

School News

Constitution Day 2017

From the preamble written in 1787, to the 27th amendment written in 1992, the U.S. Constitution is the framework of the United States government. Students first learn about the document in grade school, but many lose sight of its importance in everyday life. Constitution Day commemorates the formation and signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787.

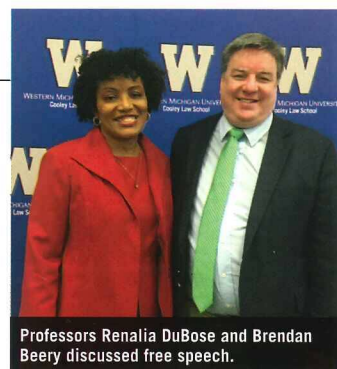
Each September, WMU-Cooley Law School celebrates Constitution Day to reflect on the document's importance. This year, each campus focused on different aspects of the document

and how its principles apply to current issues and events. In Grand Rapids, WMU-Cooley Professor Victoria Vulelich moderated "Debating the Constitution," a debate between Nathan Goetting, associate professor of criminal justice and jurisprudence at Adrian College; and John McGinnis, professor of constitutional law at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law. During the debate, McGinnis and Goetting discussed both positives and negatives of having "originalists," or individuals who believe that when deciding a case it should be interpreted through the eyes of the document's original framers, appointed to the Supreme Court.

Earlier this year, the federal government strengthened the controversial process of civil asset forfeiture, which allows law enforcement to take assets from persons suspected of criminal activity without issuing criminal charges against the asset owners. In Auburn Hills, Clark Neily, vice president of criminal justice of the Cato Institute, and Daniel Lemisch, the acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, discussed the constitutionality of civil forfeiture. Neily advocated for changes in the practice, while Lemisch provided perspective on why law enforcement agencies utilize it.

In Lansing, the law school hosted a luncheon to discuss federalism and limited government with featured speaker Hon. Michael Warren from the Oakland County Circuit Court. During his remarks, Warren reminded students of the founding principles on which the Constitution was based. He emphasized the applicability of the principles of the rule of law and equality across political ideologies.

In response to discussions of free speech following the events that occurred in Charlottesville, Virginia, WMU-Cooley Tampa Bay professors Renalia DuBose and Brendan Beery led a discussion on First Amendment rights at public schools and universities. More than 100 students attended and learned about the rights of students to assemble or to not pledge allegiance to the flag, as well as the rights of outsiders who want to use school facilities or speak on school campuses.



Professors Renalia DuBose and Brendan Beery discussed free speech.



Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Michael Warren provides closing remarks after a panel discussion on civil forfeiture at WMU-Cooley's Auburn Hills campus.