



*Through the Courts4Civics initiative, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit promotes civics education in our schools and communities. Read on to find out about ongoing initiatives and to discover how you can get involved!*

## Speak Well, Listen Better: Virginia High School Students Practice Civility Skills



On November 30, 2023, 20 high school students from Alexandria City High School traveled to the U.S. Bankruptcy Courthouse in Alexandria, Virginia to participate in the [Civil Discourse and Difficult Decisions](#) program, a national initiative of the U.S. Courts. Through simulated legal proceedings in federal courthouses, students participating in the program practice listening with an open mind, showing respect for the opinions of others, and finding common ground in areas of disagreement.



[Read what the students had to say here.](#)



## Civics Champion Spotlight

*Celebrating outreach efforts in local communities*

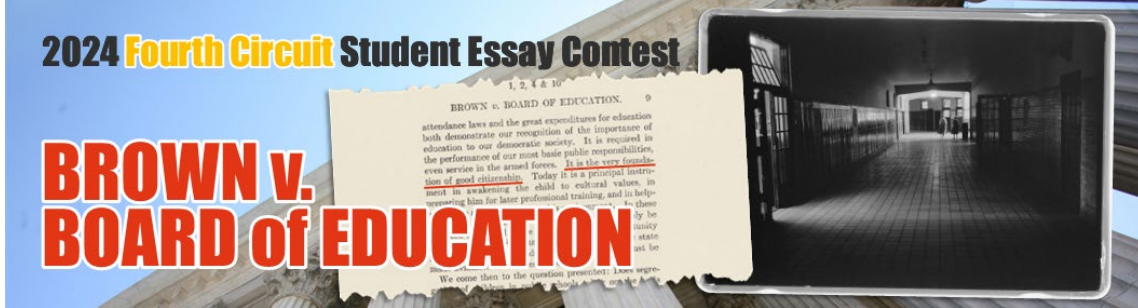
### Magistrate Judge Omar J. Aboulhosn, Southern District of West Virginia

*Co-chair of the Civics Education & Outreach Committee for  
the Federal Magistrate Judges Association*



“I think it is absolutely important for us as judges” to be involved in civics education, and to “let people see what it is to be a judge and how human we are.” Judge Aboulhosn thinks that judges have a rare opportunity to make a profound and positive impact by simply stepping into a classroom or in front of a group of students and talking with them.

[Read about Judge Aboulhosn's outreach efforts here.](#)



Has the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, viewed through the lens of 2024, achieved its purpose of ensuring equal opportunity in public education?

Students in grades 6 through 12 from Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia are invited to share their perspectives in this year's Essay Contest.

**Submission deadline: May 31, 2024. [Contest details are available here.](#)**

## New Exhibit: Spotlight on the Fourth Circuit

In December, Courts4Civics celebrated “Spotlight on the 4th Circuit: A Closer Look at Five Historic Decisions,” a new exhibit featuring cases originating from each of the five states within the Fourth Circuit. Judges, court staff, and law clerks in Richmond had an opportunity to view the display on the second floor of the Powell Courthouse, near the entrance to the Butzner Memorial En Banc Courtroom.



Visit the [Courts4Civics website](#) for public digital access to the exhibit, as well as additional information and educational resources.

## Upcoming Special Sessions

*Did you know that several times per year a panel of judges from the Fourth Circuit conducts oral argument sessions at different locations throughout the Circuit?*

**[Learn](#)** about special sessions in the Fourth Circuit and the history of "circuit riding."

**March 5, 2024:** Liberty University Law School, Lynchburg, VA ([calendar](#))

**March 28, 2024:** University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC ([calendar](#))

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## Help Us Spread the Word

Promote civics education by forwarding this email to a friend, colleague, or family member!

### About Courts4Civics

An initiative of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, Courts4Civics promotes civics education in our schools and communities, to create learning opportunities and to increase public understanding of how courts work to resolve disputes in our society and to protect our constitutional rights.

Stay connected with Courts4Civics program information and educational opportunities:

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