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PRESS RELEASE – November 2, 2026

Supreme Court of Virginia Launches Virginia Judicial Civics Week and New *In Open Court* Educational Website

RICHMOND, Va. — The Supreme Court of Virginia today marked the start of the inaugural Virginia Judicial Civics Week, November 2–6, 2026, and introduced *In Open Court*, https://inopencourt.vacourts.gov/, a new website offering educational resources to help Virginians understand the judicial branch, the work of courts, and the rule of law.

In Open Court brings together educational resources for students, educators, families, and community groups. Materials include graphic novels, classroom activities, and resources that introduce the people, processes, and responsibilities of Virginia's courts. Additional interactive learning resources are planned as the initiative develops.

In Open Court is supported by a grant from the State Justice Institute. The website is part of the broader Virginia Judicial Civics Initiative, which brings together educational resources, community partnerships, and opportunities for public engagement throughout the year.

"Public trust in our courts depends in part on public understanding of what courts do and why their work matters," said Chief Justice Powell. "*In Open Court* will help Virginians of all ages better understand their judicial system, the importance of the rule of law, and the responsibility we all share in sustaining the principles of constitutional government."

The Virginia Judicial Civics Toolkit, https://ar.vacourts.gov/virginia-judicial-civics-partners-toolkit, offers courts and community partners ideas and materials for participation, posters, classroom activities, and ways to share local efforts.

Virginia Judicial Civics Week expands upon the judiciary's longstanding civic education efforts, including Rule of Law Day at the Capitol, mock trial programs, courthouse tours, and the Judicial Learning Center, https://scvahistory.org/. Courts and community partners are encouraged to offer activities during the week or at other times throughout the year. Virginia Judicial Civics Week complements the Commonwealth's existing observances of Citizenship Day, Constitution Week, and Civics Education Week, while placing particular emphasis on the judicial branch.

“Education has more of an impact when it extends beyond websites and classrooms and creates opportunities for people to engage directly with the institutions that serve them,” Chief Justice Powell said.

About Virginia’s Judicial System
Virginia’s Judicial System is comprised of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the Court of Appeals of Virginia, circuit courts in thirty-one judicial circuits, general district and juvenile and domestic relations district courts in thirty-two districts, and magistrates in offices in thirty-two districts. The administrative office of the courts, known in Virginia as the Office of the Executive Secretary, supports the administration of the court system under the direction of the Chief Justice and the Executive Secretary.

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