



**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT**
717 MADISON PLACE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20439

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Federal Circuit Announces New Learning Center for Local Public Schools

Washington, D.C., November 20, 2023: At this past Friday's Federal Circuit Bar Association's 2023 Annual Dinner & Reception, Federal Circuit Chief Judge Kimberly A. Moore announced plans for the creation of a learning center, designed to serve and educate local public school students at the court. With a planned opening in September 2024, the Federal Circuit will unveil a new, state-of-the-art learning center in the heart of Washington, D.C. with a primary focus on providing a unique learning opportunity to students in the local community. Students will be able to tour the combined 2,400 square-feet of historic spaces and engage in interactive educational programming focused on the intersection between law and technology, which is one of the Federal Circuit's many specialties.

"The Federal Circuit was created to encourage American innovation by providing a uniform legal structure to support intellectual property," explained Chief Judge Moore. "Our new learning center seeks to bring District of Columbia public school students into our courthouse so they can see firsthand how our court handles the intersection of law, science, and technology."

This is the first-in-the-nation learning center to combine civic education, the judiciary, and STEM. It will invite students to learn about the federal judiciary and the rule of law, the Federal Circuit's unique role in resolving technology related disputes that significantly impact our nation's economy, and how the Federal Circuit's historic properties featured in important events in our nation's history.

Through the court's recent renovation of its historic spaces, the Federal Circuit is now nearing completion of a multi-year project to transform areas of the National Courts Building complex into a walking museum and civic learning center to "revive the historic role of courthouses as vital and vibrant centers of a civically engaged community," as Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. encouraged all federal courts to do in his 2019 Year-End Report on the Federal Judiciary. Chief Judge Moore emphasized that "through our tour program, we will invite students to explore the

rich history that happened in our buildings that helped shape civic life in both the District of Columbia and the nation over the past two centuries.”

Dedicated in 1967 following First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy’s efforts to preserve the historic nature of Lafayette Square, the then-new National Courts Building at 717 Madison Place, built just one block away from the White House, incorporated three historic properties into its design: the Cutts-Madison House, the former Cosmos Club building, and the Benjamin Ogle Tayloe House. As Circuit Librarian Jessica Perovich explained at the FCBA dinner, “Our library staff have spent the past year uncovering and documenting the rich history of our workplace,” adding that “the opportunity to share it with students will be very rewarding.”

Historic Events at the National Courts Building Site: From hosting the pioneering efforts of the National Women’s Party in the quest for universal suffrage to serving as the initial headquarters of NASA, the National Courts Building site has been witness to several extraordinary and significant events that have shaped the course of both U.S. and world history. The National Women’s Party, also known as the Silent Sentinels, etched their mark on history as the first organization to picket the White House, marching from their national headquarters at the historic Tayloe House. The Cutts-Madison House served as the first headquarters for NASA from 1958 until October 1961. During this time period, the Mercury Seven astronauts were first introduced to the country. The “Original Seven” were largely responsible for the creation of a new profession in the United States, establishing the image of the American astronaut for decades to come. In 1959, two female monkeys, Able and Miss Baker, were introduced to the world as the first two primates to be launched into space and return home safely.

In 1865, on the night of the shooting of President Lincoln at Ford’s Theatre, Lewis Powell, a co-conspirator to John Wilkes Booth, attempted to murder Secretary of State William Seward while he was recovering from a carriage accident in his home. Seward, living in what is now the Federal Circuit’s Library, fortunately survived the attack in no small part due to the splint he wore around his broken jaw and the metal cage around his chest from the previous accident.

The historic homes also served as the Cosmos Club headquarters from 1882 to 1952, which hosted several individuals involved in numerous significant meetings throughout those decades. For example, in 1888, several members of the Cosmos

Club came together to form the National Geographic Society. Orville Wright stayed at the Cosmos Club in the Fall of 1908, utilizing it as a sanctuary during test flights for the military at Fort Myer. Stephen Mather, a renowned member of the Cosmos Club, would spend long hours at the Club promoting legislation that would end up eventually establishing the National Parks Service in 1916. The Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, John Collier, held a meeting with leaders of Native American tribes to create the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which aimed to reverse the traditional goal of cultural assimilation of Native Americans into American society. And on December 6, 1941, one day before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Vannevar Bush, James Conant, and Arthur Compton gathered at the Cosmos Club to discuss the Manhattan Project, ushering in the nuclear age and the creation of the atomic bomb.

The National Courts Building stands not just as a courthouse, but as a living testament to the interplay of law, science, and technology—a stage where the past converges with the present to shape an enlightened future.

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