

MEMORANDUM

February 21, 2018

TO: HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, HIGH SCHOOL LAW COORDINATORS

FROM: Yu Seung, Senior Executive Director, Office of Postsecondary Readiness Division of Teaching & Learning, Jon Widlund CTE Director, Office of Postsecondary Readiness, Division of Teaching, Debra Lesser, Director, Justice Resource Center

SUBJECT: **ESSAY CONTEST FOR 10th, 11th AND 12th GRADE STUDENTS**

The Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York and the *New York Law Journal* have partnered with the New York City Dept. of Education to sponsor the Seventeenth annual essay contest for 10th, 11th and 12th grade high school students. Ten students will win the opportunity to intern for one week with a Justice of the Supreme Court and earn a \$100.00 gift card. A maximum of ten entries from each school will be considered. One of the winning essays will be published in the *New York Law Journal*, a legal periodical published by the ALM.

The Law Day theme for 2018, is *Separation of Powers: Framework for Freedom*. The U.S. Constitution sets out 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 three separate branches share power, and each branch serves as a check on the power of the others. “Ambition must be made to counteract ambition,” James Madison explained in Federalist 51. Why? Madison believed that the Constitution’s principles of separation of powers and checks and balances preserve political liberty. They provide the framework for freedom. Yet, 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 2018 theme enables us to reflect on the separation of powers as fundamental to our constitutional purposes and to consider how our governmental system is working.

Students should write a 500 word essay presenting a compelling discussion on the topic with special focus on the importance and impact of the doctrine of separation of powers.

The following websites may assist your students in their research – other resources may be used. All sources should be credited.

Law Day Topic

1. <http://www.Lawday.org>

General Legal Resources

1. New York State Courts Legal Research Portal
<http://www.courts.state.ny.us/reporter/research.htm>
2. Free Online Law Review/Journal Articles
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/departments_offices/legal_technology_resources/resources/free_journal_search.html
3. New York Law Journal
<http://www.newyorklawjournal.com>
4. The United States Constitution with Commentary
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/overview>

Statutes

1. New York State Consolidated Laws
<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/lawssrch.cgi?NVLWO:>
2. Law Library of Congress
<http://www.loc.gov/law/>
3. New York Courts Law Libraries
<http://www.nycourts.gov/lawlibraries/>

Case Law

1. New York State Court Case Law
<http://www.nycourts.gov/decisions/>
2. Federal Court Case Law
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/federal/opinions>

The Following Rules Apply:

The essays should be evaluated at each participating school. Each school may submit a maximum of ten (10) essays. Each submitted essay must include a completed cover sheet (see attached). The winning essays from each school should be mailed to:

**HON. ROBERT J. MILLER
SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
APPELLATE DIVISION, SECOND JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
320 JAY STREET
BROOKLYN, NY 11201**

DEADLINE: April 10, 2018

Questions regarding this opportunity should be directed to (1) Debra Lesser, Justice Resource Center at (212) 580-5905, dlesser@schools.nyc.gov or (2) Paulina Ellis at (347) 296-1836, Pellis@nycourts.gov

The prizes will be awarded at a ceremony. The date and location of the ceremony will be announced.

Internship opportunities include:

Attendance at trials, research with the law clerk, instruction in the use of a law library, education regarding legal terminology in a real world environment, exposure to law-related careers - e.g. court clerk, court officer, court reporter, law clerk, and judge.

The dates of the internship will be arranged according to the needs of each winning student subject to the schedule of each participating Court. Internship dates will be made available during summer vacation.

cc: Chancellor, Carmen Farina
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, NYLJ,
Susan DeSantis
Associate Publisher & Editor,
NYLJ, Hank Grezlak

**SEPARATION OF POWERS: FRAMEWORK FOR FREEDOM
10th, 11th, 12th GRADE ESSAY CONTEST**

(COVER SHEET)

NAME: _____
(Please type or print legibly)

HOME ADDRESS: _____

HOME TELEPHONE #: () _____

STUDENT'S CELL #: () _____

STUDENT'S E-MAIL: _____

SCHOOL: _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

SCHOOL TELEPHONE #: () _____

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

TEACHER'S CELL #: () _____

TEACHER'S E-MAIL: _____

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE: _____

I hereby affirm that the attached essay which I have submitted for the Law Day Essay Contest for 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students is the result of my own work.

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT _____

Deadline: April 10, 2018