



# NFWL Annual Conference

## NFWL-NRA Bill of Rights Essay Contest

### 17<sup>th</sup> Annual NFWL-NRA Bill of Rights Essay Scholarship Contest

#### APPLICATION PACKET

**Deadline: Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014**

Congratulations on your decision to apply for 17<sup>th</sup> Annual National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL) - National Rifle Association (NRA) Bill of Rights Essay Contest! Each year, NFWL and the NRA join forces to provide six female high school seniors an award, a **\$3,000 college scholarship** and an **all-expense-paid trip to NFWL's 2014 Annual Conference**. The Conference will take place November 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> at The Ritz-Carlton in Philadelphia, PA. Applicants will be required to secure a sponsoring state legislator who will attend the entire conference with them, if they should win. **Following, are detailed instructions concerning the contest, essay topic, and selection process. Good luck!**

#### **Application Requirements:**

*Complete applications should include:*

1. Completed Essay Contest Verification Form (with a copy sent in advance)
2. Two (2) copies of your essay
3. Two (2) personal reference letters
4. The name of applicant's sponsoring female state legislator\*

*\*All applicants must be sponsored by a woman state legislator for this contest. **To find a woman legislator in your state, visit your state legislature's website.** The sponsoring legislator does not have to be from the applicant's district, but she does have to be from the applicant's state. Any applicants experiencing trouble locating a woman legislator in their state should contact the NFWL office for assistance well in advance of the contest deadline.*

**IMPORTANT:** In advance of the **September 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline** applicants must send in a completed *Essay Contest Verification Form* to NFWL by mail or email (PDF document). This form should be sent in prior to the submission of your entire application so NFWL can communicate with the applicant and sponsoring legislator regarding any changes with the essay contest or Annual Conference arrangements before the deadline.

**Eligibility:** To be eligible for this year's essay contest, applicants must be college-bound female high school seniors (Class of 2015). All applicants are required to secure a woman state legislator as a sponsor. The six contest winners and their sponsoring legislators also **must be able to attend the entire NFWL Annual Conference** where students will be presented with the award. The Conference will take place **November 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 in Philadelphia, PA.** **All travel and lodging expenses for the Annual Conference will be covered by the National Foundation for Women Legislators for the both winning students and their sponsoring legislators.**

**Deadline:** Your essay must arrive or be postmarked to the NFWL office **no later than Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014.** Essays received after this date may not be considered for the contest.

**Contact Information:** Please email your completed essay application to [allison@womenlegislators.org](mailto:allison@womenlegislators.org) or send it to:

National Foundation for Women Legislators, Inc.  
ATTN: NFWL-NRA Bill of Rights Essay Contest  
1727 King St, Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Questions may be directed to the NFWL office at **(703) 518-7931** or [allison@womenlegislators.org](mailto:allison@womenlegislators.org).



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### 2014 NFWL-NRA Bill of Rights National Essay Scholarship Topics

**Guidelines:** Although not part of the original Bill of Rights, the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution is an important cornerstone to the security of our rights as Americans. Since its adoption in 1868, the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment has been one of the most controversial amendments and given rise to some of the most important decisions in American judicial history.

#### Amendment XIV

##### Section 1.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

##### Section 2.

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age,\* and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

##### Section 3.

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

##### Section 4.

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.



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Section 5.

The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

**Essay:** Select a section of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment and write an essay applying its principles to a currently pressing issue facing our country. Essays should focus on how the chosen issue affects women.

**Important:** The Scholarship Committee will weigh four specific elements in submissions: In addition to the basics of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and writing style, the judges will be looking for essays with (1) historical research, insight and perspective, (2) demonstrated understanding of the American Constitution (3) inspirational quality and (4) meaningful personal connection.

**Format:** 400-600 words, single spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman. Please remember to submit two (2) copies.



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### 2014 NFWL-NRA Bill of Rights Essay Contest Verification Form

In advance of the September 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline applicants must send in a completed *Essay Contest Verification Form* to [allison@womenlegislators.org](mailto:allison@womenlegislators.org) (PDF document), or snail mail (NFWL, 1727 King St, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314).

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**APPLICANT NAME**

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Email Address

Home Phone

Cell Phone

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Home Phone

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Mailing Address

---

City

State

Zip

---

Birthdate

High School Graduation Date

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Name of High School

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College(s) that you are planning to attend/considering attending in Fall of 2015

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**PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME**

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Email Address

Home Phone

Cell Phone

---

Home Phone

---

Mailing Address

---

City

State

Zip

---

**SPONSORING LEGISLATOR****TITLE**

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Email Address

Cell Phone

---

Office Phone

Home Phone

---

Staff Name

Staff Email

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**X****APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE****TODAY'S DATE**

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**X****PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE****TODAY'S DATE**



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### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### General Questions

**1. I can't find the verification form, can you send me one?**

The verification form is a part of the complete application (PDF). If you have problems downloading it, please email the Scholarship Committee at [allison@womenlegislators.org](mailto:allison@womenlegislators.org) to receive a copy by e-mail or postal mail.

**2. Am I supposed to fax or mail the verification form before I send in the application?**

Yes. You must send your Verification Form in by postal mail or by email (PDF document) PRIOR to submitting your full application. This allows for the Committee to have a record of your interest and to follow up with you and your sponsoring legislator closer to the scholarship deadline date. If you are submitting your essay very close to the deadline, just include the Verification Form with your completed application.

**3. I can't access the Scholarship from the website / I can't find the application.**

If you have problems downloading the application (PDF), please email the Scholarship Committee at [allison@womenlegislators.org](mailto:allison@womenlegislators.org) to receive a copy by e-mail or postal mail.

**4. How do I know my application is complete?**

Your application will be considered complete as long as you send the following:

- a. Your essay (2 copies)
- b. Two (2) letters of recommendation
- c. Verification form with
  - i. The name of your sponsoring woman legislator
  - ii. Your mailing address
  - iii. The fastest ways to notify you if you win - an email address and telephone number are preferable.

The Scholarship Committee recommends sending each item of your application at once rather than sending your essay and letters of recommendation under separate cover.

**5. How many students enter the contest each year?**

Hundreds of students submit essays each year. Six total winners are selected.

#### Securing a Sponsoring Legislator

**6. Does my sponsoring legislator have to be a woman?**

Yes. For this special scholarship contest, the sponsor must be a woman.

**7. I can't find a sponsoring legislator, can you help?**

Before calling the NFWL office, please follow these steps to find a woman legislator in your state:

- a. Locate the names of women legislators from your area by searching online (for example, if you are from Florida, type "Florida State Legislature" into your search engine) or by calling your state capitol building. Note: Once you have chosen a legislator, it is important to call and speak with someone in that legislator's office rather than simply sending an email because legislators receive many, many emails.
- b. Explain to the legislator's assistant that you are interested in applying for the NFWL-NRA Bill of Rights scholarship and that you need a legislator to sponsor you.



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- c. If the legislator agrees to sponsor you, she must provide her contact information, which you then insert in the Verification form.
- d. Confirm that your legislator will be able to come with you to the entire Annual Conference which will be held November 19-22<sup>nd</sup> in Philadelphia, PA. She will present the scholarship to you at the Conference if you are chosen as a winner. There are no other requirements for the sponsoring legislator, and all expenses will be paid for by NFWL.

### **8. Can my sponsor be a city council member, mayor, US Senator, Congresswoman?**

No. Your primary sponsor must be a woman state legislator - if you have a local or federal legislator already interested in sponsoring you, you must find a state co-sponsor.

### **9. Can one legislator sponsor more than one girl?**

Yes. A legislator can sponsor as many students as want to enter from her district.

### **10. Does my sponsor have to be a current legislator?**

Yes.

### **About the Essay**

### **11. Will I "lose points" if I do/don't write about a policy area you list?**

Yes. For the purpose of this essay, it is important to focus only on topics specifically named within the essay topic prompt. We will not accept essays that focus on a policy imitative not explicitly listed.

### **NFWL Annual Conference and Travel**

### **12. If I am chosen to receive a scholarship, is my trip to the Conference paid for?**

Yes, but you must agree to attend the entire conference which will be held November 19-22<sup>nd</sup> in Philadelphia, PA. You will share a room with another contestant unless your parents or family members choose to join you. The students will be chaperoned by a member of NFWL's staff during their stay at the Conference.

### **13. If I am chosen to receive a scholarship, is my sponsor's trip to the Conference paid for?**

Yes, but your woman state legislator sponsor must agree to attend the entire conference which will be held November 19-22<sup>nd</sup> in Philadelphia, PA.

### **14. Are my parents able to attend the Annual Conference if I win?**

Yes, but they are responsible for their travel expenses. They will be responsible for their airfare and half of the hotel room if they chose to share with you.

### **15. My sponsor cannot attend the Annual Conference. Can she still sponsor me?**

No. It is mandatory that your sponsor makes a commitment to attend to the Annual Conference. If she already knows that she absolutely cannot attend, you should find another sponsor.



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### Eligibility

#### **16. Am I eligible?**

To be eligible for this year's essay contest, applicants must be college-bound female high school seniors (the Class of 2015).

#### **17. I am not a US Citizen. Am I still eligible?**

As long as you are attending college in the US and you and your legislative sponsor can attend the Annual Conference which will be held in November you are eligible.

### Letters of Recommendation

#### **18. Who should I ask to write my letters of recommendation?**

Ask someone who knows you well. When deciding on whom to ask for a letter of recommendation, think of people in your life who are most familiar with you and your achievements. Consider asking a teacher, coach, school counselor, employer, or adult family friend.

If you have a question that is not listed here, please email NFWL at [allison@womenlegislators.org](mailto:allison@womenlegislators.org).