

## Law Day 2019 Essay Contest: Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society

The Maine State Bar Association invites all Maine students in grades 9-12 to participate in its Law Day essay contest. Established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958, Law Day honors the rule of law. Law Day, which is held annually on May 1, provides an opportunity to understand how law and the legal process protect our liberty, strive to achieve justice, and contribute to the freedoms that all Americans share.

**Law Day Theme:** The 2019 Law Day theme – Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society – focuses on these cornerstones of representative government and calls on us to understand and protect these rights to ensure, as the U.S. Constitution proposes, “the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity.” In the United States and around the world, freedom of speech and the press are among the most important foundations for a free society. Free speech and free press are prominent topics in public discourse and litigation. It is impossible to imagine a free society without these individual liberties, yet historical and current debates surrounding them continually challenge us to consider their boundaries and resilience. Changes in technology have reshaped how free speech and free press work in the everyday world. Law Day 2019 offers the opportunity to explore this pair of freedoms by probing their history and considering their future. Should all speech be “free?” What is the role of government in regulating or protecting the press? Should speech or the press be constrained through laws or norms? Can a free society exist without free speech and free press?

**Essay Prompt:** In the context of the Law Day theme above, discuss how you believe free speech and free press are part of the foundation of a free society, and how these freedoms impact your daily life.

**Eligibility:** This contest is open to Maine students in grades 9-12.

**Criteria:** Entries must be 750-1000 words and typed in a 12-point font. Essays must be submitted with an entry form. **Do not include your name on the essay.** Entries will be judged on accuracy of information, clarity of expression, content, and originality.

**Deadline:** Email or mail essays with entry form to [kholub@mainebar.org](mailto:kholub@mainebar.org) or Kathryn Holub, **Law Day Essay Contest, Maine State Bar Association, 124 State St., Augusta, ME, 04330.** Emailed entries must be received by **midnight on May 15.** Mailed entries must be **postmarked by May 15, 2019,** or they will be disqualified.

**Prizes:** Two winners will be selected. First prize is \$75 and second prize is \$50. The winning students’ teachers will also win \$75 and \$50, respectively. The winning essays will be published in the *Maine Bar Journal* and at [www.mainebar.org](http://www.mainebar.org).

**Materials:** More information about Law Day and this contest can be found at [www.mainebar.org](http://www.mainebar.org) under **For the Public > Law Day 2019.**

Contact MSBA Communications Director Kathryn Holub at [kholub@mainebar.org](mailto:kholub@mainebar.org) with questions.



## 2019 Maine State Bar Association Law Day Essay Contest Student Entry Form

### Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society

Students are encouraged to draw on additional sources, but outside information must be credited.

**Please type or print legibly.**

Student's Name & Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Telephone/Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name & Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I affirm I am a student in 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade and the attached essay is the result of my own work.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

I affirm the attached essay is solely the work of the student named above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Signature

I hereby grant my child permission to participate in the 2019 Law Day essay contest.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

Students give the Maine State Bar Association the right to reproduce material submitted in any medium without time, use, or any other limitation as long as it is for non-commercial purposes. Essays will not be returned. Winners will be notified by May 31, 2019.

Entries must be no longer than 1000 words, typed, and hand-delivered, emailed, or postmarked by May 15, 2019 at:

Kathryn Holub  
2019 Law Day Essay Contest  
Maine State Bar Association  
124 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330  
kholub@mainebar.org