



Americans Against Gun Violence
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Announcement of our 2022 National High School Essay Contest

Open to All U.S. High School Students

With \$15,000 in Total Awards

Note: Deadline for students to enter the contest is 11:59 PM on Saturday, April 16

- Essay Topic
 - To enter the 2022 Americans Against Gun Violence National High School Essay Contest, students must submit an original essay of 500 words or fewer describing their thoughts about the following statement made by the late Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger during an interview on the PBS News Hour on December 16, 1991:

“If I were writing the Bill of Rights now, there wouldn't be any such thing as the Second Amendment.... This has been the subject of one of the greatest pieces of fraud - I repeat the word 'fraud' - on the American public by special interest groups that I have ever seen in my lifetime.”¹
- Contest Eligibility and Rules
 - Contestants must be high school students in good standing attending school in the United States or its territories.
 - Students who entered high school on track to graduate in 2022 but who graduated early are also eligible.
 - Americans Against Gun Violence Board members, employees, and paid consultants and their first and second degree relatives are not eligible.
 - Contestants are encouraged to access information posted on the Americans Against Gun Violence website, among other resource materials, and to discuss the essay topic with teachers, parents, friends, and other mentors; but students must write their essays themselves, in their own words.
 - Students who are under the age of 18 must have the consent of a parent or legal guardian to enter the contest.

¹ The interview can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/157433062>. The interview with Chief Justice Burger begins at 7 minutes and 48 seconds into this PBS highlights recording.

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- **To enter the contest, students must submit their essays and demographic information via the online entry system link posted on the [High School Essay Contest page of the Americans Against Gun Violence website](#).**
- Essays may include a title and footnotes, but these elements are not required. Titles and footnotes do not count toward the 500 word limit.
- Only one essay will be considered per student. If a student submits more than one essay, the most recent submission will be the one that is considered.
- The deadline to enter the contest is 11:59 PM in the student's own time zone on Saturday, April 16, 2022. Late entries will not be accepted unless the delay was caused by a malfunction of the Americans Against Gun Violence online entry system.
- ***Selection of Contest Winners***
 - Twelve contest winners will be selected from the essays submitted.
 - The Americans Against Gun Violence Board of Directors will establish a panel of members to judge essays based on accuracy, originality, clarity, cohesiveness, and overall impact.
 - Essay judges will be blinded to all student identifying information.
 - Contest winners will be notified by email by Monday, May 16, 2022.
 - At the time that students are notified that they've been chosen as contest winners, they'll also be sent a signature form that includes the following elements:
 - A statement that the essay submitted is the student's own original work
 - A statement signed by a parent or legal guardian, if the student is under age 18, confirming that the parent or guardian approves of the student's participation in the essay contest
 - A statement by a school official confirming that the contestant is a high school student in good standing or that the student entered high school on track to graduate in 2022 but graduated early
 - Note: If the student's school is not physically in session, documentation such as a student body card or transcript will be accepted in lieu of the signature of a school official as evidence that the entrant is a high school student.
 - In order to receive a monetary award, students must return the signed signature forms within 30 days of being notified that they are contest winners.
- ***Contest Awards (Total \$15,000)***
 - Upon submission of their completed signature forms, the first place winner will be sent a check for a \$3,000 award; second place a \$2,500 award; and third place a \$2,000 award.
 - Upon submission of their completed signature forms, the fourth through tenth ranked winners will each be sent \$1,000 awards, and the 11th and 12th ranked winners will each be sent \$250 awards.
 - If any of the students chosen as one of the top 12 winners don't submit their completed signature forms within 30 of being notified, their awards may be given to other lower ranked entrants.
 - Awards will be sent by check to the home address listed on the students' entry forms.

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- Americans Against Gun Violence reserves the option of also offering additional monetary awards to students not ranked in the top 12 if the essay contest judges feel that their essays are of exceptional quality.
- ***Publication of Essays and Release of Contact and Identifying Information***
 - By entering the contest, students agree to allow Americans Against Gun Violence to publish their essays in part or in whole in any way that the Board of Directors deems to be appropriate, but without any student contact or identifying information linked to the essays.
 - Americans Against Gun Violence will not publish or release any student contact or identifying information without the written consent of the student and, if the student is under age 18, the written consent of a parent or guardian.
 - When the 12 contest winners are notified that they have been chosen as winners, they will be provided with media release forms to indicate to what degree, if any, they wish to have their contact and identifying information released in association with their essays.
 - The responses to the media release forms will not in any way influence the ranking of the contest winners.
- ***Summary of Essay Contest Timeline***
 - The deadline for entering the contest is 11:59 PM in the student's own time zone on Saturday, April 16, 2022.
 - The students selected as the 12 winners will be notified by Monday, May 16, 2022.
 - Students chosen as contest winners must return completed signature forms within 30 days of being notified that they have been chosen as winners in order to receive monetary awards.
 - Award checks will be mailed to the winners upon receipt of their completed signature forms.

For additional information or questions, please email essaycontest@aaqunv.org or call (916) 668-4160.