**Law 12 Mr. Aitken**

**Philadelphia Case Study**

**Human Tolerance/Discrimination**

**1**. Discrimination manifests itself in many ways and is directed at many different individuals, none of whom asked for the discriminatory treatment. This movie deals with discrimination based on the presence of H.I.V. The trauma of AIDS and the discrimination faced by this one man speaks volumes about how our society fears those who are different. Andrew Beckett believes he was the victim of H.I.V. discrimination. You are to follow the court case arguments from both the plaintiff’s (Beckett) position and the defense (Willard) case. Once the court case is over you will play the role of the jury. You will write up your verdict and state why you took the position that you did. You must include the legal reasoning (sections from the charter or other precedent) behind your position. (roughly ¾ page)

**2**. Choose any **THREE** of the following questions and answer in complete sentences fully explaining your position. These together should take roughly ½ of a page but in some cases could be longer.

a. Provide a character sketch of the following individuals.

i. Andrew Beckett (Tom Hanks)

ii. Joe Miller (Denzel Washington)

iii. Charles Willard (Jason Robards)

iv. Miguel Alvarez (Antonio Banderas)

Include their occupations, personal traits and motivations; family history, and perceived educational background.

b. What is the first indication that Andrew Beckett is suffering from AIDS? How does Andy attempt to hide his disease? Should Andy try to hide that he has AIDS?

c. Beckett was a young, enthusiastic, hardworking individual who was climbing up the “corporate ladder.” He was the “future” of the law firm. Things changed. Why? Was it necessary for change?

d. Define the term discrimination as stated in the law library scene in the movie. Provide detailed examples where discrimination surfaces in the movie. You must qualify why these examples constitute discrimination.

e. “I didn’t raise my kids to sit in the back of the bus.” Andy’s mother made this statement at a family gathering. What did she allude to and imply with this statement? Can you categorize all forms of discrimination as the same? Explain your position.

f. Joe Miller represents Andrew Beckett in this legal suit. What changed Joe Miller’s mind to take this case on? Outline his legal position in arguing the case of Andrew Beckett.

g. Joe Miller explodes in the courtroom challenging the sexual orientation of his own witnesses. He sums up his outburst to the judge by saying “Let’s get it out in the open…the general public’s hatred, our loathing, our fear of homosexuals, and how that climate of hatred and fear translated into the firing of my client…” Do you agree with Miller’s perception of society’s general lack of acceptance of LGBTQ people? Explain your position.

h. In the opening scenes the setting for the story is portrayed in a kaleidoscope of the “Streets of Philadelphia” Based on these shots describe the type of city Philadelphia is. Include the culture, the history, key landmarks, and the people when developing your description. Why is it ironic that this particular story would take place in Philadelphia?