



MUSKEGON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION LAW DAY 2018

ESSAY CONTEST

Muskegon County 6th, 7th and 8th grade students

2018 marks the 60th Anniversary of Law Day! The 2018 Law Day Theme is “Separation of Powers: Framework for Freedom. The U.S. Constitution created a system of government with distinct and independent branches – Congress, the Presidency, and a Supreme Court. It also defines legislative, executive and judicial powers and outlines how they interact. These checks and balances provide a framework for freedom, but this framework is not self-executing. We the people must continually act to ensure that our constitutional democracy endures, preserving our liberties and advancing our rights. The Law Day theme enables us to reflect on the separation of powers as fundamental to our constitutional purpose and to consider how our governmental system is working.

QUESTION The topic to be answered in essay format is:

Within the framework established by the Constitution of the United States, the Legislative branch is responsible for making laws and the Judicial branch determines sentences when a person breaks those laws. The Executive branch has the power to undo criminal sentences handed down by the Judicial branch under the pardoning power found in Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution. Recent examples of this pardoning power include President Obama pardoning Chelsea Manning and President Trump pardoning Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Does this pardoning power, as it’s applied today, fit within the founders’ framework for separation of powers?

Essays must be between 300 and 500 words, and submitted in a double-spaced, typed document along with the attached Entry Form. We encourage students to take a position and support that position with research, data, and material. Students should also be aware of the contrary position and be able to argue and support why their position on the issue is better. Teachers, please note that each class is limited to submitting 5 essays.

Awards for Essay Contest Winners are as follows:

1st Place: \$100.00 Prepaid Gift Card
3rd Place: \$50.00 Prepaid Gift Card

2nd Place: \$75.00 Prepaid Gift Card
4th Place: \$25.00 Prepaid Gift Card

In addition, each winning student’s teacher will receive a \$50.00 prepaid gift card to use for their classroom. **STUDENTS:** Please submit essays and entry form to your teacher. **TEACHERS:** Please submit all student essays no later than **APRIL 13, 2018**, to:

Samantha J. Jonas
Muskegon County Prosecutor’s Office
990 Terrace Street, 5th Floor
Muskegon, MI 49442
(231) 724-6382; jonassa@co.muskegon.mi.us



MUSKEGON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION LAW DAY 2018 ESSAY CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Student's Full Name: _____

Student's Home Phone Number: _____

Student's Email Address: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Email Address: _____

Student's Age: _____ Student's Grade: _____

Name of School: _____

Name of Teacher: _____

School Phone Number: _____

Signature of Entrant: _____

Eligibility: Muskegon County 6th, 7th and 8th grade students.

Notification: Winners will be notified by e-mail or phone. Winners and teachers will be invited to attend the **Muskegon County Bar Association Law Day Luncheon on April 27, 2018, from 11:30am – 1:00pm at the Lake House restaurant.**

Deadline: **Entries must be received by 5:00 pm April 13, 2018.**

Requirements: Entries must be 300-500 words, typed, double-spaced. A completed entry form must be included with each essay.

Submit to: Samantha J. Jonas
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