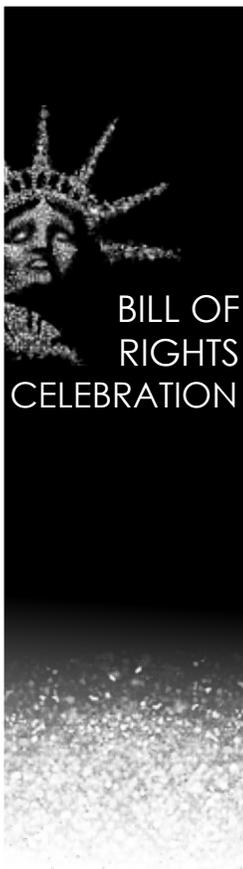




The Vigil

Fall 2013



Please join us for the 2013 Bill of Rights Celebration!

Reverend Edwin C. Sanders II, Lifetime Achievement Award

Founder of Nashville's Metropolitan Interdenominational Church, Reverend Sanders has been for decades a powerful and enduring voice for criminal justice reform and equal protection for the disenfranchised.

Remziya Suleyman, Benjamin S. Pressnell Bill of Rights Award

A courageous civil liberties advocate, Remziya champions religious freedom and the fair treatment of immigrants, focusing on educating and engaging the Muslim community.

Special performance by award-winning songwriter Annie Mosher

Thursday, November 14, 2013

6:30—9:00 p.m. (Silent auction at 6:30 p.m. Dinner at 7:30 p.m.)

**University Club at Vanderbilt University
2402 Garland Avenue, Nashville TN 37212**

Complimentary valet parking available.

Join us...

To purchase tickets, sponsor the event or make a donation, please visit <http://www.bit.ly/BORC2013> or complete the form below by Thursday, November 7, 2013.

For more information, please call 615-320-7142 or email aclutn@aclu-tn.org.

Thank you for your support!

I/we want to sponsor the 2013 Bill of Rights Celebration!

Special Sponsorship Levels

Special Sponsors are listed in the program & invited to a pre-event reception with honorees.

- Guardian of Liberty (\$2,500 — includes table for 10 & invitation for 4 to the Patrons' Party)
- Constitutional Champion (\$1,000 — includes 2 dinner reservations & an invitation for 2 to the Patrons' Party)
- Friend of Freedom (\$500 — includes 1 dinner reservation & an invitation for 1 to the Patrons' Party)

Bill of Rights Celebration Tickets

- Dinner Tickets (\$125 per person) Desired Ticket Quantity:
- Table for Ten (\$1250 per table) Desired Table Quantity:

\$85 of each reservation or \$850 per table is tax-deductible

Supporters

Name(s): _____

Please list me/us: as written as anonymous

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

My check, payable to the ACLU Foundation of Tennessee, is enclosed.

Please charge credit card #: _____ Exp: _____ Security Code: _____

I/we cannot attend; please accept my tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

Please RSVP by sending this card to ACLU-TN, P.O. Box 120160, Nashville, TN 37212 by Thursday, November 7, 2013.

From the Executive Director...

By Hedy Weinberg

Across the state, ACLU-TN is pursuing exciting pro-civil liberties initiatives and challenging anti-civil liberties actions that jeopardize equal treatment and protection for all Tennesseans. We continue to engage elected officials, the judiciary and the public, hoping that they will join in our embrace of freedom. As you can see from the sample below, there is a lot to do!

The Good... In late September, the Cumberland County Board of Education approved a settlement agreement with ACLU-TN prohibiting non-student groups from distributing Bibles or other written religious material on school grounds during school hours. ACLU-TN had sent a letter to the school board on behalf of the family of a fifth-grader who reported feeling pressured to take a Bible during a classroom presentation. We commend the school board for recognizing that children's religious decisions should be made with the help of their families and faith communities, free from pressure by school officials.

In other good news, on the heels of ACLU's *Windsor* case striking down the Defense of Marriage Act, Collegedale became the first Tennessee municipality to extend benefits to all domestic partnerships. Officials in Knoxville, Chattanooga and Nashville are considering following suit. In addition, Knox County passed an ordinance that protects Knox County employees from harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, joining Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville.

ACLU-TN's work for LGBT equality continues to focus on the passage of non-discrimination ordinances and the adoption of comprehensive anti-bullying policies in schools. Please join us in urging your local city and county governments to stand up for fair treatment of all residents.

The Bad... Unfortunately, Tennessee is making international headlines because of the outrageous anti-civil-liberties antics of elected officials. First, in a Cocke County courtroom, Magistrate Lu Ann Ballew ordered an infant's name be changed from Messiah to Martin because the "word Messiah is a title...that has only been earned by...Jesus Christ."

Soon after Ballew's imposition of her own personal religious beliefs on individuals in her courtroom, State Senator Stacey Campfield announced that he had pre-filed a bill to ensure that teachers can say "Merry Christmas." Campfield's bill is not only frivolous, as Christmas greetings in and of themselves are not problematic, it obscures and demonstrates disregard for the actual serious constitutional violations that occur when public schools engage in a pattern and practice of religious proselytizing.

The Ugly... Then Knox County Sheriff Jimmy "J.J." Jones stated that he would enforce federal immigration laws despite having his 287(g) application rejected, "stack[ing]...violators like cordwood in the Knox County Jail until the appropriate federal agency responds." ACLU-TN and the ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project promptly sent Jones a letter reminding him that he is not authorized to independently enforce federal immigration law and that if he detains people solely on the basis of immigration status, he risks being subject to liability for constitutional violations.

And the Hopeful... In the face of so many anti-civil liberties actions, it was heartening to spend the summer with our outstanding interns and volunteers, who dedicated their time to researching civil liberties issues, creating public education materials, mobilizing Tennesseans, and providing administrative support. Special thanks go to (pictured L to R): Carmen Linero-Lopez (Williams College); Kaleigh Thacker (University of Memphis School of Law); Rebekah Ninan (Williamson County high school student); Nolan Hitchcock (Vanderbilt University Law School) and Cassie Doyle (Vanderbilt University). Our vibrant intern program reminds me that



we are in good hands with the next generation of civil libertarians.

And to you, our supporters... Thank you for your shared commitment to fairness, equality and justice. I travel hopefully because of you.

Hedy

ACLU-TN Welcomes New Staff

ACLU-TN is excited to welcome several new staff members to the team. **Development Director Liz Musselman** was motivated to work for ACLU because of its comprehensive, non-partisan approach to tackling a wide range of important issues and its track record of protecting people's rights. Liz's favorite part of her job is traveling across the state to meet new donors. Her initial goal for the Development Department is to maximize donor support for ACLU-TN's important programming to ensure that we can protect Tennesseans' civil liberties for decades to come.



Liz brings many years of development experience to the position, most recently as Director of Development for the Virginia Repertory Theatre and, prior to that, The Valentine Richmond History Center in Richmond. She has studied vocal performance, and holds a bachelor's degree in English from Virginia Commonwealth University. In her spare time she enjoys reading, listening to music, and exploring her new hometown's museums, parks and restaurants.



During her tenure at bankruptcy firm Clark & Washington, P.C., ACLU-TN's new **paralegal Lauren Davis** saw many clients who were down on their luck being taken advantage of by economic institutions, sparking her interest in politics and current events. This passion eventually led her to ACLU-TN. She is excited about the issues ACLU strategically advances and looks forward to fighting for people's rights and educating people about ACLU's mission and resources. Lauren has studied photography, and earned an associate degree from Kaplan Career Institute. Her hobbies include reading, writing fiction and nonfiction, and playing with her husky mix, Blue.

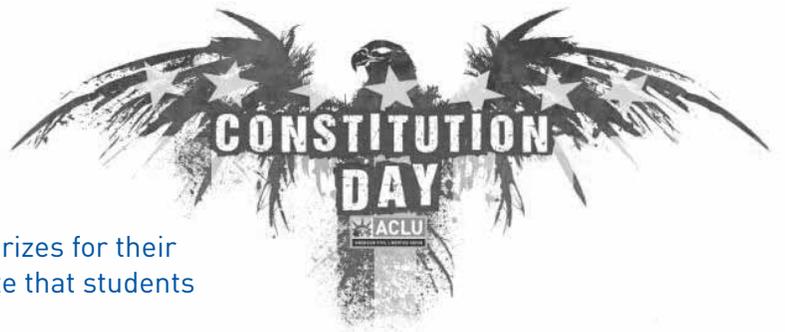


When **Claire Gardner** was working on her bachelor's degree in social work from Middle Tennessee State University, she saw firsthand the trickle-down effect that social policies had on clients. She became interested in creating large-scale social change through policy work, advocacy and public education, which brought her to ACLU-TN. Claire joined the staff as **Community Engagement Associate** after completing her undergraduate field placement with us. Her goal is to leverage social media, events and other forms of communication to help people understand how the Bill of Rights applies to them and how they can use it as a tool for empowerment. Claire enjoys running, sketching, hiking, and writing humorous nonfiction.

Constitution Day, Brought To You By The ACLU

On September 17, the anniversary of the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, ACLU-TN embarked on a mission with our national office to educate young people about the contents and contemporary relevance of the U.S. Constitution, launching "Constitution Day, Brought To You By The ACLU."

This program offers a teaching guide with real-life contemporary constitutional dilemmas that students will find intriguing, constitutional games and trivia, a "Wall of Rights" mural contest empowering students to win cash prizes for their schools, celebrity sponsors, and a dynamic website that students and teachers are sure to enjoy.



Over the past month, ACLU-TN has reached out to hundreds of middle school social studies teachers across Tennessee, as well as numerous educational associations, to share these exciting resources. You can check them out yourself here: <https://constitutionday.aclu.org/>.

My Summer as an ACLU-TN Law Clerk

By *Kaleigh Rose Thacker*,
University of Memphis School of Law

When I first started considering law school, the ACLU was one of the organizations that inspired me. The work that the ACLU does helps people, changes lives, and makes the world a better place. It sounds cliché, but I knew that it was an organization that I wanted to be a part of.

During the summer of 2013, I had the pleasure of being an ACLU-TN law clerk. As a law clerk, I helped to analyze and report on intake, researched and drafted memoranda regarding the current state of the law on various issues, and prepared public record requests. Some of the issues that I was exposed to this summer include restoration of voting rights, prisoner rights and bullying, to name a few.

One of the great things about ACLU-TN that I did not realize before is that they pursue multiple avenues to solve problems instead of immediately resorting to filing a lawsuit. Sometimes simply sending a letter can convince an organization or a county to revise their practices so that they align with the Constitution.

Working for ACLU-TN was even better than I imagined that it would be. I hope that one day I will be able to become a full-time staff attorney for the ACLU.

ACLU-TN hosts law clerks year-round. ACLU-TN law clerks gain hands-on experience in the full range of civil liberties and constitutional rights cases. For more information, please visit www.aclu-tn.org/lawclerk.htm.

Defending Student Speech in Rutherford County

By *Natalie Pate*, *ACLU-TN Intern*

When the Rutherford County Board of Education instructed social studies teacher Allen Nichols to remove an anti-bullying poster students had requested he hang in his classroom, he was concerned that the students' free speech rights were being violated. After trying to resolve the issue with the school board himself to no avail, he contacted ACLU-TN.

In August, ACLU-TN and the national ACLU sent a letter to the Rutherford County Board of Education requesting that the First Amendment rights of students and teachers be protected and that the posters be reinstated.

The posters identify classrooms as spaces where all students can feel safe from bullying and harassment, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Members of the Central Magnet School Gay Transgendered Straight Alliance student organization requested that teachers display the posters.

The posters had hung alongside posters from other student groups for the majority of the prior school year. But this fall the school board had them removed, claiming that the poster's content is of an inappropriate sexual nature because it contains the words "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender." The school board's attorney also called the poster inappropriately political in nature. The ACLU letter states that these claims grossly misconstrue the nature of the poster.

Nichols, last year's Central Magnet School Teacher of the Year, said, "I believe creating a safe school environment is important for all students. Anti-gay harassment and bullying hurts everyone, which is why I found the censorship of this poster particularly surprising and frustrating. While I hung the poster at students' request, I thought it was important to do so because it shows that my classroom is a safe, supportive environment for every young person I work with."

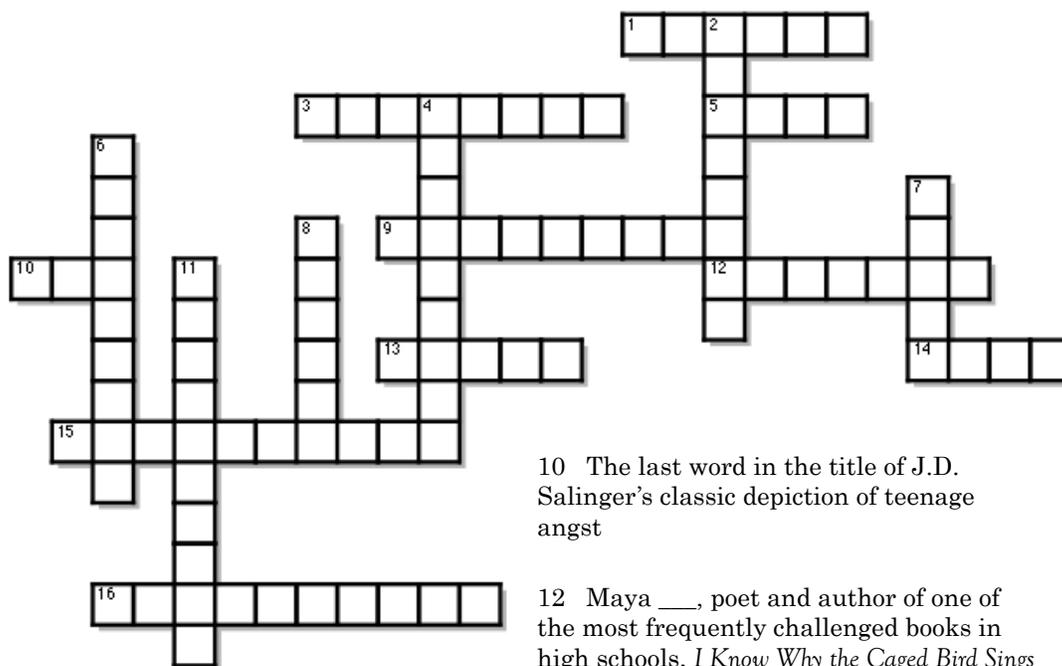
ACLU is currently waiting for the school board's response to the letter and weighing its legal options.



A copy of the poster in question

Civil Liberties Ledger

ACLU-TN's [REDACTED] Banned [REDACTED] Books [REDACTED] Crossword [REDACTED] Puzzle [REDACTED]



ACROSS

- 1 Last name of the wizard whose adventures made for the most challenged books of 2000-2009
- 3 Popular challenged series of vampire books by Stephanie Meyer
- 5 Children's book of rhymes and illustrations, *I Saw ___*, challenged in Murfreesboro for being "absolutely offensive"
- 9 The last week of this month is Banned Books Week

- 10 The last word in the title of J.D. Salinger's classic depiction of teenage angst
- 12 Maya ____, poet and author of one of the most frequently challenged books in high schools, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- 13 The number of shades of grey in a book frequently challenged for its sexual content
- 14 __ Morrison, the author of *Beloved*, a book often challenged in schools
- 15 Popular book series by Dav Pilkey, challenged for its "anti-family content," *Captain ___*
- 16 Book banned at one time in the U.S. for containing communist material, even though it's a satire on communism (2 wds).

DOWN

- 2 Classic Dr. Seuss book challenged for "portraying the foresting industry in a negative way" (2 wds.)
- 4 The organization working tirelessly to protect your right to read, the American Civil ___ Union
- 6 Young girl whose diary recording the events of the Holocaust has been banned for being "too depressing" (2 wds.)
- 7 The name of the narrator and protagonist of *To Kill A Mockingbird*, challenged in Brentwood, TN, in 2006
- 8 Young adult novel *Looking for ___*, banned in Knox County for sexual content
- 11 The first word in the title of a banned novel about a futuristic society in which books are banned

Crossword puzzle by
Cassie Doyle, ACLU-TN Intern

For more information about the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee's work on censorship and the First Amendment, visit us online at www.aclu-tn.org/freespeech.htm.



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Youth in Action: Memphis Students' Rights Summit

On Friday, October 18, ACLU-TN will present the "Youth in Action: Students' Rights Summit" in Memphis. The summit's interactive sessions offer high school students the opportunity to explore and discuss the civil liberties and civil rights issues that affect them every day in their schools and communities, such as free speech, freedom of the press, religious freedom, LGBT equality, interactions with law enforcement and more.

WHO: High school students

WHEN: Friday, October 18

Registration & breakfast: 7:30 a.m.
Program: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: BRIDGES Center, 477 North 5th Street, Memphis

COST: \$20 per student, with scholarships available
Breakfast and lunch provided.

Pre-registration is required at <http://bit.ly/14AWOhU>.

The summit is part of the 2013 Gandhi-King Youth and Community Conference, coordinated by MidSouth Peace and Justice Center and BRIDGES. For more information, please visit www.aclu-tn.org or call (615) 320-7142.

Is your school...

- **drug testing you?**
- **sponsoring religious activities?**
- **denying your student club application?**



If so, we want to hear from you!

www.aclu-tn.org/gethelp.htm