

**Report from Knight Essay Chairman, John R. Morgan,
prepared for the November 3, 2018 CTSAR All-Member Meeting.**

The CTSAR George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest update is this:

- Last contest year, 2017-18, I mailed 90 Contest Information flyers to schools statewide and received two submissions, both of which were engaging and commendable in many ways, but which had to be disqualified for historical inaccuracies. This (2017-18) was the second year in a row that we have received only two submissions (three of our two-year total of four submissions came from mailer-schools) as well as the second year that none rose to award level. In the first year, the essays were promising but weak; in the second year, they were strong except for careless inaccuracies.
 - These regrettable inaccuracies prompted me to revise the Affidavit of Original Scholarship to include a paragraph regarding our need to verify facts from the references provided along with our ability to disqualify without recourse or revoke awards if inaccuracies are discovered after the fact. Now labeled the Affidavit of Original Scholarship and Historical Accuracy (AOSHA), it reads:
 - *I also recognize that all historical facts presented must be readily verifiable and/or specifically referenced to the bibliographic sources I have provided. Further, I respect the fact that since any inaccuracy would both discredit and embarrass the Contest sponsor should it be identified after this essay receives an award, any historical inaccuracy identified during its review will merit automatic disqualification without notification or recourse; identification after an award will result in revocation.*
 - The overall high caliber of the essays in 2017-18 prompted me to institute a contest category of Honorable Mention, which I will use for strong essays that do not earn the State award. Further, since both candidates indicated that they intended to pursue graduate work in history, I crafted Honorable Mention letters to each that included this caveat for protecting their future professionalism by being more rigorous about historical precision:
 - *As you will come to appreciate more deeply as a professional historian, any imprecision tends to discredit an author's overall integrity as an authority. For example, I have a cautious acceptance of any fact presented by Stephen Ambrose after my uncle Charley, a World War II paratrooper, found the name of a buddy, Fritz Niland, in the index of one of Ambrose's books. Waving the book with his right hand he told me, "I knew Fritz: we were in the same outfit. But this guy put him in the wrong company and the wrong regiment. I know he got that wrong, so how can I trust him on anything else?" For emphasis, he then flung the book across the floor.*
- As for this contest year, on September 26th I sent mailers to 89 schools with the Contest information sheet and the AOSHA; a 90th mailer went out October 22nd to the Williams School in New London.
 - Except for the inclusion of the Williams School due to having met the History teacher there while presenting the Nathan Hale Branch essay award last June, the school list was the same as last year's—the 90th spot (90 comes from using three 30-label sheets) opened up after deleting a duplicate address.
 - I submitted the State Contest Information sheet to the Waterford library for posting: **I ask all recipients of this mailer, plus BOM members who receive this report at the meeting, to bring a copy to your local library as well.**
- To date there have been nine general inquiries for submission information. I responded to all of them on October 26th with three attachments: The National Rules; the State Contest Information; and the AOSHA.
 - Four of these inquiries arrived at the tail end of last academic year; three came over the summer; two appear to be in response to the September mailer; and one came from a school guidance counselor.
 - ***I have submitted all three forms for reference here, in part so recipients have the State Contest Information sheet for circulation.***
- Since the deadline is February 1, 2019 and no committee work begins until that time, there is nothing more to report at this time.

This ends my report for the November 3, 2018 meeting.



Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

29 Main Street / PO Box 411

East Haddam, Conn. 06423

www.ConnecticutSAR.org

www.facebook.com/connecticutsar

Organized April 2, 1889

Incorporated January 3, 1890

Essay Contest for High School Students

The Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (CTSSAR) is pleased to announce it is now accepting submissions to the annual George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest, a nationwide contest sponsored by the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR).

SAR, through its state chapters, invites all high school students (9th through 12th grades) interested in the American Revolution to participate: the contest is open to all students attending home schools, public, parochial, or private high schools in that same grade range.

To participate, students must submit an original 800- to 1,200-word essay based on an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution, Declaration of Independence, or the framing of the United States Constitution. Each student's essay will be judged based on its historical accuracy, clarity, organization, grammar and spelling, and documentation.

For Connecticut students, the essay is submitted to CTSSAR for state-wide judging, and the winner of the state-level contest is submitted for consideration at the national level. There is a \$500 award for winning the state-level contest; the national contest offers awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 for the top three essays.

Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year. State and national results are announced by the end of February and April, respectively. The state winner will be invited to read the essay at CTSSAR's spring meeting, after which CTSSAR's president will present the winner with a certificate and the award check. National winners are invited to SAR's annual meeting to receive their awards; Connecticut had a national first-place winner in 2015!

Essay submissions must be received by February 1, 2019.

A complete set of rules can be found at <https://www.sar.org/education/youth-contests-awards/george-s-stella-m-knight-essay-contest>. In addition to the national rules found above, CTSSAR requires an Affidavit of Original Scholarship and Historical Accuracy (AOSHA) with each submission.

Please communicate your interest in submitting an essay and receiving both a set of rules and an AOSHA form to John R. Morgan, CTSSAR George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Chairman, at KnightEssay@WestNeckCemetery.com. Essays should be submitted electronically, though the AOSHA needs to have original signatures and be sent via regular mail to the address on that form.

About the Sons of the American Revolution

SAR is a patriotic organization established April 30, 1889; its members are male descendants of those who served in the Revolutionary War or otherwise contributed to establishing the independence of the United States. SAR is active in such aspects of Revolutionary War history as research, genealogy, youth education, and local observances to commemorate and promote awareness of significant events, places, and patriots. In Connecticut, CTSSAR maintains three historic buildings—the Trumbull War Office in Lebanon and the Nathan Hale schoolhouses in East Haddam and New London—and participates regularly in numerous Revolutionary War events statewide.

For more information visit these Websites: ConnecticutSAR.org (state) and SAR.org (national)



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Affidavit of Original Scholarship and Historical Accuracy

Essayist

I hereby state that the essay I have submitted for consideration in the George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest is entirely my own original work product.

Specifically, it neither “borrows” from nor “leans on” the work of others by (1) incorporating the ideas, text, or phrasings of others without explicit identification of sources or (2) benefiting from the “crafting” or “shaping” efforts of anyone else beyond my accepting and independently applying bona fide editorial and grammatical suggestions from my chosen reviewers.

I also recognize that all historical facts presented must be readily verifiable and/or specifically referenced to the bibliographic sources I have provided. Further, I respect the fact that since any inaccuracy would both discredit and embarrass the Contest sponsor should it be identified after this essay receives an award, any historical inaccuracy identified during its review will merit automatic disqualification without notification or recourse; identification after an award will result in revocation.

Residency Note: I attest that I am claiming Connecticut residency for purposes of entering this Contest based on either the location of my school and/or my personal legal residence and that this is the only essay I am submitting this Contest-year to the George S. and Stella M. Knight Contest in any state. I understand that making any submission to another State constitutes grounds for immediate disqualification in Connecticut, including revocation of any award should this fact be discovered later.

Essay Title: _____

Submitted by: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Essay Reviewer

I attest that to the best of my knowledge, this essay submitted for the George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest is the sole, original work of this student and that it is consistent with and generally characteristic of the caliber of scholarship and self-expression this student has demonstrated in comparable assignments.

Name: _____

Title and/or Relationship: _____

Best Contact (mail, phone, or email): _____

Signature: _____

MAIL THIS FORM TO:

John R. Morgan, Knight Essay Chairman, P. O. Box 231, Waterford, Conn. 06385

*For more information visit these Websites: ConnecticutSAR.org (state) and SAR.org (national)
Email: KnightEssay@WestNeckCemetery.com*

Sons of the American Revolution
George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest
Applicant Form and Rules

for grading to prevent possible grading bias. The essay must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced. Please use 8½" x 11" paper and 1-inch margins on all sides. The essay's pages, which shall include the bibliography page, must be sequentially numbered beginning with the first page of the essay as page 1. No contestant information may appear on the pages of the essay or bibliography. No bindings or special covers are allowed. Graphics are not permitted. An original copy of the essay must be submitted. Poor quality copies will not be accepted. Contest entries that do not conform exactly to these requirements will be disqualified. Plagiarism will be grounds for immediate disqualification.

3.) Citations in the essay and references in the bibliography must be documented in accordance with a widely used and publicly available citation system. Examples of a citation system include the Chicago Manual of Style, the MLA Manual of Style, the MHRA Style Guide, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, and "Harvard referencing." The bibliography page must specify the system used. No contestant information may appear on the bibliography page(s).

4.) The applicant's biography is limited to one page and must include information regarding the contestant's academic awards and achievements, school activities, community activities, and plans for college. This page is separated from the essay and bibliography for judging purposes.

Entries must be submitted by the SAR chapter or society deadline. This is usually by December 31, though some have different deadlines. Please contact the chapter or society chairman to confirm the deadline and/or see the exceptions listed on the SAR contact page listed above.

Essays which meet the criteria above will be accepted and judged equally on the following criteria:

- A.) Historical accuracy
- B.) Clarity of thought
- C.) Organization and proven topic
- D.) Grammar and spelling
- E.) Documentation

Awards at the chapter and society levels may vary. Please contact the specific chairmen for more information. Awards at the national level are as follows:

First place: \$5,000; a medal and recognition certificate; up to \$500 toward travel expenses and one-night hotel stay for the winner and a chaperone at the annual SAR Congress.

Second Place: \$2,500 and a recognition certificate

Third Place: \$1,000 and a recognition certificate

The winning essay of the national contest will be submitted for publication in the *SAR Magazine*. Participants in this contest agree that their essay may be published in the *SAR Magazine* and on the SAR Knight Essay Contest webpage. Winning essay participants, on all levels, may be required to supply a tax identification number in order to receive their award. By entering this contest, all participants agree that if their essay is chosen as the national winning essay, it will be the property of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). All participants further agree that the national winning essay may not be submitted to any other contest or used for any other purpose without the express permission of the national SAR Knight Essay Contest Chairman.

Applicants in the Knight Essay Contest agree that the interpretation of the rules and decisions of the National Chairman and its judges must govern without reservation and that decisions of the judges and/or the National Chairman are final and not subject to review.

Questions regarding specific rules may be directed to the national SAR Knight Essay Contest Chairman:

Mr. James M. Lindley

Email: j.m.lindley@msn.com

Sons of the American Revolution
George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest
Applicant Form and Rules

The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) invites all high school students (9th through 12th grades) interested in the American Revolution to participate in the George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest. The contest is open to all students attending home schools, public, parochial, or private high schools in that same grade range. While the preliminary rounds of the contest begin at the local level, students' compositions may eventually advance to the state or national levels, eventually held in June during the annual SAR Congress.

The Knight Essay Contest is designed to give students an opportunity to explore topics based on original research and deal with an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution. Each student's 800- to 1,200-word essay will be judged based upon its historical accuracy, clarity, organization, grammar and spelling, and documentation.

This contest is open to all students who are United States citizens or legal aliens. Applicants shall be attending public, parochial, or private high schools (including accredited home schools). Applicants shall be enrolled in the 9th through 12th grades during the contest year. The contest is conducted in three phases: the local (Chapter), state-level (Society), and national phases. The contest must be entered through an SAR chapter near the student's residence. In some cases, the contest may be entered at the state level (if the local society does not have chapters or the chapters are not participating). Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year. If the state-level society does not participate, then the essay may be submitted no later than 11:59 PM (Pacific Standard Time) on December 31 to the Judge-at-Large, Mr. V. Allen Gray, listed on the SAR website. The first place national winner is prohibited from participating in following years' contests.

The local deadline date for the Knight Essay Contest varies by location, so please check online at <https://sar.org/education/youth-contests-awards/george-s-stella-m-knight-essay-contest> to locate your local contact and to request your local deadline information.

The national chairman will notify all submitters by early April whether their entry was among the finalists. The actual winner will be informed in order to be able to attend the annual SAR Congress and read his or her essay at the Youth Awards Luncheon. The winning essay will also be published in the *SAR Magazine*.

The George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest calls for an original researched and proven topic written in English. The topic of the essay shall deal with an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution; the Declaration of Independence; or the framing of the United States Constitution. Students must source at least five references with the minimum of three being published works to allow for verification of sources if necessary. References from encyclopedias or the Internet will be accepted, but are not considered as part of the three published book sources. If there are no published references, the essay will be disqualified.

The essay must have four parts: A.) title page, B.) essay pages, C.) bibliography or works cited, and D.) applicant's biography. The title page, bibliography, and applicant's biography must be listed on separate pages and no reference to the applicant's name or information can be part of the essay pages or bibliography.

Please follow these rules exactly. Essays that do not conform to the rules may be immediately disqualified.

1.) The title or cover page must include the title of the essay, applicant's name, applicant's school grade level, home address, telephone number, and email address. In addition, the title page must include the name, address, and telephone number of the high school in which the applicant is enrolled, and the applicant's grade level. Additionally, the cover page must include the name, address, and telephone number of the school in which the contestant is enrolled along with a statement of how the applicant learned of the contest. If the entrant learned of the Knight Essay Contest through the Internet, include the URL of the website. This page is separated from the essay for judging purposes.

2.) The essay must have a minimum of 800 words and not exceed 1,200 words (excluding the title page, footnotes, bibliography page, and biography page). Word counts based on a word processor are acceptable. All contest entries must be submitted as PDF files attached to emails. Contest entries submitted in any other format will be disqualified. The first page of the essay must include the title of the essay. No applicant information of any kind must appear on these pages as the essays are separated and distributed to the judges