



**South  
Carolina  
Bar**



AMERICAN **BAR** ASSOCIATION

Division for Public Education



## **THE HONORABLE J. MARK HAYES, II STATEWIDE LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST**

Sponsored by the SC Bar Senior Lawyers Division

### **2024 Awards Packet**

Open to all 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grade Public, Private, and Homeschooled Students

## **THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S LAW DAY 2024 THEME**

The 2024 Law Day theme will be “Voices of Democracy.” The Voices of Democracy Law Day theme encourages Americans to participate in the 2024 elections by deepening their understanding of the electoral process; discussing issues in honest and civil ways; turning out to vote; and, finally, helping to move the country forward after free and fair elections. In this way, Americans ensure that our government remains responsive to the wishes of the people. We invite all Americans to join us in 2024 to celebrate Law Day by lifting their voices to strengthen our democracy.

The 2024 Law Day theme “Voices of Democracy” recognizes that in democracies, the people rule. For nearly 250 years, Americans have expressed their political views and wishes by speaking their minds and voting in elections. In 2024, the United States will hold its 60th presidential election, and Americans will address fundamental questions about democracy and the rule of law.

### **WHAT IS LAW DAY?**

Established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958, Law Day celebrates the American heritage of liberty, justice and equality under the law. In 1961, Congress issued a joint resolution designating May 1st as the official date for celebrating Law Day. Every year, Law Day provides legal professionals and others with opportunities to help students and the public understand how the law protects our freedoms.

### **2024 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC INTRODUCTION**

ABA President Mary Smith announced the 2024 Law Day theme, Voices of Democracy, and encourages Americans to lift our voices to maintain our system of laws and to ensure that our democracy endures. Join us in 2024 to celebrate Law Day!

“When our founding Fathers convened to write the Constitution over 235 years ago, they set in motion an experiment that changed the world. America would not be a land of kings, but a nation of laws. Since then, generations of Americans have worked to defend and improve our system of laws and to ensure that the laws are applied equally and justly.

On Law Day, we celebrate the rule of law and rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of a more perfect union. Since the first Law Day was established in 1958 by President Dwight Eisenhower, the American Bar Association has been a leading promoter of Law Day, advocating for the rule of law and the preservation of our democracy. Voices of Democracy is the theme for Law Day 2024. Today, our nation and world are at an inflection point. At home and around the globe, autocrats and dictators threaten the rule of law. Our democracy is under strain. We must all use our voices to maintain our system of laws and to ensure that our democracy as conceived, endures. The American Bar Association encourages all Americans, especially the legal community, to join in recognizing Law Day on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Reflecting on the way voices of democracy shape our future. To learn more about Law Day and promote voices of democracy, visit [Lawday.org](http://Lawday.org).”

### **2024 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC**

Each student participant must write an essay of 1,000 words or less on this topic:

- Considering the Constitution, explain how the adherence to the Rule of Law is related to the success of our democracy.

Suggested Approaches (these are only suggestions; the student is encouraged to be creative to develop their own approach to the topic).

- Examine the Constitutional concept of “We the People” and the Constitutional protections of the right to vote.
- Examine one or more historical events where the Rule of Law can be linked to the rights of citizens to participate in America’s democratic society.
- Explain how America’s democracy benefits from a society that respects the Rule of Law.
- Discuss how the aspirational values of equality of all men and the fundamental rights of life, liberty and happiness are supported by the democratic principle of voting and respect for the Rule of Law.

### **ESSAY DIRECTIONS**

Each essay writer is required to adhere to the following:

- 1) Submit a typewritten essay in a 12-point font and include all attached documents:
  - The student’s name, home address, home phone number, and grade level.
  - Essay title.
  - School name, address, phone number, and educator’s name (if applicable).
  - Name of local newspaper(s).
  - Documentation of all research on the enclosed Works Cited page or an attached sheet (If applicable).
- 2) Forward all to an English, Language Arts (ELA) or Social Studies (SS) teacher to submit the given essays and application forms.
- 3) **DO NOT PUT THE STUDENT’S NAME ON THE ESSAY ITSELF.**

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Each English, Language Arts and/or Social Studies teacher may submit two (2) essays per grade level from his or her respective school for consideration for the pre-selection judging. However, more than (2) essays may be submitted if it is the teacher's opinion that additional essays are worthy of consideration. The essays will be read and assessed by Judge Hayes and members of the South Carolina Circuit Court Judges Association. The overall winner, their family, and teacher will be invited to the South Carolina Bar Annual Convention where the student will be recognized.

All public school, private school and home-schooled participants' essays must be submitted to Judge Mark Hayes by **noon on Friday, May 31, 2024**. All essays along with the appropriate cover sheets are to be submitted to the following address:

Judge J. Mark Hayes, II  
Spartanburg County Courthouse  
180 Magnolia Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29306  
Office: (864) 562-4144      Fax: (864) 562-4142

**AWARDS**

|                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | \$ 500  |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade | \$ 500  |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade | \$ 500  |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade | \$ 500  |
| Overall Winner         | \$1,000 |

Cash awards, medals and certificates will be presented to the recipients. Winning essays may be submitted to the newspaper for publication and also to other organizations for possible publication and release to the general public. By entering the essay contest, your consent is assumed for publication of your winning essay, your name, teacher, and school. If you do not wish for your winning essay and name to be published, please "X" the box on the Cover Sheet. The Statewide Law Day Essay Contest is sponsored by the SC Bar Senior Lawyers Division.

### **ESSAYS FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS**

Students from participating schools will submit essays to a school official (teacher, administrator, etc.) for pre-selection.

School submissions should include:

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A list of all other students who prepared essays for this contest. (Judge Hayes would like to recognize the efforts of all participants).

### **ESSAYS FROM STUDENTS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE NOT PARTICIPATING OR WHO ARE HOME-SCHOOLED**

Students whose schools are not participating or who are not affiliated with a school may send entries directly to Judge Hayes for consideration.

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A student who is affiliated with a non-participating school or class must provide the school's name, address, telephone number, and indicate on the form that the school or class is not participating.

Essay Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Entry #: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2024 Law Day Essay Contest Judging Criteria

### Voices of Democracy

Assign a point value (1 – 10) to each of the following questions. One point indicates the lowest mark and 10, the highest.

#### Structure/Content

- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the essay contain an introduction, a descriptive body and a conclusion?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the data correct and in a clear and logical and/or sequential order?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the essay exhibit good language skills: proper spelling, syntax and grammar?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are the references to sources (Constitution, Bill of Rights, cases, etc.) correct?

#### Creativity/Originality

- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the essay have some sense of originality and creativity?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are the ideas good and well-developed?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the essay creatively develop the theme and does not deviate?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the essay contain the writer's personal views and comments?

#### General Appearance

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the format neat/taped or written legibly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the cover sheet attached and correct?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total Points (100 points maximum)**

## COVER SHEET

### **2024 Law Day Essay Contest**

**DEADLINE: May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, AT 12:00 NOON**

A copy of this sheet must accompany each essay submitted in the 2024 Law Day Essay Contest. All of the information on this sheet must be completed and must not appear on the essay.

Entry Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (will be assigned by Law Day Essay Contest Committee)

**Please PRINT all information in blue ink.**

Grade Category: Grade 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Grade 10 \_\_\_\_\_ Grade 11 \_\_\_\_\_ Grade 12 \_\_\_\_\_

**ESSAY TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Street/PO Box) City State Zip  
Student's Phone Number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Street/PO Box) City State Zip  
Name of Teacher Submitting Essay: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Local Newspaper/Contact/Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Words: \_\_\_\_\_ (not to exceed 1,000) Number of Pages: \_\_\_\_\_

First Five Words of Essay: \_\_\_\_\_

"X" this box ☐ if you **do not** wish for your essay or name to be released to the public.

**Mail the completed cover sheet ATTACHED to your essay to:**

Judge Mark Hayes  
180 Magnolia Street, Spartanburg County Courthouse, Spartanburg, SC 29306  
Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142

Essay Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Entry #: \_\_\_\_\_

## Academic/Extracurricular Activities

### **ESSAY THEME: Voices of Democracy**

Please list any of the student's honors, awards, or extracurricular activities that can be used when publishing the student's essay:

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Please list the student's academic and vocational goals after graduation (i.e. colleges, military, law enforcement, doctor, lawyer, etc.):

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