



# Oratorical

---



# What is the Oratorical Program?

- The Oratorical Program is a function of the American Legions' "Americanism Pillar". The Oratorical Program is a constitutional speech contest for high school students, and it offers scholarships upwards of \$18,000. The contest has a prepared oration and an assigned topic which is assigned the day of the contest. The prepared oration must be on some aspect of the Constitution, with emphasis on a citizen's duties and obligations to our government. The same subject and oration used in the department contest must be used in the national contest.



# What is the purpose?

- The purpose of the contest is to develop knowledge and appreciation of the United States Constitution, the ability to think and speak clearly and critically, and the acceptance of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.
  - The purpose of the assigned topic discourse 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 contest meets guidelines of the Ohio High School Activities Association. The Legion contest is a partner with the National Speech & Debate Association, and the honor society for high-school students.
-



# Awards

## Department

- 1<sup>st</sup> place- \$2,500.00
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place- \$1,500.00
- Remainder of Contestants-  
\$2,500.00 Divided

## National

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place- \$18,000.00
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place- \$16,000.00
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place- \$14,000.00
  - First Round Participants- \$1,500.00
  - Second Round Participants-  
Additional \$1,500.00
-



# Organization

The contest is supervised by the Oratorical Commission of up to fourteen members appointed by the Department Commander.

The final authority on all aspects of the contest is the commission.

The state is divided into fourteen districts.

Each District Commander appoints County Chairs and a District Chair. Each Chair cooperates with the local schools and Legion Posts to promote the program; to supervise generally the contests in the area; and, in addition, to preside at the particular contest he or she chairs.

---



# Eligibility

- All contestants shall be citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States, bona fide students under age 20, and presently enrolled in grades 9 through 12, in a Ohio high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, home or private).
  - Contestants must either be legally domiciled in, or attend school within, Ohio.
  - Contestants may enter the contest in only one state. The three finalists in the National Finals cannot compete again at any level.
-



# Sponsorship

- Contests are sponsored and financed by Legion Posts throughout the State. Posts sponsor and assist the contestants from their local high schools. Posts of each county unite to sponsor the county champion at the district contest. Posts in each district sponsor the district winner at the Department contest.
  - Contests are open to the public, with no admission charge. Schools and the public, generally, are invited to cooperate with the Legion in promoting this patriotic enterprise.
-



# Certification of Contestants

- High school (or home school) may select, by any reasonable method, a contestant to represent the school. High school (or home school) contests are preferred in order to increase participation.
  - Each contestant, to advance, must be certified the winner of each prior contest beginning with the high school (or home school). Certification must be made in writing to both the COMMISSION Chair and the CHAIR of the next contest.
  - If a contest has only one contestant, that student advances to the next higher level. If a winner is disqualified, withdraws, or cannot compete, then the runner-up may advance.
  - Certification forms, supplied by the Commission, assure proper, uniform certification of contestants. Other written certifications are acceptable if equivalent information is provided.
-





# Prepared Oration

- Each contestant shall deliver a prepared oration, which must be an original effort. Plagiarism may cause disqualification. The oration must address some aspect of the Constitution of the United States, which emphasizes the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. A student shall use the same subject for the oration throughout all contests. Possible subjects include:
    - •An American Citizens Rights and Responsibilities Under The Constitution
    - •Our Constitution - Worth Having, Worth Defending
    - •The Constitution in a Changing World
    - •The Constitution in Our Everyday Life
    - •The Bill of Rights - Reciprocal Rights and Duties
    - •The Constitution - Guardian of the People's Rights
-



# Prepared Oration

- The oration in all contests, must last between eight and ten minutes. The same oration must be used by the state winner in the national contest. The orations need to go to the contest chair prior to the speech. The title of the oration is announced by the contest Chair before each oration.
  - Quotations must be clearly indicated. If quotations exceed ten words, the author's name shall be given both orally and in the manuscript. All speeches are delivered in English (except for short phrases from other languages). Singing is not permitted (although songs may be quoted).
-



## Assigned Topic

- Contestants in the district, county, and state contests give an Assigned Topic Discourse, in addition to a Prepared Oration. The discourse lasts between three and five minutes. The oration quotation rule must be observed. The discourse tests the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of research, and the ability to relate the topic to the basic principles of the Constitution. All contestants speak on the same topic, drawn during the contest.
  - Amendment III
  - Amendment VIII
  - Amendment XIV, Section 3
  - Amendment XXV, Section 4
-



# Delivery Time

- Prepared Oration- Not less than 8 minutes, not more than 10 minutes
  - Assigned Topic- Not less than 3 minutes, not more then 5 minutes
  - If a contestant uses less than the minimum or more than the maximum time, a penalty of one point for each minute (or fraction thereof) is deducted from the contestant's total score.
-

Department Oratorical Contest

Sunday March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Department Headquarters

Volunteer Opportunities

**Christie White**

Americanism and Children and Youth Coordinator 60  
Big Run Rd Delaware, OH 43015

(740) 362-7478 [programs@ohiolegion.com](mailto:programs@ohiolegion.com)

**John Looker**

Chairman, Oratorical Commission

(513) 290-4511 [jclooker1@gmail.com](mailto:jclooker1@gmail.com)

## Department Contest and Contacts

