



Topic

“How My Acts of Service Help Me Understand What My Community Means to Me”

- A complete packet of instructions and the **OI required forms** are available on the Optimist International Website (Click on Member Resources, then Scholarship Contests, then Essay Contest, then 2025-2026 Essay Chair Planning Guide). New rules for “AI” notations.
- Please **email a DIGITAL copy (using Microsoft Word)** of the Optimist Club’s 1st place youth essay, along with the **OI contest required written forms and materials, before February 28, 2026** to Bruce Balfanz at: babalfanz@msn.com. (The **DIGITAL** copy is needed to allow for plagiarism and artificial intelligence scans of the essay).
- DMM Essay Contest judging will be completed by April 1 and club presidents and youth contestants will be notified no later than April 10, 2026.
- If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Bruce Balfanz at babalfanz@msn.com or call at 612-709-6628, please leave message if not answered