

26-27
Scholarship
THEME

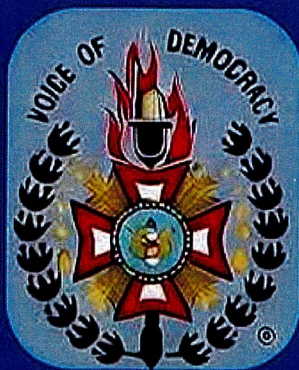


VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

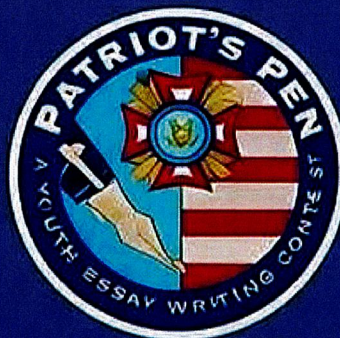
"WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA"

The VFW is dedicated to promoting patriotism and investing in our future generation. If you are a democracy-loving high school student interested in a \$35,000 college scholarship or a patriotic middle school student interested in winning \$5,000, these VFW scholarships may be for you!

WHO CAN ENTER



Voice of Democracy
open to high
school students
in grades 9-12.



Patriot's Pen
open to middle
school students
in grades 6-8.

HOW TO ENTER

Contact your local VFW Post for details and applications.
Prizes and scholarships can be earned at the Post, District, State,
and National levels.

WIN \$35,000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP OR
WIN \$5,000 PATRIOT'S PEN!

Introduction to VFW Voice of Democracy Program

Since 1947 the Veterans of Foreign Wars premier scholarship program was introduced. Each year nearly 26,000 high school students from across the country compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives. These scholarships and prizes can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme is, **"WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA"**.

The voice of democracy is open to high school students, grades 9-12. Student must be enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States. Students must be the sole author of their essay. Inappropriate use of ChatGPT or other AI tools is not allowed. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence. Students may enter one competition at V.F.W. Post 6250, Sterling Heights. The deadline for entries at the post level must be in the hands of post by midnight Oct. 31, 2026.

Students should record their original 3-5 (+ or – 5 second max.) audio in MP3 format (no videos) on a flash drive, or other electronic device. You will submit the recording, a typed essay and the completed entry form (student and parent/guardian sections) to your school instructor, administrator or directly to the local VFW program chairperson listed below. Student's essays should be anonymous. Please do not include your name, address, school name or any other personal identifiers in your essay. Avoid references to your race, sex, religion, national origin that could reveal specific characteristics that could reveal your identity.

V.F.W. Post 6250 V.O.D chairman Ray Nadolski cell 248-705-3794

2026-2027 Official Entry Form

Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Age

Jacket Size

School Name, City, State

Teacher's Name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

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Parent/Guardian Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian Email

Participant Agreement for Students Advancing to National Level

If selected as a first-place state winner, I have the consent of my parent/guardian and school to attend the Founding Forward Spirit of America Leadership trip to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania as a guest of the VFW National Organization. In consideration for permission to participate in the National Voice of Democracy Competition ("Competition") I do hereby, for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the Competition and/or arising out of any travel related to the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my audio file, essay, name and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

I Have Read and Understand the Rules and Participant Agreement

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have not inappropriately used any AI tools or Chat GPT. I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature
RAY NADOLSKI

Post #

#6250

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

VELOCITY CENTER 18 MILE

City, State, Zip

STEALING HEIGHTS, 48314

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating

No. of winners advanced to District

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairperson Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature

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Daytime Phone

Email

The winner ☒ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first place Department winner on

For assistance contact:

816.968.2787

Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact:

Phone:

Best Time To Call:

Alternate Contact:

Phone:

Best Time To Call:



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Revised 0/2026