

# LAW DAY

**Law Day** was established in 1958 by President Dwight Eisenhower and officially designated by Congress in 1961 to take place every year on May 1 to mark the nation's commitment to the Rule of Law.

The theme of **Law Day 2019** was "Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society." In Franklin County, panelists including Karen Brown, a reporter for New England Public Radio who has also worked in print journalism; Greenfield Recorder Editor Joan Livingston; and Greenfield Community College President Yves Salomone-Fernández talked about freedom of the press. The moderator was GCC Dean of Humanities Leo Hwang. Speakers included Judge William Mazanec and Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan.



In Hampshire County, US District Court Judge Michael Ponsor discussed First Amendment rights to freedom of speech with Attorney Jeffrey Pyle, who as a teenager in 1994 appeared in Ponsor's courtroom to defend his right to wear a t-shirt deemed offensive by the then-principal at South Hadley High School. DA Sullivan introduced them, and students from Pioneer Valley Performing Arts School, under the direction of Gary Huggett, entertained and educated with First Amendment skits. Students from around the Valley asked thought-provoking questions. Finally, prosecutors and defense attorneys led tours of the courthouse.



The theme of **Law Day 2018** was “Separation of Powers: Framework for Freedom.”

Around 140 local students and their teachers attended events and toured courthouses with prosecution and defense attorneys in Hampshire and Franklin counties.

Civil rights attorney Buz Eisenberg spoke at the Franklin Justice Center in Greenfield.

Western New England Law School Professor and Dean for Faculty Development and Intellectual Life Sudha Setty was the keynote speaker at the Hampshire County event at which students from the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School performed skits they created related to separation of powers.



Professor and Dean for Faculty Development and Intellectual Life Sudha Setty, DA Sullivan and PVPA students.

The theme of **Law Day 2017** was the 14th Amendment. In Hampshire County, teams of prosecutors and defense attorneys visited area high schools to present on the 14th Amendment and its many themes, including due process and equal rights.



ADA Matt Thomas and defense attorney Alan Rubin at South Hadley High School

Students in Franklin County toured the beautiful new Franklin Justice Center and heard from DA Sullivan and other speakers.



ADA Becky Michaels and fellow presenters at the Franklin Justice Center



# LAW DAY 2016

Miranda Rights were the theme of **Law Day 2016**.

If you've seen any TV or movie involving crime or law enforcement, you've heard of the Miranda warning -- and can likely recite at least part of it.

It's the result of perhaps the best-known U.S. Supreme Court case, *Miranda v. Arizona*, when the Court ruled that detained criminal suspects must be advised of a number of important constitutional rights, for example the right to remain silent and the right to an attorney, prior to being questioned by the police.



**NWDA Juvenile Justice Chief Yvonne Pesce and a defense attorney talk to students at Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in Northampton**

To commemorate its 50th anniversary, attorneys from the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, Hampshire County Bar Association and Committee for Public Counsel Services along with student performers from Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School visited area schools to present *Miranda: More than Words*.

The attorneys discussed the history and significance of the Miranda warning and what Miranda rights mean in the context of a school setting. If a student is called down to the school principal's office, for example, does the principal have to give the Miranda warning before questioning a student about a crime that occurred at the school?

The PVPA performers enacted scenarios involving juvenile Miranda situations after which presenters will analyze with students what went right or wrong.

In Franklin County, Retired Superior Court Judge Bertha D. Josephson gave a keynote speech entitled "**Miranda: More than Words**," and panelists, including Defense Attorney Jennifer Cox, ADA Caitlyn Rock and Greenfield Police Officer Cody Guilbault, discussed the right to remain silent.

## LAW DAY 2015

*Magna Carta*, the 1215 agreement that provided inspiration for the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, was the theme of the 2015 Hampshire and Franklin counties Law Days. In Franklin County, Franklin Bar Association members, NWDA staff and community partners staged a mock Grand Jury proceeding. In Hampshire County, student players from Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School portrayed the dramatic signing of the Magna Carta in 1215.



Students Kimberly Logan from Frontier Regional High School and Benjamin Potee from Pioneer Valley Regional High School were awarded scholarships at Franklin County Law Day.



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts School student performers at Hampshire County Law Day 2015

Click [HERE](#) for more photos from the Franklin County event, [HERE](#) for a Greenfield Recorder story about the mock Grand Jury hearing and [HERE](#) for Hampshire County photos.

## Law Day 2014

On April 10, 2014 at Greenfield Community College, hundreds of students attended a panel discussion about "Social Media and the Decline of Privacy Rights" at Franklin County Law Day, sponsored by the NWDA, GCC and Franklin County Bar Association. Two students, Sarah McCune, from Turners Falls High School, and Noah Jacobson-Carroll, from the Academy of Charlemont, received awards for their essays on whether high school seniors should be concerned about online content about them. Please click [HERE](#) to see a video of the panel discussion:



On May 2, 2014, the NWDA and Hampshire County Bar Association invited youth in Hampshire County to participate in a mock ballot vote on the questions of whether Northampton should revoke a city-wide smoking ban and whether the age at which young people can obtain a permit to drive should be lowered to 14. Attorney John Bonifaz, a Constitutional law expert and voting rights advocate, was the keynote speaker, and students



took tours of the Courthouse and met Judge John Agostini. Please click [HERE](#) for a link to a Springfield Republican story and short news video by reporter Fred Contrada about the event. Photos of classes from Amherst Regional High School, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School and Chinese Immersion Charter School below. More photos from the event can be seen [HERE](#).





In **2013**, the NWDA was proud to co-sponsor a Spoken Word contest and court tours for more than 100 young people in Hampshire County and a **panel discussion in Franklin County**. A winning Spoken Word submissions can be seen below.

Click **HERE** to see a gallery of photos from the Hampshire County Law Day on the NWDA's Facebook page.



NWDA Director of Outreach and Education Jana McClure, ADA Steve Sloan and some Spoken Word creators at Law Day 2013 in Old Superior Court, Northampton.