

INTERVIEW WITH

JUDGE MICHAEL J. NEWMAN



What is your legal background?

Since 2011, I've been a Federal Judge in Dayton, Ohio, where I sit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio. I graduated with honors from American University's Washington College of Law in 1989, after which I was a law clerk to a U.S. Magistrate Judge and a Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge. Prior to my appointment to the bench, I was partner at Dinsmore & Shohl, a large firm in Cincinnati, where I started a pro bono program and was honored as a Best Lawyer in America in labor and employment law. My full bio is located at <http://www.ohsd.uscourts.gov/BioNewman>.

Tell us about the Federal Bar Association?

The Association consists of more than 19,000 federal lawyers, including 1,500 federal judges, who work together to promote the sound administration of justice, quality, and independence of the judiciary. Through its multifaceted programs, the FBA advocates on federal is-

ssues that impact the practice of federal lawyers and the courts; provides opportunities for scholarship and education to the profession; delivers opportunities for judges and attorneys to professionally and socially interact; and promotes high standards of professional competence and ethical conduct. The mission of the federal bar association includes serving not just the interests of federal judiciary and the federal practitioner, but also the interests of the community that they serve.

Tell us about the National Community Outreach Project?

It's very important work. This is the second year the FBA is undertaking this effort. The Federal Bar Association's mission statement includes a commitment to the communities in which their members serve. This year, FBA chapters in more than 25 districts throughout the country are devoting the month of April to doing good work in their communities. We are fortunate to have the support and funding of the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association to allow these programs to reach communities in their districts.

The FBA has an outreach program called the National Civics Initiative and Resources for Civics Education in an effort to promote learning about civic matters, what can you tell us about this?

This program provides FBA members with quality educational material to take into any middle or high school classroom in the United States to educate students on civic matters. The FBA's Civics Initiative also seeks to increase the knowledge of civics and the judicial system in middle and high-school students and other communities by bringing them into the courthouses, meeting with lawyers, observing court proceedings, and talking directly to federal judges. The goal is to encourage nationwide participation. With material ranging in content from "Pathways to the Bench" to the "Bill of Rights," students are inspired to learn more about the American judicial system.

What was the goal of the Civics Essay Contest and The Nomination of Teachers for Excellence in Civics Education?

This year's essay contest posed the question: "What Does an Impartial Judicial System Mean to Me?" This essay is an opportunity for the young people of this nation to voice their opinions on the judicial system in a constructive and rewarding way.

What are the winners of the essay contest awarded?

The middle school category awarded \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 for first, second, and third place respectively. The prizes are doubled for high school winners, with first place receiving \$2,000, second place receiving \$1,000, and third place receiving \$500. Writers of the first place submissions in each category were rewarded with a trip to Washington, D.C. accompanied

by one parent/guardian, with the organization providing funds for travel. This trip coincided with the Federal Bar Association's Midyear Meeting on Saturday, March 18, 2017.

Why is Civics Education important?

In these times when communities, especially youth, have lost confidence in our judicial system, the FBA's outreach programming seeks to instill confidence in the judicial system in middle and high-school students and other communities by bringing them into the courthouses, meeting with lawyers, observing court proceedings, and talking directly to federal judges.

What made you focus on this topic? Is there a personal connection?

Several years ago, I was personally asked by Jim Duff, the Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, if I would consider working on a national civics initiative during my tenure as FBA president.

I thought it was an honor to be so asked by the Director of the A.O., and I believed that the FBA was the right organization to take on this effort to a national audience of lawyers and students. Frankly, we have succeeded beyond everyone's imagination – we now have thousands of children who will have a better understanding of civics, and a better understanding of our Federal Courts, as a direct result of this nationwide civics program. It is a great privilege to lead this program as a Federal Judge.

Where can elementary students, high school students, educators and attorneys and judges across the country find information on how to get involved in the FBA outreach programs?

Educational materials are available on the Federal Bar Association's website. Lawyers and judges can access lesson plans for audiences ranging in presentation time from fifteen minutes to three hours. For more information, visit www.fedbar.org/civics.

Tell us about the FBA's Annual Meeting and Convention that will take place in Atlanta in September?

The Federal Bar Association is coming to Atlanta on September 14-16! Besides our association's Annual Meeting and other business meetings, the Convention features more than 20 continuing legal education sessions on a wide variety of topics—something for everyone. There are two networking receptions hosted by the FBA Atlanta Chapter: one at the Atlanta History Center; and one at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. To cap off the week's events, the Presidential Installation Banquet will see Kip Bollin of Thompson Hine inducted as the 2017-2018 FBA National President. We encourage all attorneys and judges to join us for some or all of these events; more information is available at www.fedbar.org/FBACon17.



Inaugural FBA Civics Essay Contest winners recognized at the FBA Midyear Meeting: (Left to right) Randolph Scott, High School Essay Winner Isabelle Scott, FBA President Hon. Michael J. Newman, FBA Executive Director Stacy King, Luncheon Keynote Speaker Jeffrey Rosen of the National Constitution Center, Middle School Essay Winner Alexander Ashman, Jon Ashman, and FBA Government Relations Counsel Bruce Moyer.