The VFW is dedicated to promoting patriotism and investing in our future generation. If you are a democracy-loving high school student interested in a $30,000 college scholarship or a patriotic middle school student interested in winning $5,000, these scholarships may be for you.

**Voice of Democracy**

**The 2018-19 theme is:   
Why My Vote Matters**

Established in 1947, our **Voice of Democracy** audio-essay program provides high school students with the unique opportunity to express themselves in regards to a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. Each year, nearly 40,000 9-12 grade students from across the country enter to win their share of $2.1 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the program.

The national first-place winner receives a $30,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient’s American university, college or vocational/technical school. A complete list of other national scholarships range from $1,000-$16,000, and the first-place winner from each VFW Department (state) wins a minimum scholarship of $1,000 and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. Want to apply? [Read the rules and eligibility requirements](https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/Community/Youth-and-Education/Voice-of-Democracy-Rules-and-Eligibility.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20180109T222643Z) and [download the entry form and brochure](https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/Community/Youth-and-Education/Voice-of-Democracy-Student-Entry-Form-and-Brochure.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20180316T180558Z) before you submit your entry at your local VFW Post.

**Patriot's Pen**

**The 2018-19 theme is:   
*Why I Honor the American Flag***

Each year more than 132,000 students in grades 6-8 enter the VFW’s **Patriot’s Pen** youth essay contest. The national first-place winner wins $5,000 and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling $55,000, with each first-place state winner receiving a minimum of $500 at the national level.

The essay contest encourages young minds to examine America’s history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300- to 400-word essay, expressing their views based on a patriotic theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief. Want to apply? [Read the rules and eligibility requirements](https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/Community/Youth-and-Education/Patriots-Pen-Rules-and-Eligibility.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20170323T202830Z) and [download the entry form and brochure](https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/Community/Youth-and-Education/Patriots-Pen-Student-Entry-Form-and-Brochure.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20180316T180648Z) before submitting your entry to your local VFW Post.