



The American Legion, Department of Michigan Oratorical Scholarship Program

“A Constitutional Speech Contest”

e-mail: programs@michiganlegion.org

website: www.michiganlegion.org



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).

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.

A contestant must register with their American Legion Oratorical Zone Chairman by Monday, January 2, 2012 (see the last page on this contest for your Zone Chairman). 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 30, 2012 and the Department contest will be conducted on Saturday, February 25, 2012.

If unable to contact your Zone Chairman, Department Administrative Assistant for Programs Deanna Clark can be reached by e-mail at programs@michiganlegion.org or by phone at 517-371-4720 ext. 11.

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 need to be a United States citizen
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 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th 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 2012 PROGRAM:

Article 1 – Section 9 – Clause 2 – “The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.”

Article IV – Section 2 – Clause 1 – “The citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens of the several states.”

Amendment XIV – Section 2 – Sentence 1 - “Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed.”

Amendment XV – Section 1 - “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

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 13 – 15, 2012 (with Quarter final and Semi final contests held on Saturday, April 14, 2012 and Championship contest held on Sunday, April 15, 2012)
2. Located at University Place Conference Center & Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana
3. **All contestants must be accompanied by a chaperone over the age of 21**
4. All contestants and chaperones will arrive Friday, April 13, 2012, and will be lodged at the University Place Conference Center Hotel (850 West Michigan Road, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46202)
5. Mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will be held Friday evening, April 13, 2012
6. Banquet honoring all contestants will be held Sunday afternoon, April 15, 2012
7. All contestants and chaperones will depart for home late Sunday afternoon, April 15, 2012

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 – Roy McLain

Phone # - (517) 589 - 5514

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 – Thomas Brown

Phone # - (989) 739-1360

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 – George Maciejewski, Jr.

Phone # - (906) 639 - 2911

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