



## United States Courts District of Montana

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### COURT ANNOUNCEMENT

#### CIVICS CONTEST FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

MISSOULA – Preliminary judging has been completed in the 2020 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest for high school students in the western United States, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. All told, nearly 1,000 young people entered the contest, despite challenges posed by school closures and distance learning due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“The Right to Vote: Milestone Anniversaries” was the theme of the contest. Students in grades 9-12 in public, private and parochial schools and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status were challenged to write an essay or produce a short video with the questions presented: *“In the wake of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Amendments, barriers remained to prevent United States citizens from voting. Do formal or informal barriers remain today? What additional changes would you make, if any, to Americans’ voting rights?”*

Fifteen federal courts in the Ninth Circuit held local contests with winners advancing to the final round to compete in the circuit-wide competition. In all, 38 essays and 27 videos were selected to advance to the next round for consideration by judges, attorneys, court executives, law clerks, court and library staff, and the Public Information and Community Outreach (PICO) Committee, which will announce the winners in late June. At the circuit level, prizes of \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500 will be awarded to first-, second- and third place winners in both the writing and video competition.

Among the finalists are the winners of a local contest sponsored by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana. Prizes of \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500 were offered to the top finishers in the local competition. The winners are:

1<sup>st</sup> place, Zach Mangels, of Skyview High School in Billings; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Zander Opperman of Gardiner Public School in Gardiner; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Hannah Martin of Corvallis High School in Corvallis. The winners of the video competition are: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Nathaniel Broch, also of Corvallis High School; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Abigail Clark of Fort Benton High School in Fort Benton; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Monse Arvayo, also of Fort Benton High School.

The Ninth Circuit takes in the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana,

Nevada, Oregon, and Washington, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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