

THIRTY-SEVENTH "CELEBRATION OF YOUTH" ESSAY CONTEST CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT 2025

SPONSOR: **Global Harmony Through Personal Excellence, Inc.**
Our web site is: globalharmonyexcellence.org

THEME: Words matter. Write an essay about a time you felt that your words had power. What happened? How did your words affect yourself and others? What did you learn?

RESPONSE DATE: Essays must be received by **Sunday, May 11, 2025.**

ELIGIBILITY: Students in grades 4-9 in a DC Public or Public Charter School.

GUIDELINES:

- * 300 - 500 words (grades 4-6). Typed or neatly handwritten in the student's own handwriting. (If typed, we prefer Word or google doc.)
- * 500 - 750 words (grades 7-9). Must be typed in easy-to-read font.
- * Each entry must have the following information:
 - student's name, grade level, and the name of the school;
 - the name and email of a teacher to contact;
 - student's or parent's telephone number or email is required.
- * Entries need to address the theme of this year's contest.
- * Entries must be about a true experience from the student's life.
- * All entries become the permanent property of the sponsor.
- * Entries may be submitted by email (preferred), regular mail, or hand delivery. Email entries must be sent to the correct grade level address given below and received by the due date above.

PRIZES: Winners in each category (grades 4-6 & 7-9) will receive the following cash awards:

First Place	-	\$400 and certificate
Second Place	-	\$375 and certificate
Third Place	-	\$350 and certificate
Fourth Place	-	\$325 and certificate
Fifth Place	-	\$300 and certificate
Honorable Mention	-	\$150 and certificate

Winners will be announced before or by May 30, 2025.

Winners will be required to submit a video of themselves reading their prize-winning essay aloud. Details will come when the finalists are announced. Prizes will be mailed after June 12. Awardees and their essays will be publicized and may be published in a forthcoming book. Pictures, essays, and videos of the students reading their prize-winning essays may be used on our website and other places to honor the students and their

success. (Please do not enter if you are not willing to make a video of yourself reading your essay aloud, submit a picture of yourself, or have your essay showcased.)

JUDGING: Entries will be judged on writing skills, originality, genuineness, clarity, adherence to guidelines, spelling, and neatness. This contest values thoughtful reflection and honest self-expression about oneself and one's life. (Essays found to be written by AI will be disqualified.)

ADDITIONAL AWARDS: In addition to the prizes listed above, a minimum of twenty-five students will receive an **Award of Special Mention** in mid to late June. Priority will be given to students from schools not represented in the winner and honorable mention categories. **This award includes a letter of congratulations and a \$45.00 check.**

QUESTIONS CONTESTANTS CAN ASK THEMSELVES BEFORE SUBMITTING:
Did I address the topic? Are my examples and details true? Does the length of my essay follow the guidelines? Have I included my name, grade level, and all other required information? Did I do a spell check? Is my essay neat? Do I want to have a coach review my essay before submission?

COACHING SUPPORT: Alpha Epsilon Rho, the UDC Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, provides coaching support for this essay contest to students who request it. Contact Dr. Krauthamer at (202) 274-5626. Her Email is: hkrauthamer@udc.edu .

TO SUBMIT your essay by email: Use the emails below ONLY to submit your essays. **Teachers submitting essays for their students**, please submit essays individually or in groups of no more than 6 essays in one email attachment. **PLEASE put the name of the student in the subject line of the email.** (We prefer essays in Word or Google Doc. format in final form rather than PDF. **Essays become the property of the organization.**)

Grades 4 to 6, use this email: grades4to6.37@globalharmonyexcellence.org

Grades 7 to 9, use this email: grades7to9.37@globalharmonyexcellence.org

SUBMIT by mail or in person: Dorothea and Jim Brady
Global Harmony Through Personal Excellence
3925 Livingston Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20015-2921

To contact Dorothea or Jim Brady, call (202) 244-1682 between 8:00am and 8:30pm or use Dorothea's email drotheabrady@globalharmonyexcellence.org .

THIRTY-SEVENTH "CELEBRATION OF YOUTH" ESSAY CONTEST

March 12, 2025

Dear Principals, Teachers, and all Dedicated Supporters of DC students,

We would be honored to have your students participate in the thirty-seventh "*Celebration of Youth*" essay contest. **Our tradition is also our goal: to recognize winners from schools across the city.** The heart and wisdom in the stories of young people can help us better support them. Through personal reflection, students can see themselves in a new light. This writing competition is **open to all young people in grades 4-9 who attend a DC public school or public charter school.** **Please let eligible students know about the opportunity. We especially want to reach students in grades 7-9** because we have had fewer entries from older students in recent years.

We are proud that students from all sections of the city have been past winners, and that so many schools have participated over the years. Good writing skills are important, but **our contest also highly values authentic expression.** Winning essays show self-reflection; they express emotional depth or reveal humor. They are rich in detail and personal examples from the student's own life. An interesting story written in an honest, clear, and heartfelt style, can go far in this contest. Students who never thought they could express well have a chance to win a prize for writing.

To encourage participation, **teachers might make the contest an "extra credit" opportunity.** They can assist with brainstorming and suggest final edits. Or they can direct students to coaches at the UDC chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society. In partnership with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), coaching assistance is offered to participants who may want some help with ideas, clarity, grammar, or overall guidance. UDC's **Quality Coaches** are eager to help young people and can also support teachers who may not have the time themselves to assist students in this contest. **Students may also enter the contest independently.**

The essay contest due date is Sunday, May 11th, 2025. Winners will be announced by May 30. **Please read Contest Announcement** for contest requirements, which are also posted on our web site. **To be competitive, essays must adhere to the guidelines.** (globalharmonyexcellence.org)

The contest volunteers, coaches, and judges contribute their time and talents to support the children. Past judges have included authors, professional writers, university professors, and members of the press corps. Community leaders have written notes of congratulations to praise the children's efforts. There is support for DCPS/DCPCS children.

We sincerely hope that your students will participate in the 37th "*Celebration of Youth*" essay contest. In all you do, we wish you and your students much success and well-being. **Thank you** for the inspiring work you do every day as our city's educators. You are truly exceptional human beings.

With respect, thankfulness, and anticipation,

Dorothea and Jim Brady, Rebecca Carroll, and Molly Sloss

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