



BROWN BRIEFS

January 9, 2004
Vol. 1

INAUGURAL E-NEWSLETTER

To facilitate the promotion of the 50th anniversary of the landmark decision of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Commission is distributing this inaugural issue of an electronic newsletter providing informative links to content-rich websites, as well as highlights of recent and upcoming events. If you would like the newsletter to describe commemorative activities in your area or profile your website, please [contact the Commission](#).



50th ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

On September 18, 2001, Congress passed the statute that established the *Brown v. Board of Education* 50th Anniversary Commission to commemorate the historic Supreme Court decision of 1954. It is important for all Americans to understand the history that opened the doors for everyone. Throughout 2004, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Supreme Court, the National Park Service, The Brown Foundation, the NAACP, represented states and the District of Columbia, to name a few, will launch events throughout the United States to educate the American public and commemorate this landmark litigation.

- January 15-17, 2004 Richmond and Farmville, VA Commission Meeting: Commemoration of *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*
- March 14-17, 2004 Lawrence and Topeka, KS Commission Meeting: Legacies and Unfinished Business of *Brown v. Board of Education*
- May, 2004 Topeka, KS Brown 50th Celebration: *Brown v. Board* National Historic Site Opening

By opening the door for all people to pursue a solid education, this decision became - and remains today - the most important and significant legal decision impacting education in the United States.

Students in grades 6 - 12 are invited to participate in



BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMISSION PARTNERS WITH NATIONAL HISTORY DAY FOR ESSAY CONTEST

a national essay contest in conjunction with the National History Day competition. As part of the national 50th anniversary celebration students are encouraged to write an essay that examines the *Brown* decision and its ongoing impact. [Additional details and the rules](#) The winners will be officially announced May 17, 2004, at the *Brown v. Board* 50th Anniversary ceremony. The first place winner will receive \$1,000 and will travel to attend the anniversary ceremony, second place will receive \$500 and third place will

receive \$340. See also, [material for your own lesson plan](#).

VOTES FOR *BROWN*

[US News and World Report](#) recently sponsored a contest to determine which historical documents the public perceives as the most important or influential. The ballots are in, and the counting is underway. Check to see how the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision ranked.

COMMISSIONER PROFILES

Each issue will profile two of the commissioners: this month the co-chairs, Alex Acosta, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Justice; and Brian Jones, General Counsel, U. S. Department of Education.



R. Alexander Acosta was selected by President Bush to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice. A native of Miami, Florida, Mr. Acosta earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard College and his law degree from the Harvard Law School.

"Brown stands for equal access to the American dream. Education has long been the key to success in America, and Brown v. Board finally allowed all Americans to compete on equal terms to live the promise of America."



Brian W. Jones serves as principal adviser to the Secretary of Education on all legal matters affecting Departmental programs and activities. Mr. Jones received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a major in finance from Georgetown University and his Juris Doctor degree from the University of California at Los Angeles School of Law.

"Brown at 50 represents both a celebration of the American system of law and a sober reminder that continued social progress demands more than judicial pronouncements. Closing the achievement gap and ensuring educational opportunity for all children will require a commitment to hold our educational system accountable for results and to move the nation beyond the soft bigotry of low expectations. Brown today stands as a powerful reminder that simple justice demands that no child be left behind."

WORTHWHILE SITES

- [Howard University Law School](#)
- [Library of Congress](#)
- [National Archives and Records Administration](#)
- [National Park Service](#)
- [NEA's List of School-Based Activities](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [Washburn University School of Law](#)

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