

VFW Launches 79th Annual Youth Scholarship Contests

The VFW is now accepting entries for its 79th Annual Voice of Democracy (VOD) and Patriot's Pen essay contest. It allows middle school and high school students to compete for a share of awards totaling nearly \$2.4 million.

The theme for 2025-26 asks students "How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?"

The VOD audio essay competition is open to high school students in the ninth through 12th grades and comes with a \$35,000 National first-place prize scholarship.

First-place VOD Department or state, winners also will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to attend a "Founding Forward Spirit of America Youth Leadership program" at Valley Forge, Pa.

The VFW's Patriot's Pen essay contest is open to eligible sixth, seventh, and eight grade students, with middle schoolers competing for their share of nearly \$1 million in local, state, and national awards and prizes. The national first-place winner receives a \$5,000 award.

Students can submit their entries (along with a completed entry form) to their local participating VFW Post. The deadline for both contests is October 31, 2025.

South Platte Memorial Post 7356 located at 2 Main St., Parkville Mo will accept entries by mail at VFW Post 7356, PO Box 12121, Parkville, Mo 64152, via email at vfw7356@gmail.com or by calling the Post at 816-746-8010 to arrange a time to pick up the entry.

To learn more about the contest and download the entry forms visit <https://www.vfw.org/youthscholarships>.