

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

Release Date:
March 5, 2025

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Court Beautifies Dirksen Courthouse with Quotes Selected by Local Students in Contest

Chicago, Ill. - The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois unveiled new engraved quote panels beautifying the Dirksen U.S. Courthouse as part of the court-sponsored *Justice Inspired* contest. In 2024, the Court, in cooperation with the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association (FBA) and the Northern District of Illinois Historical Association, sought the help and input of Northern District of Illinois teachers and their students in selecting quotes to be etched on panels to adorn the Dirksen U.S. Courthouse.

"We are so pleased with how these inspiring quote panels have enhanced our courthouse while engaging young people in our district about justice. Many thanks to our former Chief Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer for spearheading this project, which leaves a lasting impact on our courthouse," said Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall.

"The Court was uplifted by the thoughtful submissions. We thank participating students and teachers for helping to enhance the dignity of the Dirksen Courthouse with quotes that communicate the power and value of the rule of law. We hope these panels will inspire courthouse visitors for decades to come," said former Chief Judge Pallmeyer.

The *Justice Inspired* contest invited all Northern District of Illinois kindergarten through grade 12 teachers to engage their students in submitting quotes on behalf of their classes that were engraved onto panels and then installed on walls in public areas inside the courthouse. Contest participants were instructed to recommend quotes that inspire justice, peace, equality, fairness, inclusion, redemption, freedom, community, and other ideals and/or reflect upon the significance of debate, the law, courts, and the constitution to democracy and to our nation. Winners were selected by a panel of FBA and Northern District of Illinois Court Historical

Association members. Winning submissions received a gift card for the benefit of their classroom and a desktop replica of their selected quote.

Winners included the following classes from the following schools:

Westgate Elementary, Arlington Heights
Percy Julian Middle School, Oak Park
Chicago Vocational High School, Chicago
Central School, Glencoe
O'Neill Middle School, Plainfield
William Howard Taft High School, Chicago
Prairieview Elementary School, Downers Grove
Mather High School, Chicago
Lester Elementary School, Crystal Lake
University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, Chicago

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Chief Judge Kendall presents Alyssa Niese, William Howard Taft High School teacher, with a replica of the winning quote her class submitted. The quote panel is installed on the 20th floor of the Dirksen Courthouse, in the Clerk's Office Intake Area.

