

LAW DAY 2014 / PROCLAMATION SIGNING RECOGNITION AND AWARDS CEREMONY

On Friday, April 25th, during a ceremony held in the CNMI Supreme Court, a proclamation establishing May 1, 2014, as Law Day and “American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters” as its theme, was jointly signed by representatives of the three branches of government. Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro represented the Judiciary, Governor Eloy S. Inos represented the Executive branch, and House Speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero represented the legislature. They were joined in the proclamation’s signing by CNMI Bar Association President Maya B. Kara.



The Law Day theme—why every vote matters—is the message Justices, Judges and their law clerks are delivering this year in classrooms and at school assemblies across the Commonwealth as part of the *Judges in the Classroom* program. The program teaches students about the rule of law and the CNMI’s heritage of justice, liberty, and equality.

retreat the justices and judges attended on Rota in 1997 that led to the entire Judiciary being constitutionally created as an independent and co-equal branch of government. Then Judges Govendo and Wiseman discussed the early history of the Bar Association dating back to 1978.

On LAW DAY, May 1, 2014, students, school officials, the governor, the lieutenant governor,



former and current jurists, and members of the local law community gathered in the Supreme Court courtroom with the Judiciary and its staff for the Law Day

Commonwealth Courts Special Recognition Session and Poster and Essay Awards Ceremony. The meeting coincided with the 25th anniversary of the CNMI Supreme Court.



Past presidents of the CNMI Bar Association were:

During the event, Chief Justice Castro spoke of the Supreme Court’s statutory creation in 1989, and about a



1. Maya Kara 2007-10, 2014
2. Sean E. Frink 2003-04, 2011-13
3. Vicente T. Salas 2006
4. Edward Manibusan 2005
5. Ramona V. Manglona 2000-02
6. Ramon G. Villagomez 1999
7. Timothy H. Bellas 1992
8. Michael A. White 1980-82, 1990-91, 1993-98

Afterwards, recognition plaques were presented to Bellas, Manibusan, Sallas and Kara, each of whom were present for the ceremony.



Herbert D. Soll and Timothy H. Bellas, above.



Edward Manibusan, former Presiding Judge and former CNMI Bar Association President With Judges Govendo, Wiseman, Justice Inos, Chief Justice Castro and Presiding Judge Naraja

The longest serving attorneys in the CNMI, dating back to the organization of the Bar Association, were also recognized: Douglas F. Cushnie, William M. Fitzgerald, Herbert D. Soll and Michael A. White. Attorneys Fitzgerald, Bellas and Soll were present and received recognition plaques.



Long serving attorney William M. Fitzgerald with Justice Inos and Chief Justice Castro

Next, Judge Joseph Camacho described the educational goals of the Northern Mariana



Historical Society including the Judges in the Classroom program, the publication of the Judicial History Book, and the financial support given to the Law Day Poster and Essay Contests, the Mock Trial, and Attorney General's Cup competitions. The non-judiciary trustees of the Northern Mariana Judiciary Historical Society: Juan S. Tenorio, Johnnie Fong, Timothy H. Bellas and Michael D. Pai were thanked for their contribution to the society's success and presented with a plaque of appreciation.

Michael D. Pai Historical Society Trustee with Judges and Justices



As has become the tradition on Law Day, the winners of the Law Day Poster and Essay contest were recognized and received their awards. Associate Justice Perry B. Inos presented the winners in the essay contest, noting that over 100 entries were received in each of the poster and essay competitions. Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja presented the winners in the poster contest.



Grant C. Eichenberger, 13, pictured above, from Grace Christian Academy, read his winning essay “American Democracy and the Rule of Law: Why Every Vote Matters.” Eichenberger cited voting’s importance to a democracy, and concluded that while voting for the United States president does not apply in the commonwealth, it is very important in other matters such as voting for governor. “Voting is very important for the common people, for then they get a voice in their government,” he said.

Katrina O. Costales, fifth grader from William S. Reyes Elementary School, and first place winner in the poster contest, showed off her beautiful poster as she received her monetary prize, certificate and copy of the book Northern Mariana Islands Judiciary: A Historical Overview.



4th Annual Essay/Poster Winners:

POSTER:

1st Place	KATRINA O. COSTALES 5th Grade, William S. Reyes Elementary School
2nd Place	TRICIA ZERUIYA D. SALCEDO 5th Grade, William S. Reyes Elementary School
3rd Place	IRISH CHRISTINE VIRAY 5th Grade, William S. Reyes Elementary School
Honorable Mention	Wm. BLAKE C. DLG GUERRERO 6th Grade, Mt. CARMEL Sch.

ESSAY:

1st Place	GRANT C. EICHENBERGER 8th Grade, Grace Christian Academy
2nd Place	RACHEL Kwon Whispering Palms School
3rd Place	BREYANDEL SANTOS 7th Grade, Chacha Ocean View Middle School
Honorable Mention	ANGELO G. Manse 7 th Grade Mount Carmel School



The Winning
Poster:

**Every Vote
Counts**

Katrina O.
Costales