

The Society of the Cincinnati  
in the State of Virginia



1783

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# History Essay Contest for College Scholarship

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## HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST

The Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia announces an essay contest open to any Virginia high school or homeschooled senior who will attend any four-year college or university in Virginia beginning in the fall of 2026. The Society of Cincinnati will award scholarships of up to \$4000 to the authors of up to four essays that are judged to be the most outstanding. The number and amount of all scholarships awarded will be determined by the contest judges based on the overall quality of all entries.

### ESSAY TOPIC

Each year the essay concerns a historical document or event that played an important role in the establishment of our nation. Past essays have included topics such as the Virginia Declaration of Religious Freedom, the Westmoreland Resolutions and the Virginia Act of Cession. This year's topic will be **"The Significance of Washington's Spies in the American Revolution."**

### ESSAY PERSPECTIVE

The essay should be written for the benefit of someone who has never studied the American Revolution and should address who these spies were and how they influenced the outcome of the war.

### AWARD CRITERIA

A team of judges will select the winners based on the following criteria:

1. **Originality:** freshness and unique application of knowledge of the topic
2. **Organization:** structure of the essay, arrangement of ideas and information in a logical sequence, and effective transition between key points.
3. **Development:** appropriate use of supporting materials and effective application of historical context.
4. **Style:** grammar, choice and arrangement of words, clarity and overall logic and flow.

## PROHIBITED USES OF AI

Writing any part of the essay text, generating a thesis or arguments, paraphrasing or summarizing sources or performing historical analysis is strictly forbidden.

**EVERY SENTENCE OF THE  
ESSAY MUST BE THE STUDENT'S  
OWN WORK**

## CONTEST RULES

Entries should be limited to 1,500 words, excluding citations, and should be typed, with double spacing and one-inch margins, on one side of white letter sized paper (8 1/2" by 11"). Each submission should be an original essay written for this competition. All quotations or paraphrases must be appropriately cited in footnotes. Entrants may discuss the development of their essays with peers, parents, and/or teachers, but essays must be the work of the contestants themselves. No editorial assistance is permitted. Winning essays become the property of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia.

## AWARDS

The Society will award up to four scholarships of \$4,000 to \$6,000 each to those whose essays are judged, based on the criteria set forth above, to be the most outstanding. The Society will notify award winners by mail or telephone by May 15, 2026, and they will be recognized at a luncheon in late May or early June.

## ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINE

Two (2) copies of each entry must be mailed with a completed application form to:

Mr. Frank T. Sutton, IV  
1209 Balustrade Blvd  
Richmond, VA 23226

Entries must be postmarked by **Friday, March 14th, 2026.**



1783

The Society of the Cincinnati was formed in May of 1783 on the banks of the Hudson River by George Washington and his officers. They created the Society as a fraternal charitable and patriotic order whose original goals were to pressure the Continental Congress to provide pay that was overdue, and to perpetuate the bonds of friendship they had formed over eight years of fighting together to create their new country.

As these soldiers prepared to become private citizens again they took the name of the Roman patriot, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus. In the fifth century B.C., this original citizen-soldier had put down his plow and picked up his sword to lead the army of Rome to victory over the Barbarians. After the victory, Cincinnatus refused all honors and returned to his farm. Our forebears followed his example as they left their homes, families, businesses and farms and fought for their, and our, freedom, and as they established the fundamental principle of civilian rule over the military in their new country.

Today, the Society of the Cincinnati has over 3,600 members, all descendants of the original officers of the continental and French armies and navies, who served under the command of General Washington during the Revolutionary War. The fourteen constituent Societies, those of the thirteen original states and France, form one Society of Friends. The Society of the Cincinnati operates museums and libraries and provides scholarships, grants and awards. Since 1783, we have worked to make all Americans aware of our proud heritage, so that we today, and those of us to come, will continue to preserve and improve our great nation.

### APPLICATION

Weedon Memorial High School Essay Contest

Sponsored by

The Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Last Nickname

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip Code

Home Telephone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal/Headmaster: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Virginia college/university you will be attending: \_\_\_\_\_

#### - CONTEST RULES -

Entries should be limited to 1,500 words, excluding citations, and should be typed, with double spacing and one-inch margins, on one side of white letter sized paper (8 1/2" by 11"). Each submission should be an original essay written for this competition. All quotations or paraphrases must be appropriately cited in footnotes. Entrants may discuss the development of their essays with peers, parents and/or teachers, but essays must be work of the contestants themselves. No editorial assistance is permitted.

I understand and have complied with the rules set forth above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature Date

Please send the completed application form and two copies of your essay, postmarked by Friday, March 14th, 2026 to:

Mr. Frank T. Sutton, IV  
1209 Balustrade Blvd  
Richmond, VA 23226  
suttonk11@verizon.net