

1. Any student entering the competition must be under the age of 20 years on the date of the National Contest.

2. The student must be presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school), commencing with grade nine and terminating with grade twelve, during the time of participation at any level of the Contest.

3. The student must either live in or attend school in Pennsylvania and can only compete in Pennsylvania.

**4. The student must submit an application to any Pennsylvania Post for sponsorship by November 30, 2025.** A local Post can be found at <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Find-a-Post>.

5. The contest will consist of two parts; an 8 to 10-minute memorized oration on some phase of the United States Constitution and a 3 to 5-minute oration on one of four “assigned topics” selected by the National Organization. These four topics can be found at <https://www.legion.org/oratorical/topics>

6. The contestant may not use any notes, props, amplification or prompts during the oration.

7. A minimum of five judges will judge all contests at the District level and above. Local and County contests may use a minimum of three judges.

8. All contests at the District level and above shall conform with National Contest procedures, rules and regulations. The “assigned topics” shall be used at all levels of competition. National Contest rules can be found at <https://www.legion.org/oratorical>

9. Assigned Tabulators will review and tabulate the judges’ score sheets. The Contest Chair will verify the results and announce the contest winners.

10. The judges’ score sheets, the tabulation forms and the timekeepers’ cards all become the property of the Department of Pennsylvania Oratorical Committee.

11. Barring unforeseen circumstances, any student that enters the Oratorical program **must** be available to compete on the date of the Department Contest and **must** be available to compete at the National Contest from May 15-17, 2026 in Hillsdale, Michigan.

12. The Oratorical Committee has established the following dates **BY WHICH the various contests must be held, if required, and the winner’s name and contact information sent to the next level of competition:** (Dates subject to change. Check with the appropriate competition level to confirm.)

Application to any Pennsylvania Post no later than (NLT) November 30, 2025

School or Post Contest NLT December 28, 2025

County Contest NLT January 11, 2026

District Contest NLT January 25, 2026

Inter-District Contest NLT February 8, 2026

Sectional Contest NLT February 22, 2026

Department Contest ON March 14, 2026

National Contest from May 15-17, 2026

13. The Department Contest will be held in Harrisburg at 10:00 AM on Saturday, March 14, 2026. A banquet to honor the Department Contest competitors will be held on Friday evening, March 13, 2026.

14. The Department Contest in March will be under the direct supervision of the Oratorical Committee; final authority on all issues raised will remain with the Oratorical Committee.

15. The Department winner must be certified with National Headquarters. If for any reason the Department winner is unable to compete at the National Contest, the Department First Runner-up will be substituted, following approval by National.

16. Additional contest resources can be found at <https://www.legion.org/oratorical>



**Application Form**  
**2026 High School**  
**Oratorical Program**  
**Deadline November 30, 2025**

Student First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Middle Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Middle Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

High School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

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**Contact a Sectional Vice Chair with any questions.**

I have read and understand the rules and regulations to participate in the Oratorical Program sponsored by The American Legion, Department of Pennsylvania. I have also read and understand the brochure prepared by The National American Legion and agree to abide by all rules and regulations of both the Department and the National Organization.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Oratorical Program Committee**

**Department Commander: John Fritz**

P O Box 2324, Harrisburg, PA 17105

**Department Adjutant: James “Woody” Hogan**

P O Box 2324, Harrisburg, PA 17105

**Department Oratorical Chair:**

**Michael Cortes**, 1903 W 8<sup>th</sup> St, PMB 284, Erie, PA  
16505 (814) 954-0067

[michael@michaelcortes.com](mailto:michael@michaelcortes.com)

**Sectional Oratorical Vice Chairs**

**Eastern: John Kubitz**, 158 Link Rd,

Fleetwood PA 19522 610-987-9670

[jkfuster@comcast.net](mailto:jkfuster@comcast.net)

**Central: Dorene Meaders**, 215 Nottingham Ln,

Bloomsburg PA 17815 570-854-6050

[punsy307@aol.com](mailto:punsy307@aol.com)

**Western: TBD**

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## AWARDS

### Department Winner

\$7,500.00 scholarship, plaque and all-expense-paid trip to the Department of Pennsylvania State Convention to deliver his or her winning prepared oration, plus the opportunity to represent Pennsylvania at the National Contest and receive an additional \$2,000.00 scholarship from the National Organization.

### Department First Runner-up

\$5,000.00 scholarship and plaque.

### Second Runner-up

\$4,000.00 scholarship and plaque.

# 2026 HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



“A Constitutional  
Speech Contest”

## Rules and Regulations



**PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION**

[www.pa-legion.com](http://www.pa-legion.com)

(717) 730-9100