

Judge Michael Warren: Passionate Patriot Educator

For a man who often sports an American flag bowtie, it is no surprise that Judge Michael Warren possesses what can easily be described as a strong passion for American civics education and involvement. Clearly, that passion runs in the family.

Outside of his role on the bench of the Oakland County Circuit Court, Judge Warren has given much of his time to advancing efforts to educate more students—locally and beyond—about American history and civics on several fronts.

He and his then-10-year-old daughter jointly founded an effort in 2009 called “Patriot Week.” Judge Warren gives his daughter, Leah, credit as the driving force behind launching the idea.

“Leah pounded on a restaurant table and demanded a new celebration for America,” he remarked. “Many of our current holidays have become overly commercialized or have lost their deeper meaning. We felt the need to invigorate our appreciation and understanding of America’s spirit.”

So what is Patriot Week all about?

“Patriot Week renews America’s spirit by deepening the appreciation of the First Principles, Founding Fathers and other patriots, vital documents and speeches, and flags that make America the greatest nation in world history,” he explained.

Judge Warren serves as the Chair and President of the 501(c)(3) Patriot Week nonprofit organization. Patriot Week is anchored by the key dates of September 11 (the anniversary of the terrorists attacks) and September 17 (Constitution Day, the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution). He reaches out to organizations in Michigan and around the country to encourage further awareness and involvement.

Currently, more than 15 other states having recognized Patriot Week with official gubernatorial and legislative proclamations and resolutions. In addition, scores of other public and private entities have gotten involved: K-12 schools; universities and law schools; student groups; community organizations (Rotaries, Kiwanis, religious, et al); local governments; courts; law firms; businesses; libraries; hospitals; and many others. According to Judge Warren, these entities are engaging in a wide range of grassroots activities, including panel discussions, speakers, lesson plans, festivals, parades, picnics, commemorations, and more.

“The grassroots effort is renewing the spirit of America, one person at a time, and is spreading throughout the nation,” he shared.

One might say that, to Judge Warren, all education is local. Closer to home, he serves as the Education Chair of the Cornerstone Education Group, which manages a network of Detroit-based charter schools serving - 3,500 K-12 students. He has facilitated the development of the

learning expectations for students, and is heading up an education improvement plan focused on character education, American history and civics, and literacy. A former employee of Cornerstone, he has served on the board of directors of Cornerstone-related organizations for about 15 years.

Most recently, Judge Warren has been tapped to serve on a state Task Force working to improve K-12 social studies standards in Michigan. “Through this effort, we are focused on improving depth, ensuring accuracy, and integrating student centered learning,” he explained. “We also aim to ensure the standards are not biased, especially in American history and civics. We are aiming to create a model for the nation.”

Judge Warren served on the previous standard-setting committee, the Michigan Board of Education, and Task Force on Social Studies.

With Judge Warren’s reelection this year, he is excited to continue serving on the bench as well as continue his educational efforts in the broader community.