

# THE 2024 AMERICAN LEGION HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM “A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST”

**Contact your local American Legion Post through [www.legion.org/posts](http://www.legion.org/posts)**

## 2024 ORATORICAL CONTEST:

The Oratorical Scholarship Program in Texas will begin in October 2023 when high school students will enter competition to qualify for the National Oratorical Program, with an ultimate award of \$203,500 in scholarships. Posts and schools may hold local contests during the fall of 2023 if they so desire. Whenever possible, it is recommended that the Oratorical Program be presented before the student body of a high school. It is strongly recommended that the National Rules be strictly followed in all contests.

## SELECTION OF CONTESTANTS AND DATES:

1. Each public high school, private school, charter school, and home schooled, with grades 9 thru 12 that is sponsored by their local The American Legion Post, can advance 1 contestant to the district level. Local contests must begin after October 28, 2023, and must be completed by **November 26, 2023**. Contests should be conducted using National rules. **Winners are to be certified by the local American Legion Oratorical Chair/Commander, who will then notify the District Oratorical Chair, and Department of the local winner.**
2. District Contests shall be held on or after November 27, 2023, but not later than January 7, 2024, at such place as may be directed by the District Chair **and the winner certified to the Division Oratorical Chair and department by the District Oratorical chair/Commander.** Contests should be conducted using National rules.
3. Division Contests shall be held on or after January 8, 2024, but not later than February 11, 2024, at such place as may be directed by the Division Chair, **and the winner certified by each Division Oratorical Chair/Commander to Department Headquarters, P.O. Box 140527, Austin TX 78714. [michaels@txlegion.org](mailto:michaels@txlegion.org).** The contest should be held in accordance with national rules. Should the winner decline to participate in the Department Finals for any reason, the first runner-up should then be certified as the participant by the Division Chairperson/commander. Contests should be conducted using National rules.
4. The American Legion, Department of Texas, Oratorical Program Finals, will be held Monday, February 19, 2024 (February 26 ALTERNATE) Contest **WILL** be conducted using National rules.

## SUPERVISION OF CONTEST:

1. The Oratorical Chairperson in charge of each Contest shall have full control and supervision of each Contest and his/her decisions shall be final. The Department Oratorical Chair will direct the Department Contest. Official judging cards, tabulation forms, and timekeeper forms can be found in the Post Oratorical Chair's Guide. Extra forms can be furnished upon request.

## AWARDS:

1. The American Legion Post may present a scholarship or such awards to the winner of the High School Contest as it chooses so long as such awards has **NO** cash value. The scholarship must be paid to the college or university of the student's choice in the student's name to be credited in the student's name once proof of enrollment has been received. A deadline for the payment should be established by the awarding organization.
2. The American Legion, Department of Texas, will award: Each Division winner will receive a certificate for participation in the Department Finals and a medal for their standing in the contest.
3. The Department will award a \$2,000 scholarship to the college of his/her choice; 2nd place - \$1,500 scholarship; 3rd place \$1,000 scholarship; and 4th place \$500 scholarship (provided the winner enters college within 1 year after graduation from high school).
4. The Department Champion will receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship from National provided he/she participates in the Quarter Finals Contest and an additional \$2,000 scholarship from National if the participant advances to the Semi Finals Contest and does not advance to the National Finals. Competitors in the National Finals are awarded scholarships as follows; 1st - \$25,000; 2nd - \$22,500; 3rd - \$20,000.

## FINANCES:

1. The Department assumes no liability for the expenses of any individual contestant in connection with any High School, District or Division Contest.
2. Expenses of .14¢ per mile round trip for contestant and one adult in car for Division winners will be paid by the Department traveling to the State Contest. **(No air travel is authorized.)** Such expenses will be paid to the adult chaperon or to the Post. No monies are to be paid directly to the contestant to protect his/her future eligibility to participate in the University Interscholastic League. Contestant's actual expenses will not be reimbursed.
3. The winner of the Department Contest will represent the State of Texas in the National Contests and expenses for such contestants will be provided in accordance with the National Rules.

## COPIES OF MANUSCRIPT:

1. All Division Winners **MUST** submit one copy of their prepared oration to the Department Chair or their designated representative before competing in the State Final Contest. (This copy is to be forwarded by the Department Chairperson to Department Headquarters for record purposes along with the Chair's written report.)

**See other side for assigned topics.**

## Assigned Topics for 2024 Oratorical Contest

**Amendment II** – A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

**Amendment XXIII** – The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the State, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

**Amendment XXV, Section 3** – Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

**Amendment V** – No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, not be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.