

News Release



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Monmouth Vicinage Receives Law Day Activity Award

The Monmouth Vicinage was selected by the American Bar Association to receive an Outstanding Law Day Activity Award for programming efforts related to the 2021 theme, “Advancing the Rule of Law Now.”

The Monmouth Bar Association co-sponsored all Law Day programs and is a co-recipient of the award. Both will be recognized with other winners during an ABA virtual program on March 8. This follows recognition of the Monmouth Vicinage and Monmouth Bar Association as winners of the American Bar Association’s Law Day 2019 and 2020 Outstanding Activity Awards.

From March through June 2021, the Monmouth Vicinage and the Monmouth Bar Association conducted four virtual and one in-person event with programming that reached approximately 800 members of the public, including students at 16 public schools, six private/parochial schools and six colleges/universities.

The selection was made from a competitive national pool of applicants by a committee of leaders from the legal community. In a letter to the vicinage, the ABA National Law Day chair wrote that the vicinage’s Law Day 2021 programs “achieved broad outreach to the community, with a substantive understanding of the Law Day theme. The programs engaged target audience(s) in meaningful conversations to help foster understanding about the rule of law in our society. And, in 2021, programs managed to do all of this in the face of an ongoing national pandemic that forced everyone to plan under extraordinarily uncertain conditions. The ABA truly commends the organizations’ work.”

Assignment Judge Lisa P. Thornton noted the collaborative efforts of vicinage Ombudsman Rebekah Heilman, Monmouth Bar Association Executive Director

Tracey Settipane, Monmouth Bar Association Presidents Christine Giordano Hanlon and Lynn Staufenberg, and Monmouth Bar members, as well as local school leadership and other stakeholders.

“We are honored to once again receive this meaningful award from the American Bar Association. Thanks to the hard work of vicinage staff and bar members, we reached many students and community members to raise awareness and promote respect for Law Day traditions and the legal system,” Judge Thornton said.

The vicinage’s 2021 Law Day activities included an art, essay and poetry contest for students, and an awards ceremony with keynote remarks by Jessica Lewis Kelly, special assistant to the Judiciary’s administrative director, on the topic of “Maintaining Transparency and Citizen Involvement in Jury Trials During a Pandemic.”

Additional Law Day 2021 programs included webinars on the following topics: “Ruth Bader Ginsburg: Applying the Equal Protection Clause to Advance the Rights of Women;” “Exploring New Jersey’s First Virtual Civil Jury Trial: Inspiring Citizens’ Participation in Jury and Grand Jury Service;” “Qualified Immunity and the Evolution of Pierson v. Ray,” and a livestreamed U.S. naturalization ceremony that discussed “A Citizen’s Duty to Uphold the Rule of Law.”

The winning program also was co-sponsored by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation and made possible with funding from the IOLTA Fund of the New Jersey State Bar.

Additional information about the activities offered and presenters can be found on the [vicinage’s Law Day 2021 web page](#). For more information, contact Rebekah Heilman at 732-358-8700, ext. 87251 or rebekah.heilman@njcourts.gov.

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