

THIRTY-SECOND “CELEBRATION OF YOUTH” ESSAY CONTEST

CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT, 2020

SPONSOR: **Global Harmony Through Personal Excellence, Inc.**

Our website is: www.globalharmonyexcellence.org

THEME: Write an essay about a topic or an issue that is important to you and affects you in a direct, personal way. Using examples from your own life, show why you care about this. What do you do, or can you do, to let others know that this issue is important in your life? What is the outcome you want?

RESPONSE DATE: **Sunday, May 3, 2020.** Essays must be emailed, postmarked, or hand delivered by Sunday, May 3, 2020.

ELIGIBILITY: Students in grades 4-9 in a DC Public School or Public Charter School.

GUIDELINES:

- * 300 – 500 words (grades 4-6). Typed or neatly handwritten in the student's own handwriting.
- * 450 - 650 words (grades 7-9). Must be typed in easy to read font.
- * Each entry must have the following information: the student's name, grade level, the school's name, and the name and email of a teacher to contact. The telephone number and email of the student are very much appreciated and make things easier, but they are not required.
- * Entries need to address the theme of this essay contest.
- * Entries must be about a true experience from the student's own life.
- * All entries become the permanent property of the sponsor.
- * Email entries must be sent to the correct grade level address.

PRIZES: Winners in each category (grades 4-6 & 7-9) will receive the following cash awards:

First Place	-	\$350.00 and certificate
Second Place	-	\$325.00 and certificate
Third Place	-	\$300.00 and certificate
Fourth Place	-	\$275.00 and certificate
Fifth Place	-	\$250.00 and certificate
Honorable Mention	-	\$100.00 and certificate

Winners will be announced before or on May 16, 2020.

Prizes are scheduled to be awarded May 28 in downtown Washington. Students with prize-winning essays read their essays aloud. Winners and honorable mentions are required to attend the celebration to receive their prize. Winners and their essays will be publicized. Pictures, essays, and videos of the students reading their prize-winning essays may be used on our website and other places to honor and to showcase the success of the students and to promote the contest. If the award ceremony is cancelled due to Covid 19, the awards will be mailed to the schools.

JUDGING: Entries will be judged on writing skills, following the guidelines, clarity, authentic expression, originality, spelling, and neatness. This contest values thoughtful, heartfelt self-expression about oneself and one's life.

ADDITIONAL AWARDS: A **minimum** of twenty-five students will receive an Award of Special Mention in June. Priority will be given to students from schools not represented in the winner and honorable mention categories. These students will be notified by mail. The award includes a letter of congratulations and a \$25.00 check.

CHECKLIST: Questions to ask yourself before submitting:
Did I address the topic? Are my examples and details true?
Does the length of my essay follow the guidelines?
Do I have my name, grade level, and the other required information?
Did I do a spell check? Is my essay as neat as I can make it?
Do I want to have a coach check my essay?

COACHING SUPPORT: The International English Honor Society at UDC provides coaching support for this essay contest to students who request it. Contact Dr. Krauthamer at (202) 274-5626. Her Email is: hkrauthamer@udc.edu.

TO SUBMIT by email: Use the emails below ONLY to submit your essays. **Teachers submitting essays for their students**, please submit essays individually or in groups of no more than 6 essays in one email attachment. **PLEASE put the name of the student in the subject line of the email.**

Grades 4 to 6, use this email: grades4to6.32@globalharmonyexcellence.org
Grades 7 to 9, use this email: grades7to9.32@globalharmonyexcellence.org

TO SUBMIT by mail or in person: Dorothea and Jim Brady
3925 Livingston Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20015-2921

To contact Dorothea or Jim Brady, call (202) 244-1682 between 8:00am and 9:00pm or use Dorothea's email dorotheabrady@globalharmonyexcellence.org

Below is a letter which gives suggestions about the contest.

The Thirty-Second “CELEBRATION OF YOUTH” Essay Contest

is proudly sponsored by

GLOBAL HARMONY THROUGH PERSONAL EXCELLENCE, INC.

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Telephone: (202) 244-1682 www.globalharmonyexcellence.org

Dear Principals, Teachers, and other Dedicated Supporters of Young People,

We would be honored to have your students participate in the thirty-second “**Celebration of Youth**” essay contest. Despite Covid 19, we have decided to offer this writing opportunity as we have every year for over three decades.

This writing competition is open to all young people in grades 4 through 9 who attend a DC public school or a publicly funded charter school. Our tradition is our goal; we want winners from schools across the city. In years past, the winners have come together to read their essays to a gathered audience in May. The ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, May 28th. If the award ceremony is held, attendance is expected by students receiving prizes. We do realize, however, that the award ceremony might be canceled due to Covid 19. If the ceremony is canceled, the prizes will be mailed or delivered to the schools.

The theme, the list of contest guidelines, our phone number, and other information are given on the page that says Contest Announcement. This accompanying letter provides useful information and gives advice about the contest. All this information is posted on our website. We also send out emails and list the announcement in DCPS and DCPCS e newsletters.

We can offer quality support to students who want to enter the contest and want assistance with ideas, clarity, grammar, and overall supervision with their essay. We partner with UDC to offer this assistance. Quality coaches are willing to help students with their essays and are excited to support young people in developing and refining their writing skills for this essay competition. We want to ensure that every eligible student who wants to enter has the necessary support. Too, this coaching opportunity can support teachers who want their students to participate in the contest, but simply do not have the time to devote to this opportunity.

The contest due date is Sunday, May 3rd, 2020. Students may submit their essays by email. Hand delivery and regular mail are also options. The post mark on a mailed submission must be no later than Sunday, May 3, 2020.

Ten winners, five from grades 4-6 and five from grades 7-9, will be chosen. More than twenty-five students will be declared honorable mentions. Students declared Winners and Honorable Mentions will be honored in the last week of May. **At this celebration, the students declared as winners will read their prize-winning essays. To receive their prize, winners and honorable mentions must attend the acknowledgment ceremony.** Parents, teachers, principals, classmates, and the media are invited to honor and to witness the students and their achievements.

We are proud that students from all sections of the city have won and that many of the

eligible schools have participated over the past 31 years. While good writing skills are important, our contest highly values authentic expression. Winning essays show self-reflection. The student might reveal humor or express emotional depth. The winning essays are rich in detail and give personal examples from the student's own life. An essay with an interesting story or a unique approach to the theme can go far in this contest. The student with a prize-winning essay has an honest, clear, and heartfelt way of writing about the topic. Many criteria are taken into consideration, and this gives students who never thought they could express well, a chance to win and be valued for sharing their thoughts and feelings.

For your essay to be competitive, we encourage you to follow the guidelines. Essays which do not address the theme will be disqualified. Essays way too short or substantially over the word limit will not win. One entry per student is the rule.

If teachers have entered students in the past and your students have not won, please do not give up. Different themes speak to different children.

To encourage the participation of students, sometimes a principal will appoint a reading coach, counselor, or particular teacher within the school to coordinate this contest. Teachers might make the contest a writing assignment, an “extra” credit opportunity, or brainstorm with a group of interested students, encouraging them to explore, organize, and personalize the theme. Identifying personal examples can be helpful to the student’s success in the contest. Teachers can help spell check. Or, a teacher can direct the students to a team of coaches we provide.

This is an essay contest that many counselors, coaches, teachers of other subjects, and staff leading after school programs have supported students in entering the competition. Students may enter independently.

Volunteers, coaches, and judges contribute their time and talents to support the children. Past judges have included authors, professional writers, university professors, and members of the press corps. Community leaders, politicians, sport teams, and special figures around the world have praised the children's efforts in this contest. There is support for DCPS/DCPCS children.

We would be honored and delighted to receive entries from your students in the 32nd “Celebration of Youth” essay contest. We hope you participate. Whether you do or don’t participate in this opportunity, we wish you and the students much success and well-being. For the challenging and necessary work you do every day as our city’s educators, we thank you and we salute you. You are invaluable.

With respect, thankfulness, and anticipation,

Dorothea and Jim Brady, and Rebecca Carroll

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