

INQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO:

The American Legion
4701 N. 19th Avenue, Ste. 200
Phoenix, AZ 85015-3799
(602) 264-7706
oratorical@azlegion.org
Paul G. Johnson
(623) 399-0633
pjchef2000@gmail.com

Craig Barnes
(602) 469-1225
commanderqc129@gmail.com
Area "A" Chairman

Jim Borgman
(847)456-1843
jaborgman9@gmail.com
Area "B" Chairman

Jeri Strande
(928) 301-9581
jeristrande21@gmail.com
Area "C" Chairman

Jim Borgman
(847) 456-1843
jaborgman9@gmail.com
SAL Chairman

Wanda Amado
(623) 251-1709
lenwanamado@gmail.com
ALA Chairman

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

ENTRY FORM:

Students may submit the proper Entry Form to participate in the program between October 1st 2026, and January 31st 2027. Apply online at www.azlegion.org/programs/oratorical.

2026-2027 RULES AND REGULATIONS
88th ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL
ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM
www.azlegion.org/programs



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA
oratorical@azlegion.org
Department of Arizona Commander
Ross Bergstresser

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 14-16, 2027, Hillsdale Michigan

The NATIONAL FINALS will be held on Sunday, May 16, 2027, followed by a banquet honoring all the contestants. 1st Place \$25,000, 2nd Place \$22,500, 3rd Place \$20,000, Contestant and one guest may accompany to Nationals.

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 13th, 2027.

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 27th, 2027. A maximum of two contestants from each "Area" compete in the Finals. *A monetary award will be given to all contestants reaching the finals*

The winner of this Contest will compete in the *National Finals in Hillsdale, Michigan, May 14-16, 20257*

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:

2026-27 ASSIGNED TOPICS

The Preamble

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article VI Paragraph 2

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Trea-

ties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

Amendment XIV Section 3

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

Amendment XXII Section 1

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

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

2026 Wendy Gluski, Basis, Scottsdale
2025 Tanish Doshi, Basis, Oro Valley
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 Cochrane, 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

