Administrative Office of the Courts

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SANTA FE – Supreme Court Chief Justice C. Shannon Bacon urged New Mexicans today to recommit to fulfilling the American promise of equal justice for all.

"In celebrating Law Day this year, let us dedicate ourselves to the great values protected and preserved in our Constitution," the Chief Justice stated in a proclamation to observe Law Day on Monday. "And, at the same time, let us recognize that democracy is not static, that we must always work to improve and perfect it. Let us seek to draw ever closer to the ideal hand carved into the woodwork above the bench of the Supreme Court of New Mexico: 'Dedicated to the Administration of Equal Justice Under Law.'"

Law Day is recognized annually on May 1, and it began 65 years ago with a proclamation from President Dwight Eisenhower in honor of the nation's commitment to the rule of law — the principle that the law applies equally to each person and that no individual or institution is above the law.

"Law Day reminds us that we must continue to work to improve access to justice, particularly for those unable to obtain legal assistance for civil matters," Chief Justice Bacon said in a statement. "We must take steps together to reduce the access justice gap that many New Mexicans face, whether too often they cannot afford an attorney or they live in a part of the state where few lawyers and legal aid services are available."

In the proclamation, the Chief Justice recognized the work of legal aid organizations, private attorneys who volunteer to provide legal services without fees, and court programs that assist the public, including those providing interpreters for people with limited English proficiency, deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.

"We salute these efforts, but let us offer greater support to those who work daily to provide legal services to those who most need them," the Chief Justice stated in the proclamation. "Let us dedicate ourselves to improving courts and our justice system, so that we will truly have 'justice for all.'"

The 2023 Law Day theme will be “Cornerstones of Democracy: Civics, Civility, and Collaboration.” Chief Justice Bacon called upon members of the legal profession to lead the way in promoting civics, civility, and collaboration—the cornerstones of our democracy. Click here to read the 2023 Law Day proclamation issued by the Chief Justice.

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New Mexico Supreme Court Chief Justice C. Shannon Bacon (photo courtesy of the state Supreme Court)