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**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Idaho Federal Court Sponsors Civics Contest for Idaho High School Students:  
“150 Years After Ratification of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment: What Does Equal Protection  
Mean to Students?”**

BOISE, January 30, 2018: Ratified on July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution provides, in part, that no state can “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” The 14th Amendment was written, along with the other Reconstruction Amendments, to provide legal and political rights to former slaves and freedmen in the aftermath of the Civil War. Over the past 150 years, Congress and the courts have applied this “Equal Protection Clause” to our right to equal educational opportunities.

The federal district court in Idaho, along with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, is sponsoring a civics contest for high school students upon the theme of “150 Years After Ratification of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment: What Does Equal Protection Mean to Students?” Students should consider how the Equal Protection Clause applies in high schools, colleges and graduate schools, whether in admissions, classrooms or on athletic fields. The contest is open to all high school students including home-schooled students of equivalent grade status in Idaho. Students from public, private, parochial, and charter schools are encouraged to enter.

Students may participate in either or both of two contests: (1) an individual student may electronically upload an essay between 500 to 1,000 words in length; and (2) a team of not more than three students may submit a video from 3 to 5 minutes in length. The essay or video must demonstrate an understanding of the historical background of the Equal Protection Clause. Students must examine and consider the facts of noteworthy cases and explain the constitutional powers and rights relevant to those cases and laws, as well as discuss the role of the Judicial Branch in preserving the rights of Americans to equal education.

The Idaho contest is now open, with entries accepted beginning February 1, 2018 via the Ninth Circuit’s website– <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest/>. The Idaho contest winners will receive prizes of \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second place, and \$250 for third place. Each first-place winner from Idaho, along with the winners of the other district courts within the Ninth Circuit, will be entered into the Ninth Circuit competition. The winners of the circuit-wide competition will receive cash prizes of \$2,000 for first place, \$1,000 for second place, and \$500 for third place. The Circuit contest winners also will receive travel and accommodations to attend the 2018 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Anaheim, California.

The Federal Judges Association and the Federal Bar Association are also sponsoring a civics contest on the same theme. This is a great opportunity for students to be able to participate in two contests with one essay and/or video entry. Information regarding that contest, including its entry submission deadlines, can be found at [http://www.fedbar.org/Outreach/Inaugural-Civics-Essay-Contest\\_1.aspx](http://www.fedbar.org/Outreach/Inaugural-Civics-Essay-Contest_1.aspx). Cash prizes of \$1,000, \$500, and \$100 will be awarded for first, second, and third place winners respectively in each category.

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