

# Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution George and Stella Knight Historical Essay Contest

The **Sons of the American Revolution** is pleased to sponsor this essay contest for high school students. Here's a brief summary. Use the links at the left to learn more.

**Topic:** Write about an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, or the framing of the United States Constitution.

Or

Put your Civics and American Government course to good use and write on some aspect of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, or the Supreme Court as applied to current times. Essays which explore specific Supreme Court rulings are acceptable.

## The 2012-2013 Contest:

**Deadline:** Send a written copy or email your essay by January 31, 2013

## Prizes:

**First Place: \$500**

**Second Place: \$250**

**Third Place: \$100**

In addition the winning essay from this contest will be sent to the National contest. That contest accepts only 1 entry per state and the prizes are significant. So once you get to that level you're chances of being successful can be high.

Contact the State Chairman, Mr. Stewart, at [uva1965@msn.com](mailto:uva1965@msn.com) for additional information not found in these pages.

## Who can enter?

This contest is open to all students residing in Florida who are United States citizens or legal aliens and who:

- are attending public, parochial, or private high schools (including accredited home schools).
- will be in their sophomore, junior or senior grade of study during the contest year.
- did not win the first place prize at the state level in the previous year.

## How to enter the contest:

### Follow these 3 steps to enter:

1. Read the rules for the contest. Make sure you are eligible to enter and understand the requirements.
2. Write your essay
3. Send your essay by January 31, 2013 to:  
Sons of the American Revolution  
Knight Essay Contest  
1049 Pinellas Bayway S.  
Tierra Verde, Florida 33715-2184

Or email the essay to:

[uva1965@msn.com](mailto:uva1965@msn.com)

*Note: In some areas chapters of the Sons of the American Revolution will be conducting local contests. If you receive information indicating you should enter the local contest, please follow those directions. Otherwise, submit your essay as indicated here.*

### Additional Information:

- The State winner is announced in March. Check this website at that time.

- The State winner is entered into the National Contest.
- The National Winner is announced in June.

## George and Stella Knight Historical Essay Rules 2012-2013

### Entry into the National Society Contest

Usually, the winning essay in the Florida Society contest will automatically be entered into the National Society contest. However, the National contest has more restrictive rules than the Florida Contest, including specific word count requirements, and in some cases it may not be possible to make the winning essay conform to these rules. Upon notification, the winning student will be given the opportunity to make alterations to the work in order to conform to the National contest rules. If this is not possible for some reason, the State Committee reserves the right offer the opportunity to enter the National Contest to the second place essay. Should neither essay be suitable for entry, the State Committee will proceed through the other entries in order of finish until a qualifying essay can be submitted to the National Contest. You can find the [National Rules here](#).

### Submitting an Essay:

Entries may be submitted via post or email.

Postal entries must be postmarked on or prior to January 31, 2013 and mailed to:

Knight Essay Chairman  
1049 Pinellas Bayway S.  
Tierra Verde, Florida 33715-2184

Entries submitted via email should be sent as an attachment in Microsoft Word format. The subject of the email should read, "Knight Essay Entry".

Email the essay to: [uva1965@msn.com](mailto:uva1965@msn.com)

### Judging Criteria and Rules Interpretations:

The essay will be judged on historical accuracy, clarity of thought, the strength of the thesis and proof, organization and flow, grammar and spelling, and documentation. Participants in this contest agree that the interpretation of rules and the decisions of the NSSAR, the FLSSAR and its judges shall govern without reservation.

### Awards:

#### Florida State Society:

First Place: \$500.00  
Second Place: \$250.00  
Third Place: \$100.00

#### National Society: (amounts are subject to change)

First Place: \$2,000.00 a winning recognition certificate; airfare and one night hotel for two at the SAR 119<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress in Atlanta, GA in July 2009.  
Second Place: \$1,000.00  
Third Place: \$500.00

### Publication Permission:

Participants in this contest agree that their essays may be published in the publications and websites of the Florida Society, and National Society.

## Prizes

### National Society:

*(Please note: The National prize amounts are subject to change.)*

First Place: \$2,000 a winning recognition certificate; airfare and one night hotel for two at the SAR Annual Congress (site changes annually)  
Second Place: \$1,000.00  
Third Place: \$500.00

### Florida State Society:

First Place: \$500.00  
Second Place: \$250.00  
Third Place: \$100.00

In addition, the winner may be eligible to compete in the National contest.

## The Contest History:

The Knight Essay Contest was originally named in honor of SAR Compatriot President Calvin Coolidge who won an SAR essay contest while a student at Amherst College. The contest was reestablished in 1988 by Compatriot McCarthy DeMere. In 1995, the contest was renamed the "George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest" in honor of their generous gift to the National Society to support this contest. The contest is designed to give High School students an opportunity to explore the early events that shaped American Revolutionary History.

The Florida Society has conducted a contest nearly every year since the National program was established. In recent years, the state committee has taken steps to improve the contest, concentrating on making it easier for students to enter. The committee is open to suggestions for improving the contest. Use the "Contact Us" link at the left for this purpose.

## Previous Winners

**We congratulate these individuals for their excellent essays.**

2011-2012	Linda Meier
2010-2011	Brooke Wade
2009-2010	Alexander Tasi
2008-2009:	Morgan Finkelstein
2007-2008:	Lauryn Walter
2006-2007:	Jason Byer
2005-2006:	Erik King
2004-2005:	Kathlen O'Neal
2003-2004:	Ian Malinowski
2002-2003:	Claire Horan
2001-2002:	Shannon Rose Enterline
2000-2001:	Mamie Wise
1999-2000:	J. Matthew Lowe
1998-1999:	Anastasia Boutsis
1997-1998:	Jennifer Tutak
1996-1997:	Rita Martin
1995-1996:	David RodrigueS

## Getting Started:

Sometimes the hardest part in getting started is coming up with a topic for your essay. Perhaps the easiest approach is to pick some aspect of the American Revolution you found particularly interesting when you studied it in school.

There are any number of very interesting characters in the drama of our revolution. George Washington, Ben Franklin, and John Adams come immediately to mind, but you might find that an essay written about a lesser known individual might be more interesting to you and, hopefully, more interesting to the judges.

Events are also appropriate so any battle of the revolution is up for consideration. An analysis of the success or failure of tactics and strategies can make for a good essay thesis. But the revolution was more than battles. John Adam's defense of the British soldiers charged in the Boston Massacre is just one example.

If you like to "think the big thoughts" you can pursue a thesis on the ideals of the revolution. For some students this approach would be all but impossible but perhaps you enjoy philosophy and can articulate this type of topic well.

So, give it some thought. Talk to your history teacher. Do some brainstorming.

Once you get a topic you'll need to decide what your thesis will be. Yes, it sounds like your English teacher, but in order to write a quality essay you have to know what main point you want to make. If you don't do this, you'll likely ramble through the essay and the judges will, having finished reading it, ask, "What was that about?"

The rest is basically research and writing. We'll be offering some thoughts about this aspect later this fall.

## MLA Documentation:

If you need assistance with the proper formatting of your essay and the bibliography here are two suggestions that might help.

1. Your high school English teacher: He/she can not only help you with formatting but will likely be able to make some suggestions that will improve the writing and content of your essay. It is always a good idea to have someone proof read your work.
2. Run a web search on "MLA Documentation". You'll put many fine website that give all the information you'll need for your essay. Here's one that we thought was helpful: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>

## Contact Us:

Thanks for your interest in our contest. If you have additional questions, or suggestions by which we can improve the contest, please contact us using one of the methods below.

Via Post:

Sons of the American Revolution  
Knight Essay Contest  
1049 Pinellas Bayway S.  
Tierra Verde, Florida 33715-2184

Via email:

[uva1965@msn.com](mailto:uva1965@msn.com)