



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

The purpose of the Oratorical contest is to provide high school students with a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States. Other objectives of the contest include the development of leadership qualities, improving speaking skills, and acceptance of the responsibilities as well as the privileges of American citizenship. Contestants will compete for scholarship money ranging from **\$800 to \$1,500** at the department(state) contest conducted on Saturday, March 2, 2019 held at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids. The department winner will advance to compete for scholarship money ranging from **\$14,000 to \$18,000** in the National contest held April 5-7, 2019 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

A contestant must be sponsored 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 the Department Programs Coordinator by e-mail at legion@michiganlegion.org or by phone at 517-371-4720 ext. 23 for assistance.

A contestant must register with the American Legion, Department of Michigan by Monday, November 20, 2018 (see registration form on pg.4). Once you have registered with the Department of Michigan your information will be forwarded to your Zone Chairman and they 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, February 11, 2019 and the Department contest will be conducted on Saturday, March 2, 2019 at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids.

Eligibility: To participate in the Oratorical Contest you must meet the following eligibility requirements:

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 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th and not older than 20 years-of-age.

What you should know:

- **Apparel:** Contestants may wear appropriate business attire but wearing uniforms, awards, or medals are not permitted.
- **Travel Expenses:** Department will pay mileage to and from the State Contest for only the first-place winner of each Zone contest. All contestants must be accompanied by a chaperone over 21 years of age.
- **Speaking Order:** A drawing will be held to determine the order in which the contestants will present their prepared oration and their assigned topic (two different speeches). Until the end of the contest, they will be introduced and known to the judges by number only.
- **Notes or Podium:** The use of notes, amplification devices, lectern, prop's or speaker's stand by contestants is **not** permitted.
- **Judges:** The judges are an integral part of the contest and are selected based on their qualifications. The decision of the judges is final. Five judges are used in the process, which ultimately results in the selection of the state champion each year.

What to Prepare:

The prepared oration: The Prepared Oration must be as follows:

- 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.
- Contestant's oration must be his or her own original speech.
- Spoken in the English language.
- Speech length is no less than 8 minutes and no more than 10 minutes.
- Songs in a speech are not permitted.
- 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.

The assigned topic: The purpose of the assigned topic is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of his or her research, and the ability to discuss the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution. The assigned topic must be as follows:

- Assigned Topic (listed below) will be one of the articles and sections or amendments of the Constitution of the United States.
- Spoken in the English language.
- Speech length is no less than 3 minutes and no more than 5 minutes.
- Songs in a speech are not permitted.
- 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.

The assigned topic will be drawn by the contest official in full view of the audience immediately before the last speaker begins delivery of his/her prepared oration and will be made known to the audience and each contestant approximately five minutes prior to the time of delivery.

ASSIGNED TOPICS FOR THE 2019 PROGRAM

- **Amendment 1**-Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
- **Amendment 4**-The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.
- **Amendment 13**- 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.
- **Amendment 21**- 1. The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed. 2. The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited. 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

State Oratorical Contest

The following information only applies to the State Oratorical Program:

- The State (Department) program will be held on March 2, 2019 at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids. Starting time is 12:00 p.m.
- Scholarships are as follows: 1st Place- \$1,500, 2nd Place- \$1,000, 3rd Place- \$800
- All Zone winners should arrive by 11:30 a.m.
- The winner of the State Contest will advance to the National Finals Contest (information is below)

If you have any further questions please contact the Department Programs Coordinator by e-mail at legion@michiganlegion.org or by phone at 517-371-4720 ext. 23 for assistance.

National Finals Contest

The following information only applies to the National Program:

- National program held on April 5–7, 2019 (with Quarter final and Semifinal contests held on Saturday, April 6, 2019 and the Championship contest held on Sunday, April 7, 2019)
- National Contest will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana at Wyndham Indianapolis West.
- All contestants must be accompanied by a chaperone over the age of 21.
- All contestants and chaperones will arrive Friday, April 5, 2019, and will be lodged at a hotel to be determined in Indianapolis.
- Mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will be held Friday evening, April 5, 2019.
- Banquet honoring all contestants will be held Sunday afternoon, April 7, 2019.
- All contestants and chaperones will depart for home late Sunday afternoon, April 7, 2019.

DEPARTMENT ORATORICAL REGISTRATION FORM IS ON THE NEXT PAGE

For a copy of the complete 2019 Official Rules, go to:

<https://www.michiganlegion.org/oratorical> or

https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/publications/07ACY0518-Oratorical-Rules-Brochure_0.pdf



2019 MICHIGAN AMERICAN LEGION
ORATORICAL CONTESTANT REGISTRATION FORM

(Please print clearly)

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 _____ Expected Graduation Year: _____

7. Accompanying Chaperone _____ Phone # _____

8. Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

9. Email Address _____

10. Name of Coach _____

11. Sponsoring Post # _____ Location _____

Post Contact Name: _____ Email/Phone: _____

12. Title of Oration _____

EMAIL, FAX OR MAIL TO THE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS
By the Deadline Date of November 20, 2018
Email (Preferred Method) – legion@michiganlegion.org
Fax – 517-371-2401
Mailing Address - The American Legion, Department of Michigan
Attn: Programs
212 N Verlinden, Ste. A
Lansing, MI, 48915