

Annual American Legion Department of Iowa

High School Oratorical Scholarship Program

"A Constitutional Speech Contest"

2024 – 2025



Open to students in grades 9 – 12

Scholarships are awarded to winners at Department and National levels:

Department Contest Prize*	Placement	National Contest Prize
\$2,000	First	\$25,000
\$1,500	Second	\$22,500
\$1,000	Third	\$20,000

The Department of Iowa Champion will also receive an additional \$2,000 for participating in the first round of the national competition.

*Half of each Department of Iowa scholarship is awarded by
The American Legion of Iowa Foundation.

Rules and Regulations

**Please see COVID-19 Guidelines on page 6*

Eligibility

Rules of The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest conform to the National American Legion Contest rules (www.ialegion.org/oratorical) unless exceptions for the contest are stated as outlined below.

All contestants in the Department of Iowa shall be citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States and oration must be in the English language.

The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Finals shall consist of one contestant from each of the three area contests (an area consists of three districts).

The area contest shall consist of two contestants from each district in the designated area.

The District Contest shall consist of no more than one contestant from each post/county in the district. If there is more than one contestant from each county, there shall be a county contest to determine the representative from the county who will advance to the District Contest.

Quotations

Quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than 10 words in length, the author's name must be given orally and in the manuscript.

Withdrawals

If for any reason a contestant withdraws, voluntarily or by disqualification, from a contest after progressing through one or more stages, their place shall be taken by the next highest-ranking contestant of the previous contest. If this withdrawal is sudden and the next ranking contestant of the previous contest is available and can proceed without delaying the contest, the substitution should be made at once. If the substitution cannot be made without delay, then the contest shall proceed among the available contestants.

Judging

If a local contest is necessary to determine the representative of a local high school, these contestants shall be judged according to standards set up by the local American Legion Post. In all community contests between two or more high schools to determine contestants to represent local posts, county, district, area, and Department contests, the following rules shall prevail.

Notes and Platform

Post and county level contests: Notes on 3 x 5 cards are allowed; judges are not to downgrade contestants for the use of notes.

District level contest: No prompting, notes, and/or lectern will be allowed.

Area and Department contests: The area and Department contest will be conducted in an auditorium having a platform from which contestants will speak. The use of notes, lectern, or speaker's stand by contestants, or prompting in any manner, is prohibited. The normal speaking voice of the contestant is not to be interfered with or amplified within the auditorium.

The use of a raised platform at post, county, or district is encouraged if facilities are available.

No research material, just a pad, and pencil will be allowed in preparing for the Assigned Topic discourse at the district, area, and Department levels.

A blind contestant may have a chaperone or escort remain in the room to read the Assigned Topic only.

The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest Certification Form – Section I

To be completed by the contestant’s High School Official – If handwritten, print legibly

This is to certify that Mr./Miss _____ is a student at _____ High School/Home School, located in _____ (city), and is not undergoing post-graduate work, is not deficient in any school work for the current year, and will be enrolled for the current school year.

The above participant is a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States.
___ Yes ___ No

CURRENT GRADE: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

ANTICIPATED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION YEAR: ___

Parent(s) Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Parent(s) Phone: _____

Parent (s) Address: _____

Official’s Email Address (Required)

Number of Contestants

Principal’s Signature

Please Print Name

The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest Certification Form – Section II

To be completed by Legion Post Officer and mailed to County Oratorical Chair

I, Commander of _____ American Legion Post # _____,
of The American Legion Department of Iowa, do hereby certify that the above-named student is
the official contestant of this post in The American Legion Department of Iowa High School
Oratorical Contest.

_____ Number of Contestants Participated

Post Commander Signature

Post Oratorical Chair Signature

Phone & Email

Phone & Email

Section III – Complete this section ONLY if a County run-off is held!

Completed by County Legion Officer and mailed to District Oratorical Chair

**If there is more than one contestant from each County, there shall be a County Contest to
determine the representative from the County who will advance to the District Contest.**

I, Commander of _____ County
of The American Legion Department of Iowa, do hereby certify that the above-named contestant
was declared by the judges as the winner of this county contest, and is eligible to represent this
county in the _____ District Contest.

_____ Number of Contestants

County Commander Signature

County Oratorical Chair Signature

Phone & Email

Phone & Email

The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest Certification Form – Section IV

To be completed by District Oratorical Chairman; mailed to Area Oratorical Chairman

I, Commander of the _____ District of The American Legion Department of Iowa, do hereby certify that the above-named student is the official contestant of this district and is eligible to represent the Area ____ Contest of The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest.

_____ Number of Contestants Participated

District Commander Signature

District Oratorical Chair Signature

Phone & Email

Phone & Email

Section V - Completed by Area Oratorical Chairman and Forwarded to Department Headquarters

I, _____, Area # ____, of The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest, do hereby certify that the above-named student is the official contestant and is eligible to represent this area in the Department Finals.

Area Oratorical Chairman Signature

Tabulator Chairman Signature

Phone & Email

Phone & Email

Section VI - Completed by Department Chairman

I, _____, Department Chairman of The Department of Iowa American Legion High School Oratorical Contest, do hereby certify that the above-named contestant was declared by the judges as the winner of this Department Contest, and is eligible to represent this Department in the National Contest.

Department Chairman Signature

Tabulator Chairman Signature

Phone & Email

Phone & Email

DATES FOR THE CONTEST

Dates, times, and locations for District and Area Contests can be found online at www.ialegion.org/calendar or www.ialegion.org/oratorical.

Local Contests Must be completed by December 1, 2024

County Contests Must be completed by December 16, 2024

District Contests Must be completed by January 5, 2025

Area Contests Must be completed by January 19, 2025

*Host district indicated by underlining and bold

AREA I – Districts 1, 5 & 6

AREA II – Districts 2, **3** & 4

AREA III – Districts 7, 8 & **9**

Department Finals: Sunday, February 16, 2025, Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines

The American Legion Department of Iowa High School Oratorical Contest will be held Sunday, February 16, 2025, at the Airport Holiday Inn on Fleur Drive in Des Moines, at 8:00 a.m. The Department winner will advance to the National Contest UNK.

2025 National Contest

The 2025 National Finals will be TBD. Quarterfinal and semifinal contests are scheduled for Saturday, TBD with the finals scheduled for TBD.

Awards/Finances

The American Legion High School Oratorical Contest is financed by the Department of Iowa American Legion, The American Legion of Iowa Foundation, and various American Legion Post, County, and District organizations. Post, county, and district awards are the responsibility of the host for their level.

Each participant who appears in an area contest will receive \$50 from the Department of Iowa for expenses. Participants eliminated in the area contests will receive a cash prize of either \$200 (2nd and 3rd place finish) or \$100 (4th, 5th, and 6th place finish). Any restrictions placed on the awards in the Department finals are placed equally on these scholarships.

Each participant in the Department Oratorical Contest will receive \$100 from the Department of Iowa American Legion for expenses. The Department Oratorical Contest pays \$2,000 (1st place finish), \$1,500 (2nd place finish), and \$1,000 (3rd place finish) respectively.

COVID-19 Guidelines

In the event COVID-19 protocols are put in place by the Governor of the State of Iowa, the American Legion of Iowa will abide accordingly. Mitigation strategies will be posted on the Department of Iowa's website (www.ialegion.org/oratorical) should this be the case.

**The American Legion Department of Iowa
Oratorical Committee
2024 - 2025**

Frank Andrew
Department Vice Chairman
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Bob Waugh
Chairman
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First District Chairman

Roger Hopwood
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Second District Chairman

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Fourth District Chairman

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Fifth District Chairman

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Sixth District Chairman

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Seventh District Chairman

Amy Muse
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Eighth District Chairman

Gary Schmitz
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Ninth District Chairman

James Kessler
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jmkessler71@gmail.com

Assigned Topics for 2025 Oratorical Contest

<https://www.legion.org/oratorical/topics>

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 VII

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 XVIII

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XXVI

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Oratorical Contest
ABOUT ORATORICAL CONTEST
HOW TO PARTICIPATE
ASSIGNED TOPICS
STATE AND LOCAL CONTESTS
NATIONAL FINALS
NATIONAL CHAMPIONS
PHOTO GALLERY
VIDEOS
VOLUNTEER TO HELP
RESOURCES
CONTACTS