

Fifth Year of National Outreach Initiative

A Career Day at Federal Courts

Program Description

The theme for the national *Open Doors to Federal Courts* program this year is *Working for Justice: Careers in the Courts*.

Target Audience: High school juniors and seniors, along with their teachers.

Learning Objective: The program is designed to: 1) teach about the structure and operations of the federal courts in an interesting and interactive way; 2) put a human face on the justice system; 3) make students aware that they can pursue many fields of endeavor for the cause of justice; 4) expose students to the preparation necessary to pursue different career paths within the system; 5) recognize the crucial work of employees behind the scenes, as well as in the courtroom, who make the system function; 6) boost employee morale and enhance rapport among employees, departments and agencies

Preparation: Courts may choose to have a Teachers Orientation at the courthouse to prepare teachers for the event, to ensure that it runs smoothly, and to educate teachers about the federal courts. Other options include: 1) telephone conference calls; 2) advance classroom visits.

Event: The mock trial creates opportunities for the judge to call on previously selected and prepared justice system employees before, during, and after the hearing to briefly describe their role in regard to the case. After the mock trial and sentencing, which include introductory remarks by participating judicial system employees, coordinators may follow up with any of several options, including but not limited to: 1) small group lunches with judges, court personnel, and other legal professionals; and/or 2) an interactive tour of the courthouse focusing on giving students further exposure to the justice system environment and employees.

Participation: Over the past four years courts in every Circuit have registered. More than 300 judges and 8,000 high school students have participated.