



The George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest

The George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest was originally established and named in honor of President Calvin Coolidge, who won a local SAR essay contest while a student at Amherst. The contest was reestablished in 1988 by Compatriot McCarthy DeMere. In 1995, the contest was renamed the George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest in honor of their generous gift to the SAR to support this contest. The program is designed to give freshman, sophomore, junior and senior students an opportunity to explore events that shaped American history.

Conducted at the Chapter, State Society and National Society levels, the students must submit an original essay with topics based on original research and deal with an event, person, philosophy or ideal associated with the American Revolution, Declaration of Independence, or the framing of the United States Constitution.

Knight Essay Contest Rules

CONTEST RULES

1. ELIGIBILITY, SUBMISSION OF ESSAYS and DEADLINES

The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) invites all high school students (9th through 12th grades) interested in the American Revolution to participate in the George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest. The contest is open to all students attending home schools, public, parochial, or private high schools in that same grade range.

In Alaska the contest is conducted in two phases: the state-level society, and national phases. Alaska's State Chairman is Mr. Tom Rollman. All essays must be submitted to him by January 31, 2025, via email (tomrollman@yahoo.com) in PDF format. Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year. The first place national winner is not eligible to participate in the contest again. A committee of SAR members from Alaska will select a 1st,

2nd, and 3rd place winner. The 1st place winner's essay will be submitted to the National contest

State Chairmen must submit their winning essays and the national contest entry form to the National Chairman no later than February 15th.

The National Chairman will notify all state chairmen who submitted an essay whether their entry was among the finalists by early April. The national winners will be informed in order to be able to attend the Congress. The first-place national winner will read the winning essay at the Youth Awards Luncheon. The winning essay will be published in The SAR Magazine.

2. ESSAY SUBJECTS and RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

The topic of the essay shall deal with *an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, or the framing of the United States Constitution*. The essay must be based upon no less than *five references*, at least *three of which must be published works*. References to an encyclopedia or Internet websites are acceptable, but will not satisfy the requirement that at least three references be published works. If there are no published references, the essay will be disqualified. Plagiarism will be grounds for immediate disqualification as well as use of AI tools.

3. ESSAY FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Contest entries must be submitted as PDF files attached to emails. The essay must have four parts: 1) title page, 2) essay pages, 3) bibliography or works cited, and 4) applicant's biography. The title page, bibliography, and applicant's biography **must be listed and e-mailed on separate pages** and no reference to the applicant's name or information can be part of the essay pages or bibliography. Please follow these rules exactly. Essays that do not conform to the rules may be immediately disqualified.

1) Title Page – The title page must include the following:

- Title of the Essay
- Applicant's name, grade, address, phone number & email
- Applicant's high school's name, address & phone number
- Statement on how applicant learned about the contest (if from the Internet, include the URL of the website)

2) Essay Pages – The essay must:

- Minimum of 800 and a maximum of 1,200 words (excluding title page, footnotes, bibliography, page and biography)
- First page must include the title
- No applicant information is on the essay pages
- 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced
- Use 8 ½" by 11" paper with 1" margins on all sides

- Essay pages are numbered sequentially, starting with “1”
- No graphics, special covers or bindings are allowed

3) Bibliography pages – The bibliography must:

- Citations in the essay and references in the bibliography must be in accordance with a widely used, publicly available citation system (Examples include the Chicago Manual of Style, the MLA Manual of Style, & the MHRA Style Guide)
- The bibliography must specify the system used
- No applicant information is in the bibliography
- Minimum of 5 references, 3 of which must be published works (encyclopedias or internet sources are acceptable but not considered part of the 3 published works)

4) Biography page - The biography must:

- Limited to one page.
- Includes academic awards and achievements, school activities, community activities and plans for college.

4. JUDGING CRITERIA

Essays which meet the criteria above will be accepted and judged equally on the following criteria:

- Historical accuracy
- Clarity of thought
- Organization and proven topic
- Grammar and spelling
- Documentation

5. AWARDS

The **State of Alaska Society Awards** are as follows:

- **First place:** \$500 and a medal with a recognition certificate
- **Second Place:** \$250 and a recognition certificate
- **Third Place:** \$100 and a recognition certificate

The National Society awards are as follows:

- **First place:** \$6,000; a medal with a recognition certificate; up to \$1500 toward travel expenses to attend the Annual SAR Congress.

- **Second Place: \$3,000** and a recognition certificate.
- **Third Place: \$2,000** and a recognition certificate.
- **Fourth and Fifth Place: \$500** and a recognition certificate.

6. AFFIDAVIT OF ORIGINAL SCHOLARSHIP AND HISTORICAL ACCURACY

In addition to the essay submission, entrants must submit an Affidavit of Original Scholarship and Historical Accuracy (attached to this e-mail). This form must be signed by both the entrant and a trusted essay reviewer such as a teacher or counselor, attesting to the fact that the essay is factually accurate and the sole work of the writer. Also, that no AI tools were employed, such as ChatGPT and the like. This form shall be scanned and emailed along with the final essay submission.

7. PUBLICATION and ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS

The winning essay of the national contest will be submitted for publication in the SAR Magazine. Participants in this contest agree that their essay may be published in the SAR Magazine and on the SAR Knight Essay Contest webpage. Winning essay participants, on all levels, may be required to supply a tax identification number in order to receive their award. By entering this contest, all participants agree that if their essay is chosen as the national winning essay, it will be the property of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). All participants further agree that the national winning essay may not be submitted to any other contest or used for any other purpose without the express permission of the national SAR Knight Essay Contest Chairman.

8. NSSAR DECISIONS ARE FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO REVIEW

Applicants in the Knight Essay Contest agree that the interpretation of the rules and decisions of the National Chairman and its judges must govern without reservation and that decisions of the judges and/or the National Chairman are final and not subject to review.

Questions regarding specific rules may be directed to the National or State Chairman.

National Chairman:

Mr. Ernie Coggins
coggins.sar@gmail.com

Alaska State Chairman:

Mr. Tom Rollman
tomrollman@yahoo.com
907-441-4341