

# **A Constitutional Speech Contest**

The 2024 Department High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest will be held on March 9, 2024 at 1PM in the Historic Old Courthouse on 51 South University Avenue, Provo, Utah.

## **About the Oratorical Contest**

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students: 9-12 grades. Since 1938, the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

The program has featured numerous politicians and prominent contestants over the years, including former president candidate Alan Keyes, CNN anchor Lou Dobbs, and former Vice President Mike Pence. Young orators earn some of the most generous college scholarships available to high school students.

This year the scholarship award for the first place national oratorical contest winner will increase to \$25,000; the second place national oratorical contest winner will increase to \$22,500;

and the third place national oratorical contest winner increase to \$20,000, for a total of over \$203,500 in scholarships awarded for the annual national oratorical contest of The American Legion. Each department (state) winner who is certified into and participates in the national contest's first round receives a \$2,000 scholarship. Those who advance past the first round receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship. The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States.

The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States. High school students under age 20 are eligible. Competition begins at the post level and advances to a state competition. Legion department representatives certify one winner per state to the national contest, where department winners compete against each other in two speaking rounds.

The contest caps off with a final round that decides the three top finishers. Speaking subjects must be on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with some emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to our government. Speeches are eight to 10 minutes long; three- to five-minute speeches on an assigned topic also are part of the contest.

**The contest starts at the Post level and moves up to the District level. The winners from the districts then go on to the Department Contest.**

- The Utah Oratorical contest will be held in Provo at the Courthouse starting at 1:00 pm on March 9, 2024.
- Contestants must be there at noon. [Click here for Contest Resources](#). This site has all the information that a post will need to run a contest: videos, scripts, briefings, etc. At department we follow the national procedures and highly encourage posts and districts to follow suit so all contestants know what to expect if they make the next level of competition.
- The winners receive scholarships of \$1500 for first place, \$1000 for second place, and \$750 for third place.

**More information** about Oratorical can be found at the [National American Legion Site here](#). And [click here are the National Oratorical Rules](#).

Utah has a Facebook Oratorical page: [www.facebook.com/utlegionoratorical](http://www.facebook.com/utlegionoratorical) -Utah American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Program.

For more information about the Department contest contact Shiela Heindel, Oratorical Department Chair at [seheindel@gmail.com](mailto:seheindel@gmail.com).