



**The American Legion, Department of Michigan Oratorical Scholarship Program**  
*“A Constitutional Speech Contest”*

**e-mail:** [programs@michiganlegion.org](mailto:programs@michiganlegion.org)

**website:** [www.michiganlegion.org/oratorical](http://www.michiganlegion.org/oratorical)

**General Department Program Information:**

The purpose of this program is to provide high school students with a deeper understanding of the Constitution of the United States, develop and sharpen their speaking skills, and compete for scholarship money ranging from \$800 - \$1,500 (Department Contest) and \$14,000 - \$18,000 (National Contest). Department Contestants will be notified by email how to access their scholarship money.

A contestant must have sponsorship (representation by an American Legion Post) to qualify for the contest. If you don't know of an American Legion Post to ask for sponsorship, contact your Zone Chairman to assist you with this matter (**see the 3rd page for your Zone Chairman**).

A contestant must register with the American Legion, Dept. of MI by Saturday, November 19, 2016 (**see attached registration form**). Your Zone Chairman will notify you of the dates, times and locations of all contests at the District and Zone level. All Zone contests will be conducted before Monday, January 21, 2017 and the Department contest will be conducted on Saturday, February 18, 2017 at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids.

If unable to contact your Zone Chairman, Department Programs Coordinator can be reached by e-mail at [programs@michiganlegion.org](mailto:programs@michiganlegion.org) or by phone at 517-371-4720 ext. 23.

Contestants may wear appropriate business attire but **wearing uniforms, awards, or medals are not permitted.**

**Eligibility:** Eligibility for participating must be as follows:

1. Contestants shall be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States.
2. Have a permanent residency in the state of Michigan
3. Be enrolled in an accredited high school (public, parochial, military, private) or an accredited home schooled program
4. Be in grades 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, or 12<sup>th</sup> and not older than 20 years-of-age

**Prepared Oration:** The Prepared Oration must be as follows:

1. Given at each level of competition (District, Zone, State, National) and must be on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States with emphasis on the duties and obligations of a citizen to our government but **not the preamble**.
2. Contestant's oration must be his or her own original speech
3. Spoken in the English language
4. Speech length is no less than 8 minutes and no more than 10 minutes
5. Songs in a speech are not permitted
6. Quotations may be used and indicated as such but quotes 10 words or more in length will need the author's name given in your written manuscript and cited orally

**Assigned Topic:** The Assigned Topic must be as follows:

1. Assigned Topic (on Page 2) will be one of the articles and sections or amendments of the Constitution of the United States
2. Spoken in the English language
3. Speech length is no less than 3 minutes and no more than 5 minutes
4. Songs in a speech are not permitted
5. Quotations may be used and indicated as such but quotes 10 words or more in length will need the author's name and cited orally

## **ASSIGNED TOPICS FOR THE 2017 PROGRAM:**

**Amendment 7:** In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

**Amendment 10:** The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

**Amendment 16:** The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

**Amendment 17:** The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies; Provided that the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

## **Program Regulations:**

The order in which the contestants will present their prepared oration and their assigned topic (**two different speeches**) will be determined by a drawing conducted by one of the program officials. The Department Education and Scholarship Chairman will announce the title of the contestant's speech immediately after introducing him or her as Contestant No. 1, Contestant No. 2, etc. The Department Education and Scholarship Chairman will request the audience to refrain from any applause until the end of the contest.

**The use of notes, amplification devices, lectern, props or speaker's stand by contestants or prompting in any manner is NOT permitted. The use of any type of electronic/digital data gathering, receiving, and/or transmitting equipment in any form by contestants or members of the audience is prohibited.**

Contestants may consult their notes or a copy of their oration until they leave their designated holding room to present their speech. For the assigned topic, each contestant will be given 5 minutes to prepare and a contest official will draw the assigned topic in front of the audience before the last contestant begins their prepared oration.

Contestants are required to remain in their designated holding room until it is their turn to deliver their prepared oration and the selected assigned topic and will be supervised at all times by an individual who is the hall monitor and appointed by the Department Education and Scholarship Chairman. Contestants are not allowed to associate with each other until a contestant has concluded his or her assigned topic.

There will be two (2) timekeepers whose duty it shall be to keep the accurate time of each contestant's speech and will be located at the front table on the main floor in full view of the contestants. The timekeeper will begin timing each contestant at the start of the prepared oration and at the start of the assigned topic. Each timekeeper will be equipped with a stopwatch and time cards. Time cards for the prepared oration will be for the 8, 9 and 10 minute markers and for the assigned topic will be 3, 4 and 5 minute markers. When each minute marker has been reached, the timekeeper will hold up the appropriate minute marker for the contestants, judges and audience to view. The Department Education and Scholarship Chairman will announce the time of each contestant on both the prepared oration and assigned topic for the judges to mark their score sheets accordingly.

There will be penalties for a speech that is under the minimum time as well as over the maximum time for both the prepared oration and the assigned topic. A penalty of one point for each minute, or fraction thereof, shall be assessed against the contestant's total score. Judges are permitted to penalize a contestant up to a maximum of 10 points for failure to speak on the Constitution. Judges are advised that a lack of emphasis in the prepared oration and assigned topic on the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen must result in a penalty towards the contestant's speech.

There will be 5 judges seated throughout the audience for the Department and National contest and will not be introduced until after the contest has concluded. Once all prepared orations and assigned topics have been given, the judges, timekeepers, tabulators and the Department Education and Scholarship Chairman following the last assigned topic will proceed to a private room for final review and tabulation. **The decision of the judges is final.**

The Department Education and Scholarship Chairman will assign 3 people to be tabulators for the Department contest. Tabulators are responsible for reviewing the judge's scorecards to be certain they are completely tabulated and signed. Judge's scorecards for the Department and National contests **will not be divulged to anyone.** There will be 3 runners up, 1 second-place winner and **only 1 Department winner who will advance to the National Contest Finals.**

**National Information:** The following information only applies to the National Program:

1. National program held on April 21 – 23, 2017 (with Quarter final and Semifinal contests held on Saturday, April 22, 2017 and the Championship contest held on Sunday, April 23, 2017)
2. National Contest will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana with the host location at Wyndham Indianapolis West.
3. **All contestants must be accompanied by a chaperone over the age of 21**
4. All contestants and chaperones will arrive Friday, April 21, 2017, and will be lodged at a hotel TBD in Indianapolis
5. Mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will be held Friday evening, April 21, 2017
6. Banquet honoring all contestants will be held Sunday afternoon, April 23, 2017
7. All contestants and chaperones will depart for home late Sunday afternoon, April 23, 2017

**Listing of Zone Chairman with Michigan Counties They Cover**

**Zone 1 – John Bradford**

**Phone # - (313) 551 – 4198**

**Counties - Wayne County with the exception of the following cities: Redford, Livonia, Plymouth, Northville, and Detroit West of Mejers Rd. (use the 3 Zone Chairman for these cities)**

**Zone 2 – James Atkinson, MD**

**Phone # - (269) 948-8219**

**Counties - Jackson, Washtenaw, Lenawee, Monroe, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Branch, Hillsdale, Eaton, Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, Ottawa, Kent**

**Zone 3 – Brian Czubak**

**Phone # - (517) 599-3858**

**Counties - Ingham, Livingston, Genesee, Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, Lapeer, St. Clair, Macomb, Saginaw, Shiawassee, Gratiot, Clinton, Montcalm, Ionia, Oakland, and the cities of Redford, Livonia, and Plymouth, Northville, and Detroit West of Mejers Rd.**

**Zone 4 – Richard Tracy**

**Phone # - (989) 255-6330**

**Counties - Leelanau, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Mason, Lake, Oceana, Newaygo, Muskegon, Osceola, Mecosta, Clare, Isabella, Gladwin, Midland, Arenac, Bay, Roscommon, Ogemaw, Iosco, Crawford, Oscoda, Alcona, Kalkaska, Antrim, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Emmet**

**Zone 5 – TBD**

**Phone # - Please call John Bradford (Zone 1 & Chairman) with any questions**

**Counties - Gogebic, Ontonagon, Keweenaw, Houghton, Baraga, Iron, Marquette, Dickinson, Alger, Delta, Menominee, Schoolcraft, Luce, Mackinac, Chippewa**

**For a copy of the complete 2016-2017 Official Rules, go to:  
[www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships](http://www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships) and click on Oratorical Contest Scholarships**



## **ZONE ORATORICAL CONTESTANT REGISTRATION FORM**

### **ZONE ORATORICAL CONTESTANT INFORMATION:**

1. Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

2. Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

3. Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name of Contestant's High School \_\_\_\_\_

5. City in which High School is located \_\_\_\_\_

6. Grade in School \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

7. Accompanying Chaperone \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

8. Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

9. Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

10. Name of Coach \_\_\_\_\_

11. Sponsoring Post # \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

12. Title of Oration \_\_\_\_\_

### **EMAIL, FAX OR MAIL TO THE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS**

**By The Deadline Date of November 19, 2016**

Email – [programs@michiganlegion.org](mailto:programs@michiganlegion.org)

Fax – 517-371-2401

Mailing Address - The American Legion, Department of Michigan

Attn: Programs

212 N Verlinden, Ste. A

Lansing, MI, 48915