

2011-2012 Optimist Oratorical Contest

Topic: "How my Optimism Helps me Overcome Obstacles"

Who can participate: Students under the age of **18** years as of December 31 of the 2011-2012 school year (December 31, 2011) who have not graduated from high school or the equivalent and who are educated in the United States, Canada or the Caribbean.

When to have your Contest (Set your date early)

- District Contest is set for 3rd quarter board meeting in **Watertown, SD May 4-5.**
- District needs to know your Zone winners by **April 23.**
- Zone contests should be completed by **April 21.**
- Local contests should be held in February, early March, or sooner.

What kind of Club Level Contest do you run?

- A Gender Separate BOY'S and GIRL'S contest. You DO NOT need a minimum number of students to participate in each contest on the Local level. The boy and girl winner of the local contest goes on to the Zone Contest.

What kind of Contest is run at the Zone Level?

- A separate BOY'S and GIRL'S contest is run. You need at least three contestants in each contest. If you have less than 3 Boys or less than 3 Girls, they should be forwarded to the District.
- If you have 3 Boys and / or 3 Girls, the winner of the boy's contest and the winner of the girl's contest advance to the District.
- If your Zone does not have a contest the local club winner(s) need to attend another Zone contest or should be sent on directly to the District.

What Oratorical winners receive?

- Club winners- medallions
Clubs are allowed to give monetary awards of up to \$500 per winner for the Oratorical contest in addition to the official medallions. The Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary. *(First clubs should consult with the association for their state or province that coordinates scholastic activities and competitions to determine if such payments would result in the recipient's forfeiture of amateur status. If a student loses their amateur status they may be unable to compete in collegiate athletics and activities. If you need assistance, ask a local English teacher or Debate coach if they can direct you to the appropriate organization).*
- Zone winners receive a plaque. If a plaque is given, Lt. Govs need to determine how the plaque will be paid for since the District does not provide funds for the plaque.
- Districts winners receive a \$2,500 scholarship. The top Boy and the top Girl in each contest receive a \$2,500 scholarship.

District Contestants must forward an electronic copy of their speech, a written copy of their speech, a copy of their birth certificate and the Zone/Regional/District Entry Form to the District Chair by **April 23rd.**

Support merchandise for this program can be ordered through Promotions Corall at 1-866-739-9555 or www.optimistsales.com. Please check Optimist Web for supportive packets. www.optimist.org/e/member/scholarships4.cfm

When to start your local contest

Begin now as the school year begins

1. Gather a small committee
2. Review Oratorical Club Chair Packet. www.optimist.org/e/member/scholarship4.cfm
3. Determine date and place for the contest (You may need to have microphones and podiums available for the contest. This may determine where you have the event.)
4. Determine what kinds of prizes will be given to winners
5. Design your informational flyers (Make copies of flyers and registration forms)
6. Start to publicize your contest. (See suggested places below)
7. Distribute your information to the contacts you have made.
8. Find three judges and one alternate
9. Choose timekeeper(s) from your club for the contest
10. Choose door monitors from your club for the contest
11. Choose moderator(s) for the contest(s)
12. Order Medallions
13. Review Oratorical Club Chair Packet for any other information you may need. You can also contact your District Chair for help. **Rick Johnson-763-421-8863**

Who to Contact to promote the Oratorical Contest

- Contact the State Department of Education or local school system, ask for a contact name for local home-schooled students, and send contest information to them.
- Contact School Principals, Counselors, and English department heads, Speech/Debate, or Drama teachers who will ensure a good number of entries.
- Contact local youth clubs such as Boy/Girl Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and JOOI (Junior Optimist.) Check with your local Toastmasters. They may have a youth group they are working with. They also are an excellent source for judges and assisting with the contest.
- Contact the local PTA/PTO President to distribute information to parents about contest at a meeting.
- Contact local bookstores, libraries, coffeehouses, recreation centers and places where young people spend time and ask if they will display information about the contest
- Contact your local media. Sample media releases are on the Optimist Web Site.

As a Reminder - Each Club should submit to the next level of competition.

- _____ Zone/Regional/District Entry Form
- _____ Copy of speech
- _____ Copy of birth certificate
- _____ Electronic Copy of Speech (District level only). Speeches to be run through plagiarism program

DMM Oratorical Contest Chair –

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