

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division
The Affiliate

Using Videos to Celebrate Law Day

By Jaime Ackerman

The first Law Day dates back to 1958, at a time when technological developments limited the spread of information about this new observance to newspapers and television and radio programming. Over fifty years later, Law Day has grown into a widespread observance with celebrations held across the country at the national, state, and county levels. Using videos, Affiliates can encourage greater participation in, and understanding of, Law Day and the chosen Law Day theme. Several Affiliates hosted their own YouTube video contests as part of their state's 2010 Law Day celebrations this past year.

Affiliate Video Contests

The **New Jersey State Bar Association Young Lawyer's Division** opened its contest to high school and middle school students, grades 6 through 12. Contestants were invited to submit a video of three minutes or less on the theme "Law in the 21st Century: Enduring Traditions, Emerging Challenges." All entries were judged on originality, creativity, overall quality, and adherence to the theme.

Each of the videos submitted were posted on the NJSBA YouTube webpage. While contestants could submit more than one entry, they were only eligible to win one prize. Four winners were selected from the high school category, winning prizes ranged from \$500 for first place to a \$50 iTunes gift card for honorable mention. Three winners were selected from the middle school category, with the first place winner receiving \$250 and the two honorable mention winners receiving \$50 iTunes gift cards. Representatives from the law firms sponsoring these prizes served as some of the judges for the contest.

The **Maryland State Bar Association** opened its contest to any Maryland resident, students enrolled in any state school, and all attorneys licensed to practice law in the state. Videos were broken into two categories, submissions from those under 18 or over 18. All videos were entered into the "People's Choice Awards" and were voted on at the state bar's Law Day celebration.

The **Oklahoma Bar Association** provided teachers with color certificates so that each student who participated in the contest would receive personalized recognition for their involvement in the YouTube contest. Winning entries received prize money, as well as a framed award certificate. Teachers who submitted entries from their students were entered into drawings for gift certificates.

The **Massachusetts Bar Association** solicited original, family-friendly entries in any format for their contest. The MBA asked for submissions based on the theme of diversity in the law. The winners and their families were invited to a special ceremony and screening of the videos.

ABA Young Lawyer's Division Contest

This year's Law Day theme is "The Legacy of John Adams, from Boston to Guantanamo." To promote high school students' participation in Law Day and their understanding of this year's theme, the ABA Young Lawyer's Division is holding a **Law Day Video Contest** as a public service project this year. The contest is being held in conjunction with the ABA Standing Committee on Judicial Independence.

The video contest is open to any student or group of students in grades 9 through 12. Eligible students should submit a brief video, no longer than three minutes in length, which relates to the importance of Law Day and the theme of celebrating John Adams's legacy. Entry forms and selection criteria will be made available online at www.abanet.org/yld/lawday. A brief two minute promotional video about the contest is currently available online.

All entries must be submitted by March 1, 2011. Four finalists will win round-trip airfare to Washington, D.C., hotel accommodations, and \$100 per day for three days to attend the ABA Law Day Celebration in our nation's capital. For additional information related to the ABA video contest, contact ABA YLD Program Associate, Renee Lugo, at lugo@staff.abanet.org or by phone at 312/988-5626.

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Considerations for Planning a Video Contest

If your Affiliate is planning to hold its own video contest this year, certain legal and technological decisions must be made as part of the planning process. How will your contestants' entries be submitted? Will you require your submissions to be burned to a disc and mailed, e-mailed, or uploaded to a web page? Do videos have to be in a specific format, such as Windows Media Player or QuickTime? If all submissions are available online, will the public be able to vote for their favorite submissions either online or at your Law Day celebration, similar to Maryland's people's choice awards?

Appropriate releases and authorizations also need to be prepared and executed by all participants. These could include authorizations to use certain locations, consent to use the likeness of all participants in the video, and a release giving your Affiliate the exclusive rights to publish the video.

Whether or not your Affiliate is planning to host its own Law Day video contest, please promote the ABA YLD's contest to the schools in your area to help make this project a success.

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