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**16<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT**  
37W777 Route 38  
St. Charles, IL 60175



*Office of the Chief Judge Robert K. Villa*

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*

May 7, 2025

### **16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit hosts Law Day celebration and announces Law Day essay contest winners**

On Thursday, May 1, the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and the Kane County Bar Foundation celebrated Law Day by announcing the winners of their Law Day Essay Contest, and hosting a Law Day Celebration at the Kane County Judicial Center. Judges and Kane County Bar Foundation (KCBF) representatives presented the awards to winners at their high schools, including a cash prize, certificate, and swag bag, in front of educators, school staff, friends, and family.

The winners of the contest are listed below:

**Sophomore Category:**

1. Kieran Grey Edwards, \$500 – Illinois Math and Science Academy (Aurora)
2. Sree Chitrapu, \$250 – Illinois Math and Science Academy (Aurora)
3. Malyada Medikundam, \$250 – Illinois Math and Science Academy (Aurora)

**Junior Category:**

1. Kendall Pemberton, \$500 – St. Edward Central Catholic High School (Elgin)
2. Isabel Aguilera, \$250 – Kaneland High School and Fox Valley Career Center (Maple Park)
3. Sonya Patel, \$250 – Illinois Math and Science Academy (Aurora)

Judge D.J. Tegeler and Judge Kimberly DiGiovanni presented the award at Kaneland High School, while Judge Bradley David and KCBF representative Paul Steele presented the prize at St. Edward Central Catholic High School. Chief Judge Robert Villa presented multiple awards with KCBF representative Ann Lobb at the Illinois Math and Science Academy. All monetary prizes for this contest were generously donated by the Kane County Bar Foundation. The contest was open to all sophomores and juniors who attend high schools in Kane County. Students were invited to submit essays centered on the 2025 American Bar Association's Law Day Theme, "The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One".

The Law Day festivities continued at the Kane County Judicial Center, where Chief Judge Villa addressed staff and local attorneys on the significance of Law Day. Copies of the winning Law Day essays were also available to read, reminding those in legal professions of the opportunity they have to educate and serve. Discussing the need to uphold the law, Chief Judge Villa stated, “We have an obligation. This is a human system we all operate under. The judicial system is entrusted with a true authority, and it is our job to maintain that authority with a high standard of service. The world has to operate by maintaining our social order, and what Eisenhower called, ‘The Rule of Law’. We here have the opportunity to educate our community on the importance of this law, while upholding it with integrity ourselves.”

With attorneys, judicial partners, and 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit judges present, Chief Judge Villa explained, “Everyone who knows you’re a lawyer or a judge, whether you know it or not, looks to you for some guidance on this; the necessity of law. Start being those answers. Explain to friends and family so they can truly understand the judicial system, not just ‘know’ about it.”

In his final remarks, Chief Judge Villa announced, “This is a reminder day. That’s what it should be for all of us. Those who can give those talks, whether here or at the dining table, I encourage all of you to do that.”

If you would like to read the winning Law Day Essays, please click [here](https://www.illinois16thjudicialcircuit.org/Pages/Law-Day-Essay-Writing-Contest.aspx) or visit <https://www.illinois16thjudicialcircuit.org/Pages/Law-Day-Essay-Writing-Contest.aspx>.



From left to right: Judge Kimberly DiGiovanni, Kaneland High School Junior Isabel Aguilera, Judge D.J. Tegeler (Photo Provided by Judge Kimberly DiGiovanni)



From left to right: KCBF representative Ann Lob, IMSA Junior Sonya Patel, IMSA Sophomore Sree Chitrapu, IMSA Sophomore Malyada Medikundam, IMSA Sophomore Kieran Grey Edwards, and Chief Judge Robert Villa (Photo provided by Ann Lobb)



From left to right: KCBF representative Paul Steele, St. Edward Central Catholic High School Junior Kendall Pemberton, Judge Bradley David (Photo provided by St. Edward Assistant Principal Maureen Mann)



Kaneland High School Junior Isabel Aguilera receiving her award from Judge D.J. Tegeler (Photo Provided by Judge Kimberley DiGiovanni)

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