will engage judges, prominent speakers in the legal and education communities, members of the bar, and state and local court partners in this endeavor.

