

# AMERICAN LEGION



## **2025**

# **Department of Washington Oratorical Contest**



To: Post, District, and Area Oratorical Chairs

From: Carol Reed, Department Oratorical Chairman

Subject: Oratorical Program

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Thank you all for being involved in the High School Oratorical Contest. I know some of you have some experience and know what an inspiring effort this is; and to those that are new, I can tell you that the more you talk to others the more you will enjoy the experience.

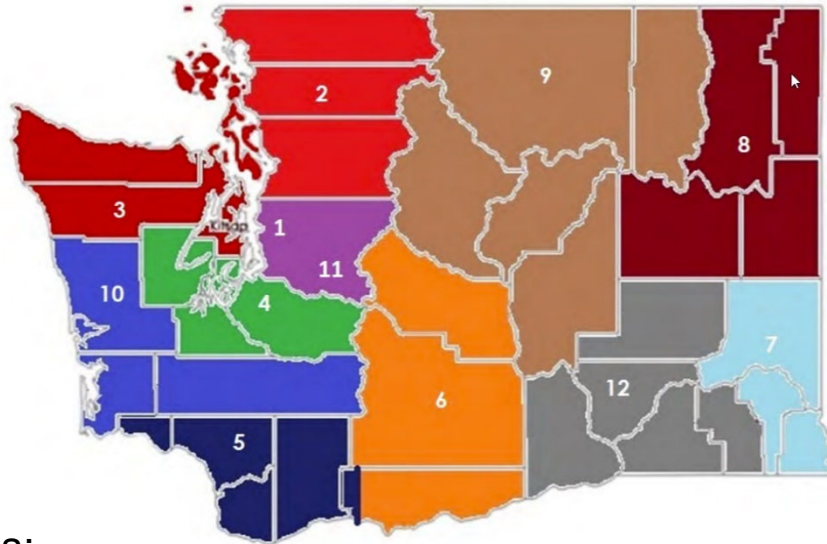
This guide was developed to provide you with the necessary tools to promote the contest and conduct a certification event. For a new person, it can seem daunting. We have tried to keep the guide organized and easy for you to find the answers you need, but always feel free to call, text or email me with a question.

Attending the contest is the very best way to learn and I encourage you to find a Post or District near you where you can see a certification event in action. I also suggest you do a dry run of a certification event on your own, reading through the entire script and getting your friends or family to be actors so you can figure out where you want them to stand or walk and where the flag will be and when they will salute. A little practice goes a long way towards giving a more polished contest.

Thanks again for getting involved!

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Department Chairman  
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## Areas & Districts



### Areas:

- 1 – Districts 1, 2, 11
- 2 – Districts 3, 4, 5, 10
- 3 – Districts 8, 9
- 4 – Districts 6, 7, 12

### Districts:

- 1 – Seattle & Vashon Island
- 2 – Island, San Juan, Snohomish, Skagit & Whatcom Counties
- 3 – Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap & North Mason Counties
- 4 – Pierce, South Mason & Thurston Counties
- 5 – Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania & Wahkiakum Counties
- 6 – Kittitas, Klickitat & Yakima Counties
- 7 – Asotin, Garfield & Whitman Counties
- 8 – Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane & Stevens Counties
- 9 – Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant & Okanogan Counties
- 10 – Grays Harbor, Lewis, & Pacific Counties
- 11 – King County (outside the City of Seattle)
- 12 – Adams, Benton, Columbia, Franklin & Walla Walla Counties

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# INTRODUCTION

This guide has been developed to help with organizing and conducting a successful recruitment at the Post, District, and Area levels for the Oratorical Contest. Here in Washington State, we conduct the actual contest over a single weekend. We will accept all qualified and certified applicants without limitation to which Post, District or Area they are being sponsored from. This guide is offered as an aid, and Chairs should be familiar with the rules and information contained herein.

The students have worked very hard to prepare their speeches and compete and we aim to give them the best possible contest and opportunity.

As a local chairperson, you will need to provide the initiative to get the students interested and ready to compete. Delegate when you can and work smarter, not harder by using technology to reach more people. Ask questions and ask for help or advice along the way. We are all in this together for the enrichment of the students.

## ORATORICAL CONTEST DATES AND AWARDS

### Department Contest Dates

All contestants and chaperones will arrive the Friday of the contest weekend. All contestants and chaperones will stay at the official contest hotel.

A mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will take place Friday evening of the contest weekend. All contestants and chaperones will depart for home on Saturday afternoon after the final contest.

Hotel accommodations will be directly paid by the Department of Washington – a shared room for each contestant and their chaperone to attend the Department Contest. Upon successful completion of the contest, the contestants are supplied a voucher to be filed for reimbursement of a mileage allowance to help defray the cost of traveling to Moses Lake.

Department Contest	March 29, 2025
Pre-Contest Briefing for Contestants	March 28, 2025
Certification Deadline	February 15, 2025
Application Deadline	February 4, 2025

## Department Contest Scholarship Awards

The scholarship awards listed below will be made at the Department level and awarded to the respective winners.

First Place	\$2,000
Second Place	\$1,500
Third Place	\$1,000
Fourth Place	\$ 500

## National Contest Dates

The 2025 National Finals will be May 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> in Hillsdale, Michigan at Hillsdale College.

Pre-Contest Briefing for Contestants	May 16, 2025
Quarter-Final Round	May 17, 2025
Semi-Final Round	May 17, 2025
National Finals	May 18, 2025

All contestants and chaperones will arrive the Friday of the contest weekend. All contestants and chaperones will stay at the official contest hotel.

A mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will take place Friday evening of the contest weekend. A banquet honoring all contestants will be Sunday afternoon, following the National Championship contest. All contestants and chaperones will depart for home later that afternoon.

Travel and hotel accommodations will be paid by the National American Legion travel office for each contestant and one chaperone to attend the National Contest. More detailed information can be found at [www.legion.org/oratorical](http://www.legion.org/oratorical).

## National Contest Scholarship Awards

First Place	\$25,000
Second Place	\$22,500
Third Place	\$20,000

Contestants who take part in the National Quarter-Final round competition receive a \$2,000 scholarship. Contestants who take part in the National Semi-Final round competition receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship, except the 3 winners who advance to the National Finals.

# ASSIGNED TOPICS FOR 2025 CONTEST

## 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.

# WHAT DO THE CONTESTANTS PREPARE?

## The Prepared Oration

The prepared oration must be on **some aspect of the Constitution of the United States with emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to our government.** The same subject and oration used in the Department contest must be used in the National contest. The prepared oration must be the original effort of each contestant and presentation should be at least eight minutes but not longer than 10 minutes in length.

This aspect of the Constitution is the choice of the contestant but should have a strong emphasis on the obligations of citizens to their government. Contestants should not use their name or home city/state in their oration as the contest judges should not know this information before they have completed judging all contestants.

The Prepared Oration must be delivered in the English language. Contestants may have a hard copy of their oration in the first holding room to study but must give the copy to the holding room monitor when exiting the room to give their Prepared Oration. Cell phones or tablets are not allowed. In the prepared oration, as well as in the assigned topic discourse, quotations must be indicated as such.

Where quotations are more than 10 words in length, the author's name must be given in the manuscript and cited orally. Signing is not allowed and will result in immediate disqualification. The contestant may, however, quote a verse(s) of a song, provided proper attribution is made.

A hard copy of the Prepared Oration should be given to the Department Oratorical Chairman at the Pre-Contest Briefing on Friday evening. The Prepared Oration given should remain largely the same at each level of the contest though minor changes are allowed.

## The Assigned Topics

The assigned topic discourse must be at least three but not more than five minutes in length. 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 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.

The topic will be on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States as listed under assigned topics at [www.legion.org/oratorical/topics](http://www.legion.org/oratorical/topics).



All contestants at each contest level are required to speak in the English language on the same assigned topic. It is acceptable to utilize or incorporate short phrases of a foreign language into the prepared oration and/or assigned topic in order to develop the argument, establish a point, etc. It is to be understood that the vast majority of the prepared oration and/or assigned topic must still be delivered in the English language.

If multiple contests are taking place at the same time, an assigned topic is drawn separately for each contest. Therefore, the contestants in different contests will likely be speaking on different topics during this phase of their respective contests.

## **CONTESTANT ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible participants in The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest shall be citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States.

The three finalists of the national contest are ineligible for further participation at any level.

All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of twenty (20) years on the date of the National Contest who is presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or state accredited home school), in which the curriculum is considered to be of high school level, commencing with grade nine (9) and terminated with grade twelve (12). Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest. Homeschooled students are welcome to participate.

Further, to participate in the Washington State Contest, students must be residents of the State of Washington. Students whose parents are legal residents of another state must participate in that state's contest.

## **CONTEST ATTIRE**

- Appropriate business attire is required for all contestants.
- Uniforms (school, JROTC, etc.) are NOT permitted.
- Contestants should not wear awards, medals or ribbons from previous competitions or from other clubs or organizations; nor should they wear school pins.
- A flag lapel pin is acceptable.

# APPROPRIATE CERTIFICATION VENUES

It is important that certification is held in a suitable location that is family friendly. You can host it at your local Post, a library, or a local school. No certification contest should be hosted at or near a bar. Your audience members are students and parents, and we strive to give them a setting that is healthy, comfortable, and welcoming.

If you want to host your certification at the Post and the room you are using has a bar, the bar should be closed until all students and parents have left the premises. Alcohol cannot be served while students and parents are present. If students must walk through the bar area to reach the presentation room, then the bar should be closed for business until the contest is over.

The Department encourages you to hold your contest at a public place as it will naturally draw more attention to the contest. Also, when several American Legion members show up with hats and uniforms to watch a contest, it shows the community more about who we are and what we do. Rural communities have fewer options, but we do encourage you to be creative.

If your venue has a raised platform for the contestants to stand on, that is ideal. It is recommended, but optional. If there is no platform, consider marking off an area on a stage or floor so that all students stay within the marked area.

## Suggestions For Contest Venues

Schools	Garden Clubs
Community Colleges	Community Theaters
Museums	Civil Clubs
Historical Settings	Certain Military Installations
Community Centers	National Guard Units
Senior Centers	Armories
Public Libraries	Arboretums
Zoos	Women's Centers
Botanical Gardens	Legion Posts

# PROMOTING THE CONTEST

One of the most challenging aspects of being an Oratorical Recruiter is successfully promoting the contest. This is especially true when schools may not allow visitors and students may be taking classes from home virtually. It is essential to use social media and digital platforms to promote our contest.

Here are some suggestions about ways or places to promote the contest, but ultimately, it is up to you to decide how to reach your target audience in your local area.

Your Post/District/Area Facebook Page	
Your Post/District/Area Twitter Account	
Your Post/District/Area Instagram Account	
Your Post/District/Area Website	
Radio Public Service Announcements	See Attachments
Place posters in places where students congregate	See chairman resources page on the <a href="https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org">https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org</a> website for posters
Emails (counselors, teachers & students)	Check local school websites for contact info
Phone calls (teachers & counselors)	Check local school websites for contact info
School clubs: JROTC, Speech & Debate, Key Club, Junior Achievement, etc.	Check local school websites for contact info
Homeschool Support groups in your area	<a href="https://washhomeschool.org/resources/support-groups-co-ops/">https://washhomeschool.org/resources/support-groups-co-ops/</a>
Teacher Workshops	Check with your local school board
Libraries/Grocery Stores/Big Box Stores	Put a poster on the public bulletin board
Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)	Put an announcement on their Facebook page
Evergreen Boys/Girls State Delegates	
Boy or Girl Scout Troops	
Washington Forensic League	<a href="https://www.forensicscommunity.com/index.php?q=league/washington-forensics">https://www.forensicscommunity.com/index.php?q=league/washington-forensics</a>
Toastmasters Juniors	<a href="http://www.toastmasters.org">www.toastmasters.org</a>
Future Farmers of America	<a href="https://www.washingtonffa.org">https://www.washingtonffa.org</a>
Article to school newspaper	See Attachments
Listed on school website under scholarships	Contact career counselor (website search)
Morning announcement at schools	

# CONTEST POLICY STATEMENTS

The following policies are set forth by the Department Oratorical Committee. These policies are in effect and shall be adhered to for all contests held in the state of Washington.

1. The National High School Oratorical Contest rules prevail at all levels of the Department contest.
2. Any qualified student who is a permanent resident of the state of Washington may enter the Oratorical Contest if he or she is sponsored by a Legion Post, Auxiliary Unit, SAL Squadron, or Riders Chapter.
3. Certification of contestants should be forwarded to the Department Chairman immediately following the respective local certification event. These forms may be hand delivered, sent by email, or via USPS mail. Each local Recruiter should keep a copy of the forms and send the original to the Department Chairman.
4. At your local certification event the contestants may, or may not, be at a point of having their speeches finalized and memorized. Cut them some slack here if they need to check their notes – they still have a month to get their speech fully memorized. They should be reminded that at the State Contest no notes will be allowed and prompting by parent, judges or audience members will result in immediate disqualification of a contestant.
5. It is okay for the contestants to be in the room to hear each other's presentations at your local certification event.
6. Props of any kind are not allowed. It's okay to gesture toward the U.S. Flag, but contestants may not touch it during their presentation.
7. All local certification events should be held in local Posts, high schools, or other appropriate facilities. Some additional suggested venues are listed in the guide under the topic Appropriate Venues.
8. The script should be followed exactly as written so that each contestant will have experienced the contest as it will be conducted at both the Department and National contest levels. If you wish to make a custom introduction or conclusion you may, but once your contest starts, we request you follow the script exactly as written.
9. We suggest that certification events with only one contestant still be conducted under regular contest conditions and rules to give the contestant an opportunity to experience the contest in full.
10. For volunteers working directly with students, a local background check is recommended but not required. However, at no time shall a volunteer,

Legionnaire or Oratorical committee member be alone with a student in a closed room. Also, at no time shall a Legionnaire touch a student, except to shake hands. There should be no hugging or putting an arm around a student's shoulder or waist before, during or after the contest, including photographs. We expect our Legion members to be above reproach when dealing with students who are typically minors or very young adults. If a background check is completed, it is at your local Post's expense.

## INSPIRATION & RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

One of the best ways to learn more about the Oratorical Contest is to watch videos of past winners. Here is Benjamin Crosby, Washington's 2016 National winner from Burlington, WA:

<https://youtu.be/etCZOpMuoEw> (prepared oration)

<https://youtu.be/f39XorSYVFQ> (assigned topic)

Here is Aubrey Jane Moore, Washington's 2024 National winner from Renton, WA:

<https://youtu.be/DkEICeHervE> (prepared oration)

<https://youtu.be/J3GJ88SMX3E> (assigned topic)

## Podcasts

**Presidential.** A Podcast by Lillian Cunningham. In 45 episodes, notable historians and journalists explore the character, leadership and legacy of each of the American Presidents.

**Constitutional.** A Podcast by Lillian Cunningham. This series explores the Constitution and the people who framed it and reframed it—revolutionaries, abolitionists, suffragists, teetotalers, protesters, justices, presidents—in the ongoing struggle to form a more perfect union.

**More Perfect.** A Podcast by Radio Lab. Season 3 is all about the 27 Amendments and how the Supreme Court got so supreme. Seasons 1 and 2 are just as interesting.

**We The People.** A weekly show of constitutional debate hosted by National Constitution Center President and CEO Jeffrey Rosen where listeners can hear the best arguments on all sides of the constitutional issues at the center of American life.

## Websites Apps & Organizations

[www.Constitutioncenter.org](http://www.Constitutioncenter.org)

[www.ConstitutionFacts.com](http://www.ConstitutionFacts.com)

**National Archives Charters of Freedom:** <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs>

**The Avalon Project:** The American Constitution. A Documentary Record: [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject\\_menus/constpap.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/constpap.asp)

[www.USHistory.org](http://www.USHistory.org)

**C-Span US Constitution Page:** <https://www.c-span.org/classroom/>

**Bill of Rights Institute:** <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/>

**Bill of Rights in Action:** <http://www.crf-usa.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/>

**Annenberg Classroom:** <http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/>

**LikeSo App.** Say It media, Inc. was created to improve communication skills through practice with mobile apps that helps users train against verbal habits, to motivate and track and measure their speech fitness. Only available for iPhone and iPad.

**The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute Great Communicator Debate Series:** <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/education/scholarship-programs/great-communicator-debate-series/>

**The Bill of Rights Institute:** This amazing non-profit educational organization works to engage, educate, and empower individuals with a passion for the freedom and opportunity that exist in a free society. They offer monthly debate preparation webinars, have a huge library of primary source documents, and offer a one week Constitution Academy in Washington, D.C. <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/about-us/institute/>

**Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation:** They host some of the best student debaters in the country at the Coolidge Cup tournament. Their virtual library has speeches, press conferences, primary sources, essays, videos and other artifacts relevant to great oratory. <https://www.coolidgefoundation.org/>

# FORMS & INSTRUCTIONS

## **Sample Cover Sheet For Oration**

# THE AMERICAN LEGION 2025 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL CONTEST

**"Title of your Prepared Oration"**

Your full name, complete street address to include  
city, state and zip code.

Participants will need to bring a printed copy of their Prepared Oration to the  
Department Contest in Moses Lake for the Chairman's records.



# Checklist For Recruiting & Certification

## Before Contest Day

### September

- Begin contacting schools, teachers and youth groups and trying to get students interested in taking part. Flyers can be found on the contest website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org/home/recruiter-resources/>
- Choose your Post Chair or other volunteers to help.

### October

- Promote the contest on your Post/District social media accounts if available
- Send a notice to your local newspaper, radio and TV station to let them know about the contest. Notify schools about the contest. You can use the **Invitation to Compete** as a guide of what to give your news outlets or write your own. This Invitation is attached at the end of the guide.

### November/December

- Continue promoting the contest on social media, TV, radio, to schools, churches, and youth organizations.
- Continue trying to get student contestants.

### January

- Choose your venue making sure it's open on the date and time you want to have your certification. Make sure your date falls before the certification deadline.
- Follow up with evaluators and volunteers and students to make sure everyone knows the certification contest date and see if anyone has any issues.

### February

- Finalize and re-confirm the venue, all evaluators, and volunteers. Check to make sure your venue has an American Flag still in place. A podium is very helpful for the moderator.
- Send signed, original copy of Certification form to the Department Chairman upon completion of the event.

### **Chair needs:**

- The Script
- Certification forms for each contestant
- Four envelopes with the Assigned Topics
- An American Flag if your venue does not have one on site
- Stopwatch(es) for Timekeeper(s)
- Bottled water for the contestants and evaluators

### **Certification Day**

- Arrive early to set up needed tables and chairs.
- Make sure people can find the entrance to the venue and that there is adequate parking. Heavy rains or other inclement weather can unexpectedly flood a parking lot.
- If necessary, mark off an area for the speakers.
- If more than one contestant, prepare your container with the numbers for the contestants to draw their placement.
- As contestants arrive have a volunteer show them around the venue so they can see where the restrooms are and where the event will take place.

### **Order Of Appearance Of Contestants**

- When all the contestants have arrived, a contest official conducts a drawing to decide the order in which contestants appear. This is a random drawing of numbers. The contestants appear in the same order for both the Prepared Oration and the Assigned Topic discourse.
- If a contestant is traveling a great distance and is late due to inclement weather or conditions out of their control (such as traveling by bus), if all contestants agree, the contest can be postponed for a short time to give the contestant time to arrive. Any postponement should not exceed an hour but will be left to the discretion of the Chair.

## **Timekeeper Instructions**

There shall be a timekeeper for the contest located on the main floor and in full view of the contestants as they deliver their orations.

### **Timekeepers shall be equipped with:**

- Stopwatch
- Timekeeper Record Card
- Time Cards Numbered 8, 9, and 10 for Prepared Oration
- Time Cards Numbered, 3, 4, and 5 for Assigned Topic
- Clipboards
- Pencils

The Chair will meet with the Timekeeper prior to the contest. It is recommended that the Time Cards have the large, bold numbers printed on both sides. When a Timekeeper is holding a card up for the contestant to see, then the audience behind the Timekeeper can see which minute mark the contestant is at.

### **Timing Procedure**

1. Begin when contestant begins his Prepared Oration and stop when contestant ceases to speak.
2. Enter exact time consumed (in minutes and seconds) for both the Prepared Oration and the Assigned Topic on the Timekeeper Record Card.
3. Prepared Oration must not be less than eight (8) or more than ten (10) minutes. When eight (8) minutes have been consumed, hold the number 8 card so that it can easily be seen by the contestant for several seconds. Do not wave or move the card from side to side. Repeat when nine and ten minutes have been consumed.
4. Assigned Topic must not be less than three (3) or more than five (5) minutes. Repeat the process explained above, using numbered cards 3, 4, and 5.

### **Reporting Time Consumed**

1. The Chair will advise how you should report time to them.
2. You shall report minutes and seconds consumed.
3. For the benefit of the evaluators, the chair shall announce the time consumed by each contestant for both the Prepared Oration and Assigned Topic immediately after each contestant speaks.

# Timekeeper Card

The American Legion Department of Washington Oratorical Contest

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

POST / DISTRICT / AREA / DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Contestant Number</b>	<b>Time Consumed Prepared Oration</b>	<b>Time Consumed Assigned Topic</b>
Contestant 1	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____
Contestant 2	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____
Contestant 3	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____
Contestant 4	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____
Contestant 5	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____
Contestant 6	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____	Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____

# American Legion Oratorical Contest PSA's

## 30 Seconds

\*\*\*Education ... protecting the foundation of freedom that we as Americans cherish. American Legion Post **(number)** has information on how to earn scholarships for students in **(community)**. Each year, The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program awards over \$203,000 in college scholarships which can provide a stepping stone to further education. For more information contact **(your name)** American Legion Post **(number)** at **(your email address and phone number)**. Visit our website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org> for more information.

\*\*\*College. Money. Two words that go hand-in-hand. It takes a lot of money to pay for a college education. For high school students, there is a way to actually talk your way to college. Each year The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program awards over \$203,000 in college scholarships. Contact **(your name)** at American Legion Post **(number)** at **(your email address and phone number)** for details. Find out today how you can get involved and talk your way to college. Visit our website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org> for more information.

## 20 Seconds

\*\*\*Are you in high school? Planning on college? Need some college money? Then consider talking your way to college. You can earn scholarships if you're a winner in The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program. Contact **(your name)** at American Legion Post **(number)** at **(your email address and phone number)** for details. Talking can pay big dividends. Visit our website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org> for more information.

\*\*\*Do you know someone at your high school who is an excellent speaker? Could this person use a college scholarship? The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program offers students over \$203,000 in scholarships each year. Contact **(your name)** at American Legion Post **(number)** at **(your email address and phone number)** for details. Visit our website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org> for more information.

## 10 Seconds

\*\*\*Talk your way to college? You can earn scholarships if you're a winner in The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program. Want to find out more? Contact **(your name)** at American Legion Post **(number)** at **(your email address & phone number)** or visit our website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org> for more information.

\*\*\*The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program offers students over \$203,000 in scholarships. Contact **(your name)** at American Legion Post **(number)** at **(your email address and phone number)** for details. Visit our website at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org> for more information.

# Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## The American Legion invites high school students to compete in speech contest

*Winners will earn scholarship money and a chance to compete in national finals*

High school students of **(community or name the school)** have been invited by **(name of post, District or Area)** Post No. **(##)** of The American Legion to compete in the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program. The invitation to enter the competition was extended today by Post Commander **(or Post Oratorical Chair)** **(full name and contact information—email and phone number)**.

The certification contest for **(community or name the school)** students has been arranged with the full cooperation of local school officials and **(full name and title)** of the **(school name)** faculty who will assist with the contest arrangements.

This is a multi-level contest where students first compete in one or more levels at the State contest. The winner of the State contest advances to the National Contest held in Hillsdale, Michigan, in May of 2025.

The contest is open to any student in grades 9 through 12, including home schooled students.

To compete, the student must prepare and deliver an original 8-to-10-minute memorized speech about some aspect of the Constitution, with an emphasis on a citizen's duty to their country and government.

In addition to the college scholarships awarded to the top 4 winners of the Washington State contest, college scholarships of \$25,000, \$22,500, and \$20,000 will be awarded to the first through third places in the National Finals. Each state winner who competes in the first round of the national contest will receive a \$2,000 scholarship. Participants in the second round who do not advance to the National Final round will receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship. The top three youth orators who have won all previous elimination rounds of the contest will vie for top honors in the national contest in May in Hillsdale, Michigan.

The American Legion will pay the expenses of state winners to attend the National contest.

High school students in **(community or school)** who are interested in entering the competition will find complete rules and contest information at <https://waconstitutionalspeechcontest.org>