THE AMERICAN LEGION, Department of Missouri, during this school year, again sponsors an Oratorical Contest for high school students in Missouri. 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 contest meets guidelines of the Missouri State High School Activities Association and appears in the Advisory List of Contests and Activities, of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The Legion contest is a partner with the National Speech & Debate Association, the honor society for high-school students (formerly the National Forensic League).

AWARDS

The Department of Missouri awards the following medals and scholarships at State Finals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Place</td>
<td>Gold Medal</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Place</td>
<td>Silver Medal</td>
<td>$1,800.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Place</td>
<td>Silver Medal</td>
<td>$1,600.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th Place</td>
<td>Silver Medal</td>
<td>$1,400.00</td>
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<th>ZONE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Place</td>
<td>Gold Medal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Place</td>
<td>Silver Medal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Bronze Medal</td>
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<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Place</td>
<td>Silver Medal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Place</td>
<td>Bronze Medal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>County award</td>
<td>Brooch</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
If a high school contest is held, the sponsoring Post should award the winner a bronze medal, available from Department Headquarters, P.O. Box 179, Jefferson City 65102 at $12.50 each.

Contestants in the National Finals receive scholarships of $18,000, $16,000, and $14,000 for the top three places.

State winners who participate in first-round National contests receive $1,500 scholarships.

Second-round National participants (who do not make the finals) receive additional $1,500 scholarships.

Some colleges including Drury University give additional scholarships based on participation in the Oratorical Contest.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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<td>District</td>
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<td>Zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Finals</td>
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2019 - 2020 NATIONAL CONTESTS

National contests are April 17-19, 2020, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Missouri sends one contestant to the first of the three National rounds. The top three national finalists earn berths in Original Oratory at the National Speech & Debate national tournament.

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
The oration in all contests, except the State Finals, must last between five and six minutes. The oration in the State Finals must last between eight and ten minutes. The same oration must be used by the state winner in the national contest. 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 DISCOURSE

Contestants in the district, zone, 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 from the four listed in the section "Assigned Topics" below.

DELIVERY TIME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prepared Oration</th>
<th>Assigned Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Less Than</td>
<td>Not More Than</td>
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<tr>
<td>School, County</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>6 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>District &amp; Zone</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>6 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Finals</td>
<td>8 min.</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
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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.
Amendment XII

The Electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate; — The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted; — The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President. — The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

Amendment XX

Section. 1. The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

Section. 2. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section. 3. If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President
Vice President shall have qualified.

Section. 4. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

Section. 5. Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

Section. 6. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

Amendment XXIV

Section. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

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

Amendment XXVII

No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

ORGANIZATION

The contest is supervised by the Oratorical Commission of nine members appointed by the Department Commander. The final authority on all aspects of the contest is the commission.

The state is divided into four zones:
Zone 1 - Legion Districts 1, 2, 8 and 9
Zone 2 - Legion Districts 3, 4, 5 and 7
Zone 3 - Legion Districts 6, 15, 16 and 17
Zone 4 - Legion Districts 10, 11/12, 13 and 14

Each District Commander appoints County Chairs and a District Chair. The Commission appoints the four Zone Chairs. 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 Missouri high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, home or private). Contestants must either be legally domiciled in, or attend school within, Missouri. Contestants may enter the contest in only one state. Students who graduate early may compete if not enrolled in a college, university, trade school, or other institution of higher learning on February 23, 2020. The three finalists in the National Finals cannot compete again at any level.

SPONSORSHIP

Contests are sponsored and financed by The American Legion Department of Missouri, Inc., and the Legion Posts throughout the State. Posts sponsor and assist the contestants from their local high schools. If no Post is near a high school, or if a contestant is not sponsored by a Post, then the Commission, upon request, will assist the contestant. Posts of each county unite to sponsor the county champion at the district contest. Posts in each district sponsor the district winner at the zone contest, while Posts of the zone sponsor the zone champion at the State Finals in Jefferson City.

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. Constructive criticisms and suggestions are considered by the Commission at its annual meeting.
CRITERIA FOR SPEECHES

Before the contest, each Judge should study the scoring of the Prepared Oration and Assigned Topic, as indicated by this scorecard:

Name of judge _________________________________
Date __________________
Number of Contestant 1 2 3 4 5 6

A. Content
1. Was the speech original, fresh, and direct, applying the student's knowledge?

2. Did the student skillfully select examples, descriptions, analogies, and specific data?

3. Was the speech logical, well organized, and developed?

4. Did the student show a comprehensiveness of knowledge of the subject matter?

B. Speaking Skills
1. Did the student use volume, rate, pitch, and diction effectively?

2. Rate the speaker's style: language use, word arrangement and selection, and transitions.

3. Were body actions -- poise, eye contact, posture, gestures, facial expressions -- appropriate?

Prepared Oration Assigned Topic

| Prepared Oration | 12 pts. |
| Assigned Topic   | 4 pts.  |

Penalties:

- 1 point for each minute (or fraction thereof) over or under allotted time
- 1-10 points for failure to speak on the Constitution

Rank each Contestant 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
METHODS OF JUDGING

Zone and state contests have five judges. Lower contests may have three or five judges. Judges should be trained or experienced in public speaking, and (preferably) previously judged speech contests. Judges should not have judged a prior contest including the contestant or be employed by a school represented by a contestant. Arrangements for judges are made by the Chair of each contest, who should brief the judges before the contest. A judge should not discuss anything about the contest with a contestant before the contest. During the contest, judges are seated in different locations. Each judge individually ranks the contestants without consulting anyone else. Judges must use and follow the scorecard in the section "Criteria for Speeches" above. If the prepared oration or assigned topic ignores the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen, the contestant may be penalized up to 10 points. Judges also downgrade contestants if parts of the assigned topic discourse appear memorized. The Judges, Timekeepers, Tabulators, and Chair, following the last speech, may proceed to a private room for final review and tabulation. Tabulators check each scorecard and then tally the rankings. The contestant receiving lowest total rankings (not total points) is the winner. (For example, if contestant #1 receives two firsts, two seconds, and a third on the judges’ score cards, the total score is 9. If contestant #2 receives two firsts, two seconds, and a fourth, the total score is 10. Though contestant #2 receives two firsts, the total score of 10 places second.) In contests with five judges, if two contestants have the same rankings total, the tie is broken by the rankings of the five judges for the two contestants. One contestant wins by three judges’ Record of Choice – comparing only the rankings of the two top contestants. Total points do not break a tie between two contestants. If three (or more) contestants receive the same rankings total, the tie is broken by the highest total points from all judges. Total points are used only when three (or more) contestants tie on total rankings. In the rare case of a tie on points as well as on rankings, the judges will meet, compare scores and arrive at consensus rankings, which are final.
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. If a substitute contestant would delay the contest, the contest shall proceed among available contestants. Certification forms, supplied by the Commission, assure proper, uniform certification of contestants. Other written certifications are acceptable if equivalent information is provided. Electronic certification is available for high schools or home schools at http://www.missourilegion.org/oratorical.htm

OTHER CONTEST RULES

- **Publicity** – The names of contestants may be released to the media for publicity purposes. Interviews or photographs of contestants are prohibited before the contest. No publicity shall be given to the judges before the contest, who are introduced only after announcement of their decision.

- **Broadcasts** – Television and radio recording is permitted if the normal speaking voice of the contestant is not interfered with or amplified within the auditorium, the lighting and other conditions are the same for all contestants, and provided the Legion is not obligated financially. Satisfactory arrangements for recording must be made in advance with the Chair of the contest and with the person in charge of the building. Recording shall not change the contest schedule, nor distract the contestants. Any other electronic/digital data gathering, receiving and/or transmitting equipment shall not be used by contestants or audience members during the contest.

- **Copies of Prepared Oration** – Contestants in the district, zone, and state contests shall give the Chair two printed copies of their prepared oration, which clearly show the title. Contestants may possess and consult a copy of their oration until exiting the holding room to speak, when they must leave the copy in the holding room.

- **Dress** – Contestants shall not wear uniforms, or awards and medals from previous competition. Business attire is recommended for all contestants. Notes and Rostrums – Contestants may not use notes, speaker’s stands, or amplification systems while speaking. Prompting is not allowed, nor props of any kind.

- **Applause** – The Chair at each contest shall try to prevent applause until all contestants speak, so that speakers are judged on merit. Order of Speaking –
Contestants speak in the order determined by a drawing conducted with the Chair, who will refer to the speakers only as Number 1, Number 2, Etc.

- **Announcement of Winner** – The Chair does not introduce the contestants by name until after the judges have finished all scoring. The Chair shall announce only the first-place winner and alternate, or only those contestants receiving actual awards.

- **Timekeeper** – The Chair names an official timer to keep an accurate time record of each contestant. The timer shall sit on the main floor in full view of the contestants. The timer has a stopwatch and timecards with the figures 3, 4, 5 and 6. Timing starts when the contestant starts speaking. When 5 minutes pass in the Prepared Oration, the card with the figure “5” is placed in full view of the speaker, followed by the “6” card at the end of 6 minutes. During the Assigned Topic, the timer uses cards with the figures 3, 4 and 5. (Timecards with the figures 8, 9 and 10 are used for the Oration in the State Finals.) The Chair announces the time immediately after each speech, for the benefit of the judges. The Chair also announces penalty points then, if any.

- **Escorts** – Immediately before the prepared orations, all contestants enter a separate room with an Escort appointed by the Chair, so the other orations cannot be heard. Contestant #1 then returns to the platform for delivery of the oration, following which he or she retires to the separate room. Each student in turn speaks and returns to the separate room, then all contestants return together to the platform

- **Assigned Topic** – Immediately before the last prepared oration, the Chair places in separate envelopes the actual words of the four Assigned Topics and asks someone in the audience to draw one. The Article or Amendment drawn is the topic for all contestants but is not then announced. The Chair reads the topic to the judges and audience after the last oration.

- **Assigned Topic Preparation** – Approximately five minutes before delivery of the assigned topic, contestant #1 is first shown the topic and taken to a private room, with an escort who ensures that the contestant does not consult anything except the actual words of the topic. Each contestant is called in order of previous appearance. Each, also in turn, is shown the topic and escorted to the private room for five minutes, just like contestant #1.

- **Tabulators** – The Chair appoints at least three Tabulators to compile and check the judges’ scorecards before handing them to the Chair. The Chair and the Tabulators shall not divulge the judges’ scorecards to anyone at the site of the contest. Persons interested in the scoring, for professional purposes, may request, from the commission Chair, copies of the scores of a contestant (with judges’ names omitted).

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**Judge Duane Benton**  
Chair Oratorical Commission  
P.O. Box 179  
Jefferson City MO 65102-0179  
(573) 893-2353