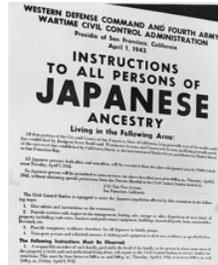


Recent Topics

2002-2004 and 2007-2008
Racism and Lawlessness in the South
(*Contempt of Court: The Turn-of-the-Century Lynching that Launched 100 Years of Federalism*)



2005-2006
World War II Japanese American internment (*Hirabayashi v. U.S.* (1943), *Yasui v. U.S.* (1943), *Korematsu v. U.S.* (1944), and *ex parte Endo* (1944))



2008-2009
From *Tinker* to *Morse*:
Student Speech - How Free?
(*Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969),
Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier (1988),
Texas v. Johnson (1989), and
Morse v. Frederick (2007))

2009-2010 and 2010-2011
Constitutional Rights on Campus:
How Free? (*Tinker v. Des Moines*
(1969), *Morse v. Frederick* (2007),
Layshock v. Hermitage (2008)
and *Safford v. Redding* (2009))

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*Established
2001*

A Commitment to Civic
Education by Attorneys,
Teachers and the Judiciary

Operation Protect and Defend is a program of Sacramento Law Foundation. Its steering committee includes representatives of federal and state courts, public and private law offices, law schools and diverse bar associations, as well as teachers from participating high schools.

To all California judges, justices and lawyers:

Before becoming a member of the California state bar or sworn in as a judicial officer, we each took an oath to support and defend the Constitutions of the United States and our state “against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” While our country’s democracy has always survived direct assaults, in the last several decades a deadly and pervasive domestic enemy has gained ground: ignorance and apathy - ignorance of American history and values, and apathy toward the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

According to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Assessment of Educational Progress (2006), three quarters of America’s students do not receive an effective education needed to perpetuate a democracy. The California Survey on Civic Education (2005) reveals that less than half of California high school seniors agree that “Being actively involved in state and local issues is my responsibility.” Such reports bring to mind the words of lawyer and educator Robert Maynard Hutchison, who warned: “The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination or ambush. It will be a slow extension from apathy, indifference and undernourishment.”

I believe that the privilege of admission to the bar and bench carries with it responsibilities that go beyond representing clients, adhering to the Code of Ethics or ensuring equal access to justice in the courtroom. I believe lawyers and judicial officers have a duty to serve the nation through fostering democratic principles.

As Justice Anthony Kennedy told a group of McClatchy High School seniors in 2001: “Democracy must be taught. It must be transmitted by us.” I urge you to join us in protecting our Constitutions and invigorating our democracy by working with educators to reach out to students and engage them in a dialogue on their citizenship rights and responsibilities.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank C. Damrell".

Hon. Frank C. Damrell
U.S. District Court
Eastern District of California
Founder, Operation Protect and Defend

Operation Protect and Defend targets average high school students and students most likely to benefit from additional civics and government programs. The project seeks to:

- connect students to the U.S. Constitution and American history;
- educate future voters and jurors;
- explore issues of U.S. citizenship and both its rights and responsibilities; and
- encourage students to become active citizens.



In 2009-2010, the participating schools include: Grant Union High School, Kennedy High School, Luther Burbank High School, McClatchy High School, Natomas Pacific Pathways Prep, Rio Americano High School, and Sacramento High School.

The judges, lawyers and teachers on the steering committee work together to design a curriculum, including selected readings and court opinions. The program has four main components:

1. Teacher-led introduction of the topic and Constitutional rights;
2. “Dialogue on America” - a lawyer-judge team goes into the classroom and engages students in a dialogue, discussing issues and questions raised by the curriculum;
3. “Story of America” - an essay contest (essays reviewed by a lawyer committee and a teacher committee; the finalist essays submitted to a panel of 11 federal and state judicial officers);
4. “Modern Masters of America Art Contest” and gallery reception; and
5. Law Day dinner in the spring where students whose essays are selected for prizes are honored.

