

WILL: 1 Year Later: Religious-themed valentines STILL cannot be freely distributed at tech college

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WILL produces new video showing Polly innocently handing out Valentines, files for summary judgment

The Story: On Valentine's Day 2018, officials at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College ("NWTC") stopped student Polly Olsen from peacefully distributing religiously-themed Valentines on campus. NWTC accused Polly of violating its "Public Assembly Policy," which limits free speech to a tiny area of campus and requires advance permission from officials before the area may even be used. In response, WILL filed a federal lawsuit explaining that NWTC's policy unconstitutionally restricts the First Amendment rights of its students. But another Valentine's Day is almost here, and Polly still doesn't know whether she can celebrate the holiday by handing out cards to her friends and colleagues.

Polly is now a step closer to getting her answer. WILL has filed a summary judgment brief asking the federal district court to definitively rule on the constitutionality of NWTC's policy. The brief can be found [here](#).

New Video: WILL has obtained a [video of security footage of Polly distributing Valentines](#) at NWTC in 2018. The video, which WILL has submitted to the court, shows Polly innocently approaching students and handing out Valentines at a campus building. The footage of the incident that NWTC characterized as "disturbing" the learning environment lasts just over a minute. This is the type of activity that NWTC still prohibits.

Quotes: Polly Olsen, NWTC student and plaintiff: "Since my mother's passing, I have sought to carry out our tradition of handing out simple religiously themed Valentines on Valentine's Day to brighten peoples' day. Another year has passed and I cannot do this freely at my school. It's sad and deeply disappointing.

As the newly released video shows, I wasn't disturbing or hurting anyone. I just want to freely express love for others."

WILL President and General Counsel Rick Esenberg: "One year later, NWTC still has not fixed its unconstitutional free speech policy. It's not only hurting our client but also all the other students who wish to speak without permission. NWTC is putting free speech in a tiny box and WILL is asking the judge to let it out."

What's Next: A judge will make a decision on WILL's brief imminently. NWTC's next board meeting is February 27.

Go Deeper:

- [NEW video](#) of Polly handing out religious-themed Valentines on Valentine's Day
- Watch WILL President Rick Esenberg discuss the case on [Fox & Friends](#)
- [Green Bay Press-Gazette](#): First Amendment: NWTC asks for dismissal of free speech lawsuit over religious-themed valentines
- [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#): Valentines with Bible verses at heart of free speech lawsuit student filed against college
- Case File: [Polly Olsen v. NWTC](#)