CONTEST WINNERS

FIRST PLACE — KINDERGARTEN TO SECOND GRADE POSTER

Ryuki Hotta
Austin Parkway Elementary School (Missouri City)
Houston Bar Association

FIRST PLACE — THIRD TO FIFTH GRADE POSTER

Logan C. Lyn
iUniversity Prep (Houston)
Houston Bar Association

FIRST PLACE — SIXTH TO EIGHTH GRADE POSTER

Shelby Morrison
Willow Wood Junior High (Tomball)
Houston Bar Association

FIRST PLACE — NINTH TO TWELFTH GRADE POSTER

Miamor Orozco
Young Women’s Leadership Academy (San Antonio)
Bexar County Women’s Bar Association

FIRST PLACE — PHOTOGRAPHY

Amare’on Reyna
G.W. Carver Magnet High School (Houston)
Houston Bar Association
“...one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” As the pledge comes to an end, I lower my hand to my sides and take my seat. The American flag, which was gracefully draped across my classroom’s wall, gleamed with pride. For the past 12 years, I realized, I have recited these same words verbatim. Every morning, I acknowledge that the United States of America guarantees liberty and justice for all.

But is this true? I pondered this question over the years as I involved myself more with the world around me and realized that our society was shamefully plagued with injustice and inequality. For instance, although African Americans were granted their full freedoms as individual citizens in 1863, they are still discriminated against today. Indeed, African Americans have the highest incarceration rates, struggle to find homes and jobs, and face violence, as seen by George Floyd’s death in May 2020. I also learned about the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 57 years ago and how it intended to end discrimination in employment. Nevertheless, women today are generally paid lower wages than men and are largely underrepresented in the engineering and mathematics sector of our economy. As a woman entering the field of computer science, I will likely face this inequality.

Evidently, it is not the law but the rule of law that is weak. We can preach that our world is equal and rightfully use the Constitution as evidence, but if we do not take action by changing our rule of law, the way we implement these principles into our society, we will never reach this equality. Instead, we must improve the rule of law by administering laws that value equity over equality by giving those in need the same opportunities as those not in need.

Primarily, we should improve upon the rule of law by increasing the minimum wage. $7.25 an hour is not nearly enough for an individual to survive, and it prohibits the poor from reaching their full potential simply because they have such an unfortunate background. Furthermore, we should introduce laws that make education accessible. Thousands of students across the country have to turn down quality education because of high college tuition rates they cannot afford. Education is what propels our society and it should be guaranteed to every child no matter their financial status. On a similar note, we should implement laws that provide widespread internet connection. Many underprivileged and rural areas do not have access to the internet, which has become a powerful source of education for many students as a result of the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, we should administer laws that improve the affordability of healthcare. Even though every citizen is lawfully guaranteed the right of protection, the poor struggle to access healthcare because of their standing in society.

Actions speak louder than words, and we must take action to reduce inequality. Only then will our law be properly enforced and will our world become just. TBJ

Angelica Sharma, of Cinco Ranch High School in Katy, represented the Katy Bar Association in the Law Day editorial contest, which explored the theme of “Advancing the Rule of Law Now.”

To see the full list of contest winners, go to texabar.com/lawday.

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