



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FEDERAL COURT CELEBRATES THE 250<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Hartford, CT – Chief United States District Judge Michael P. Shea enthusiastically announces the successful conclusion of the District of Connecticut’s Celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, held at the Wethersfield Historical Society on May 21, 2026. The event was organized by the court’s Public Outreach Committee, with the support of the Connecticut Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

The District of Connecticut’s Public Outreach Committee hosted an unforgettable celebration from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m., which was attended by judges, attorneys, teachers, and students from across the state. The evening brought to life the pivotal moments of our nation’s birth, with a special focus on Connecticut’s vital role. Attendees were transported to the 18th century by the stirring melodies of historical musicians Linda Russell and Christa Patton, who performed patriotic anthems and dance tunes from the Revolutionary era. The celebration also delved into Connecticut’s rich past through captivating displays and presentations, including a look at Connecticut’s own signers of the Declaration of Independence, the historic meeting of Washington and Rochambeau, and powerful stories of local resilience.

The Court honored modern-day “Civic Heroes” who have devoted their time and talents to collaborate with Connecticut’s federal judges to teach and coach students throughout the state. Six talented young artists, whose artwork was displayed at the celebration and will soon be exhibited in the Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport federal courthouses, were recognized for their creative contributions to the Judiciary and the Arts program. The Judiciary and the Arts program is supported by the Connecticut Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and is a project of the District of Connecticut’s Public Outreach Committee and The Hon. Robert A. Katzmann: Justice For All Courts and the Community Initiative. This initiative teaches students about the historic and present-day role of the federal courts and its development of the law through the visual arts.

The event was more than just a history lesson; it was a celebration of community and civic spirit.

The U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut enthusiastically supports student civic education programs that foster meaningful relationships between federal judges, students, attorneys, educators, and court personnel. The court strives to educate students and the public about the vital role that federal courts, judges, and lawyers play in upholding democracy and preserving the rule of law. In addition to this event, the Public Outreach Committee supports the court's civic education initiative with off-site naturalization ceremonies; the Hon. Warren W. Eginton Justice Institute, a free 5-day summer camp at the Hartford courthouse; an after-school program; visits to classrooms across the state to teach civics lessons and read to elementary students; career path panels; and activities for Read Across America Week, Constitution and Citizenship Day, and Bill of Rights Day.

The court's civic education webpage offers a variety of available educational programs, and the court encourages educators, administrators, and public community groups to consider participating. Any interested parties can use the webpage to contact the Court: <https://www.ctd.uscourts.gov/public-outreach>.

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