



2023 Law Day

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Talking Points

1. **Under the rule of law, the foundation of America, power is in the will of the people.**
 - Power exercised by the government is limited.
 - Rules are meant to apply to all equally.
 - Constitutionally based government with checks and balances where everyone is subject to legal protections and safeguards.
 - Not foolproof. People are flawed, and when the power is in the will of the people, there are mistakes.

2. **Slavery was permitted until the 13th Amendment was ratified in 1865.**
 - Women were denied the right to vote until the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920.
 - African Americans were not granted citizenship until the 14th Amendment was ratified in 1868.
 - Segregation was allowed for more than 50 years.
 - In 1942 after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, an Executive Order issued by the president allowed all persons of Japanese ancestry, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, to be relocated to internment camps.
 - In the present day, we continue to struggle with racial justice, poverty and inequality, the criminal justice system, rights of non-citizens, health and human rights, voting rights, and more.

3. **As perspectives change, so does the rule of law.**
 - Changes can be made informally through federal legislation.
 - Generally, both houses of Congress need to pass a federal law and then the President must sign the law (or two-thirds of Congress can pass it over the President's veto). Federal legislation covers a wide variety of topics including immigration, bankruptcy, copyright, and civil rights, to name a few.
 - Changes can be made to the Constitution through a formal amendment process.
 - According to Article V, there are two general steps that a proposed amendment must follow in order to be considered ratified. First, the proposed amendment must be approved by either 2/3 of both houses of Congress, or state legislatures. Then, it must be approved by 3/4 of all the states, either by a vote of the state's legislatures or a state level convention.
 - Growing incivility among members of the public with differing opinions is a threat to the rule of law.
 - Civil discourse is a function of freedom of speech and a foundation of democracy.
 - Informed, respectful debate is ideal; people have diverse perspectives on matters of public concern and civility is about how we conduct ourselves during a disagreement.
 - When people are intolerant of others' opinions and perspectives, fewer seats are offered at the table and democracy is ineffective.
 - Those in the legal profession are crucial for supporting civil conversation.