

Announcement of 2015 High School Scholarship Essay Contest

Open to High School Seniors in Sacramento and Surrounding Counties

Total Scholarship Awards \$15,000

Sponsored by the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility

Note: Deadline for entry is 11:59 PM on Wednesday, March 11, 2015

- **Essay Topic**

- Students may enter the 2015 PSR/Sacramento Scholarship Essay Contest by submitting an original essay of 500 words or fewer describing their thoughts about the statement, "The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded," by United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon.

- **Contest Eligibility and Rules**

- Contestants must be high school seniors attending school in Sacramento County or in one of the following surrounding counties: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, San Joaquin, Solano, Sutter, Yolo, or Yuba.
- Contestants must be in good academic standing and on track to graduate in 2015. (Students who entered high school on track to graduate in 2015, but who graduated earlier are also eligible.)
- Contestants are encouraged to discuss the essay topic with teachers, parents, friends, and other mentors, but each contestant must write the essay himself or herself, in his or her own words.
- To enter the contest, students must submit their essays and demographic information via the online entry system available on the PSR/Sacramento website at www.sacpsr.org.¹
- Essays may include a title and footnotes, but these elements are not required. Titles and footnotes do not count toward the 500 word limit.
- All essays must be accompanied by an essay contest signature form which includes the contestant's name, town or city of residence, phone number, email address, and high school; the name of a parent or guardian; a statement signed by the contestant documenting that the essay being submitted is the original work of the contestant; a statement signed by the parent or guardian indicating that the parent or guardian approves of the student's participation in the scholarship essay contest; and a statement by a school official confirming that the contestant is a student in good standing, on track for graduation from

¹ An exception to this rule will be considered for students who do not have access to a computer and the internet. If students are not able to submit their essays online, they must contact PSR/Sacramento by telephone at 916-955-6333 or by U.S. mail at 10 Dumfries Court, Sacramento, CA, 95831 at least two weeks prior to the contest entry deadline to arrange an alternate method of submitting their essays and demographic information.

the 12th grade in 2015. A blank essay contest signature form is available on the PSR/Sacramento website and is also appended to this announcement. The completed essay contest signature form may be scanned into PDF format² and sent by email to essaycontest@sacpsr.org, or it may be sent by U.S. mail to: PSR/Sacramento, 10 Dumfries Court, Sacramento, CA, 95831.

- The deadline for online essay and demographic form submission is 11:59 PM on Wednesday, March 11, 2015. Essay contest signature forms must also be submitted by email by 11:59 PM on March 11, 2015 or postmarked on or before March 11 if sent by U.S. mail.
- Late entries will not be accepted unless the delay was caused by a malfunction of the PSR/Sacramento server.
- **Selection of Scholarship Winners**
 - The PSR/Sacramento Steering Committee will establish a panel of PSR members and other qualified individuals in the community to judge essays based on originality, clarity, cohesiveness, and overall impact. Essay readers will be blinded to student demographic information. The panel will select 10 finalists and two alternates by Monday, April 13, 2015. The 10 finalists and two alternates will be contacted by email and/or telephone at the email address and/or telephone number provided with their contest entry forms.
 - The top 10 finalists will be invited to present their essays orally at a dinner open to the public on the evening of Sunday, April 26, at the Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Boulevard, in Sacramento. Dinner will begin at 6 PM, and essay presentations will follow.
 - Finalists must participate in the April 26 finals dinner presentation to be eligible for scholarship awards. Finalists must confirm by Sunday, April 19 that they will be participating in the April 26 finals event, or an alternate finalist may be invited in their place.
 - A panel of judges selected from the community will listen to the essay presentations at the dinner and will ask one question of each finalist concerning his or her presentation. Finalists will be given up to three minutes to respond to the judges' questions. Following all presentations and questions, judges will choose first, second, and third place winners, based on the combined quality of the essay presentations and the responses to the judges' questions.
- **Contest Prizes (Total \$15,000)**
 - First place winner will receive a \$3,000 scholarship; second place a \$2,500 scholarship; and third place a \$2,000 scholarship
 - The other seven contestants participating in the April 26, 2015 final judging event will each receive \$1,000 scholarships.
 - If all of the top 10 finalists participate in the finals dinner presentation, the two alternate finalists will both receive \$250 scholarships. If one or more of the top 10 finalists cannot be present at the finals dinner and an alternate

² Due to computer compatibility issues, essay contest signature forms submitted in other electronic formats may not be accepted.

finalists takes his or her place, the alternate finalist will instead receive a minimum of a \$1,000 scholarship and will be eligible for the first, second, or third place awards.

- Scholarship money may be applied toward any education-related expenses upon matriculation at an accredited college or university. Essay contest winners may also apply awards toward tuition for certain other post-high school educational programs, including trade schools, following review and approval of the proposed curriculum by the PSR/Sacramento Steering Committee.

Summary of Essay Contest Timeline

- Deadline for entering contest is midnight on Wednesday, March 11, 2015.³
- 10 finalists and 2 alternate finalists will be contacted by email and/or telephone Monday, April 13, 2015.
- Deadline for finalists to confirm that they will be able to participate in essay contest finals dinner is Sunday, April 19, 2015.
- Essay contest finals will be on Sunday, April 26, beginning at 6 PM.

For additional information or questions, email essaycontest@sacpsr.org or call (916) 955-6333.

³ Students who are unable to submit their essays and demographic information online must contact PSR/Sacramento by telephone or U.S. mail by February 25, 2015, to arrange an alternative method of submitting their entries.

