

## VFW Youth Essay Competitions

Every Year, the Veteran's of Foreign Wars hosts two youth essay competitions. These two competitions have distinct criteria and are based on the educational level of the student competitors. These competitions, named "Patriot's Pen" and "Voice of Democracy" are based on themes that are changed on a yearly basis.

Patriots Pen is for students in grades 6, 7 and 8. To participate, these students write a 300-400 word essay based on the annual patriotic theme. The theme for 2009-2010 is "When is the Right Time to Honor Our Military Heroes?" The National first-place winner receives a \$10,000 savings bond and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington D.C. The top national winners each receive a savings bond anywhere from \$1,000 to \$10,000. To download a copy of the official entry form as well as the contest rules, go to <http://www.vfw.org/resources/pdf/PatriotsPen2010.pdf>

Voice of Democracy is for high school students in grades 9-12. These students present a three to five minute audio essay based on the annual patriotic theme. The theme for 2009-2010 is "Does America Still Have Heroes?" The National first-place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient's American university, college or vocational/technical school. Other prizes include scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$16,000, and the first place winner of each state receives an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. To download a copy of the official entry form as well as the contest rules, go to <http://www.vfw.org/resources/pdf/VOD2010.pdf>

The deadline for both "Patriot's Pen" and "Voice of Democracy" is the 1<sup>st</sup> of November of 2009. That is the date that the essay needs to be turned in to your local VFW post. If you cannot find it in the white pages, go to <http://www.azvfw.org/Post%20Addresses.htm> to find the Post closest to you.