

2025 RULES AND REGULATIONS  
88th ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL  
ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP  
PROGRAM

[www.azlegion.org/programs](http://www.azlegion.org/programs)



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA  
[oratorical@azlegion.org](mailto:oratorical@azlegion.org)  
Department of Arizona Commander  
Manny Beltran

Paul G. Johnson, Chairman  
Department Oratorical Committee  
The National Contest Rules Govern  
Department Contests (See National Contest  
Brochure) <http://www.legion.org/oratorical>

THE DEPARTMENT of ARIZONA PRIZES  
ARE  
AS FOLLOWS:

First Prize - \$1700.00 plus an additional \$2000.00  
scholarship upon participation in the First  
Round of the National Finals in Hillsdale,  
Michigan.

All Contestants at the Department Finals  
receive Cash Scholarships.

The Department (State) Oratorical champion  
will automatically advance into the National  
American Legion Oratorical Competition. The  
FIRST and SECOND ROUNDS of the  
National Contest will be held on May 16-18,  
2025, Hillsdale Michigan

The NATIONAL FINALS will be held on  
Sunday, May 18, 2025, followed by a banquet  
honoring all the contestants. 1st Place \$25,000,  
2nd Place \$22,500, 3rd Place \$20,000

INQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO:

The American Legion  
4701 N. 19th Avenue, Ste. 200  
Phoenix, AZ 85015-3799  
(602) 264-7706  
[oratorical@azlegion.org](mailto:oratorical@azlegion.org)  
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Tom Core  
(913) 240-6474  
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Area "B" Chairman

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ALA Chairman

Lisette Eckman  
(520) 360-3656  
[lisette.eckman@gmail.com](mailto:lisette.eckman@gmail.com)  
ALR Chairman

ENTRY FORM:

Students may submit the proper Entry  
Form to participate in the program between  
October 2024, and January 31, 2025. Apply  
online at  
[www.azlegion.org/programs/oratorical](http://www.azlegion.org/programs/oratorical).

ORGANIZATION

The contest will be under the direct supervision of  
The American Legion Oratorical Committee,  
appointed by the Department (State) Commander.  
Final authority on all issues raised shall remain with  
the Committee.

LOCAL, DISTRICT, AND AREA CONTESTS

Students will compete multiple times. Contests are  
progressive, will be held during the months of late  
February - March, (your choice of weekends) but  
must be completed on or before MARCH 22, 2025.

The locations of each student's contests are based on  
where they attend school. The dates and locations  
vary throughout the state. **CONTACT THE  
CHAIRMAN OF YOUR DISTRICT FOR DATES  
AND LOCATIONS OF YOUR CONTESTS AS  
SOON AS POSSIBLE!**

The State is divided into American Legion "Districts  
and Areas" as follows:

Area A: (Southern AZ) Districts 2, 3, 4, and 5  
Area B: (Phoenix Metro and Yuma) Districts 1, 11, 12  
Area C: (Northern AZ) - Districts 6, 7, 8

EACH AREA SENDS TWO CONTESTANTS TO  
THE ARIZONA FINALS.

THE ARIZONA FINALS CONTEST  
Will be held on Saturday, March 29, 2025. A  
maximum of two contestants from each "Area"  
compete in the Finals. A monetary award will be  
given to all contestant reaching the finals

The winner of this Contest will compete in the  
National Finals in Hillsdale, Michigan, May 16-18,  
2025.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible participants in The American Legion High  
School Oratorical Scholarship Program must be  
citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the  
United States. All contestants must be bona fide  
students herein described as any student under the  
age of twenty (20) years on the date of the National  
Finals Contest, who is currently enrolled in high  
school (public, charter, parochial, military, private, or  
home-schooled) in which the curriculum of said high  
school is considered to be of high school level,  
commencing with grade nine (9) and terminating

with grade twelve (12). Students must be enrolled in high school during the time of participation at any level of The American Legion National High School Oratorical Scholarship Program.

### PREPARED ORATION

All contestants shall be required to deliver a PREPARED ORATION, which must be the original effort of each contestant, and must require not less than eight (8) nor more than ten (10) minutes for delivery. It must be delivered in the English language. Singing is NOT allowed. Before the contestant starts their oration, they will give the title of their Prepared Oration to the Chairman of the Contest. Quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than ten words in length, the author's name must be given both orally and in the manuscript. The penalty for plagiarism will be disqualification. The Prepared Oration must be based on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. The same Prepared Oration is to be used throughout all levels of the Contests.

### ASSIGNED TOPICS FEATURE

All contestants must participate in both the Prepared Oration and the "ASSIGNED TOPIC" features at all levels of the Contest. The Assigned Topic discourse must consume not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) minutes for delivery. The Prepared Oration quotation rule must be observed. The purpose of the Assigned Topic feature is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of his/her research, and the ability to discuss with minimal preparation the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution. Each contestant speaks on the same topic, which is drawn by the Contest Committee at the Contest. By action of the National Americanism Commission, the Assigned Topics to be used in this year's contest are the following:

### 2025 ASSIGNED TOPICS

#### AMENDMENT I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

#### AMENDMENT VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

#### AMENDMENT XVIII

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited. Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation. Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

#### AMENDMENT XXVI

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age. Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

### CONTEST REGULATIONS

~~DRESS~~-Business attire is required. (No Tennis Shoes)

~~ORDER OF APPEARANCE~~-Contestants shall draw for the order in which they appear, the drawing to be conducted by the Chairman, who will introduce the speakers as Number 1, 2, etc.

~~NOTES AND ROSTRUMS~~-The use of notes, amplification, lectern or speaker's stand by contestants, or prompting in any manner, is not permitted. Props are not permitted. Singing is not permitted.

**THE PREPARED ORATION AND ASSIGNED TOPICS MUST BE COMMITTED TO MEMORY.**

### DEPARTMENT OF AZ PAST CHAMPIONS

2024 Mary Sanapu, IIEA, Phoenix  
2023 Kaleb Rasor, BASIS Oro Valley  
2022 Kaleb Rasor, BASIS Oro Valley  
2021 Hannah Shin, BASIS Oro Valley  
2020 Caleb Doerksen, Verrado HS  
2019 Cassandra Lawson, BASIS Oro Valley  
2018 Kylie Cochran, Scottsdale  
2017 Juliana Martinez, Pusch Ridge  
2016 Elizabeth Baxter, AZ Lutheran  
2015 Chetan Bafna, Kofa High School  
2014 Chetan Bafna, Kofa High School  
2013 Alex Kate Halvey, Pusch Ridge  
2012 Rachel Moses, Home Schooled  
2011 Rachel Moses, Home Schooled  
2010 Nicholas Everetts, Fountain Hills H.S.  
2009 Clayton Masterman, River Valley H.S.  
2008 Michael Fleming, Mesa H.S.  
2007 Ronni Stirling, Coronado H.S.  
2006 Michele O'Shea, Cactus H.S.  
2005 Michele O'Shea, Cactus H.S.  
2004 Michele O'Shea, Cactus H.S.  
2003 Thomas Joraanstad, Brophy Preparatory  
2002 Thomas Joraanstad, Brophy Preparatory  
2001 Thomas Joraanstad, Brophy Preparatory  
2000 Sarah Joraanstad, Xavier Preparatory  
1999 Joshua Deahl, Mountain View H.S.  
1998 William Self, Mountain View H.S.  
1997 Katherine Forrest, Mountain View H.S.  
1996 Kaleen Love, Mountain View H.S. -  
1995 Shira Shafir, Sunnyslope H.S.  
1994 Shira Shafir, Sunnyslope H.S.  
1993 Soraya Ali-Akbarian, Sunnyslope H.S.  
1992 Jimi Jo Story, Mingus H.S.  
1991 Michael Wawro, Sunnyslope H.S.  
1990 Jamie Lee Wagner, Chaparral H.S.  
1989 Mark Light-Orr, Deer Valley H.S.  
1988 William Gates, Deer Valley H.S.  
1987 William Gates, Deer Valley H.S.  
1986 Matthew Ortega  
1985 Steven R. Houbek  
1984 H. David Preston  
1983 James F. Ireland  
1982 Matthew Fitzgerald, Casa Grande H.S.  
1981 Matthew Fitzgerald, Casa Grande H.S.  
1980 Bartholmew Fitzgerald, Casa Grande H.S.  
1979 Victoria Fimea  
1978 Randi-Jean Hedin  
1977 Thomas R. Harrell  
1976 Arleen Armstrong  
1975 Sari Lisa Horwitz  
1974 Joyce Helen Weaver  
1966 Ronald T. McCoy, Phoenix AZ  
1938 John Jansen, Nogales AZ