

JUNIOR HIGH LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST

1. Eligibility

- **Grade Level:** The contest is generally open to students in grade/middle/junior high school in grades 5 – 8 (ages 10–14).
- **Residency or School Affiliation:** Students enrolled in grade/middle/junior high schools located in DuPage County, Illinois.

2. Essay Topic

- **Theme:** The theme of the essay should be centered around the phrase: “My American Dream.” The theme urges us reflect on how our system of Democracy can best ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to pursue their dreams and ambitions.
- **Originality:** The essay should be the student’s original work, free of plagiarism, and no Artificial Intelligence should be used in connection with the submission.

3. Essay Length

- **Word Count:** The essay is typically between 300 and 500 words.
- **Formatting:** The essay should follow specific formatting rules, such as double-spacing, font size (usually 12-point), and font type (commonly Times New Roman).

4. Submission Guidelines

- **Deadline:** Entries must be submitted by March 27, 2026.
- **Method of Submission:** Via email to: rrupp@dcbba.org or via mail or hand delivery to: DuPage County Bar Association, 126 South County Farm Road Wheaton, IL, Attn: Robert Rupp.
- **File Format:** In PDF or Word document format.

5. Judging Criteria

- **Clarity and Coherence:** The essay should be well-organized, with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
- **Creativity and Originality:** Students should express unique ideas or perspectives.
- **Grammar and Spelling:** Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation are usually crucial for a successful submission.
- **Adherence to Theme:** The essay should clearly address the topic or prompt provided by the contest organizers.
- **Persuasiveness and Insight:** Some contests may prioritize essays that make strong arguments or offer deep reflections on the topic.

6. Prizes or Recognition

- **Awards:** A gift card in the amount of \$50 will be awarded for the best essay, and \$25.00 to the runner-up, as well as the opportunity for public recognition at the DCBA Law Day event or publication in the DCBA Magazine.

7. Parental Consent (for minors)

- **Parent/Guardian Consent:** Since middle school students are under 18 years of age, parental or guardian consent is required.

8. Additional Instructions

- In order to enter, complete and return attached Official Entry Form and Waiver, together with your Essay.

9. Any questions or for further information contact:

- Robert Rupp, Executive Director, DuPage County Bar Association, rrupp@dcba.org,
Phone: 630-653-4090

Thank you,

DCBA Law Day Committee

**OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM AND WAIVER
2025 LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST**

Name / Age _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Signature of parent/guardian required

Signature (parent or guardian for entrants aged 18 and younger)

Date

Email Address _____

Phone _____

I, _____ (parent's/guardian's name) consent to allow my child's image to be used in any future DCBA materials or presentation, or on the DCBA Web sites

Child's name _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Deadline: All submissions must be received by the announced deadline. Judging: Essays will be judged by a panel of attorneys on content, presentation, originality, creativity, and relevance to and incorporation of the topic. Other Rules: Only one entry per person will be accepted. Entries must be composed of original, authentic, unpublished material and must be the sole property of the entrant, not previously submitted in any other contest. DCBA is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, incomplete, or entries. Contest void where prohibited or restricted by law.

This contract signifies an agreement for publication of the Essay between the Contest Participant and the DuPage County Bar Association (DCBA). By signing below, you are agreeing to provide a nonexclusive, royalty-free, in-perpetuity license to DCBA for Publication n of your Essay. You acknowledge that the Essay submitted is yours and not the property of anyone else. Your signature extends to DCBA the right to use your Essay in DCBA copyrighted materials, websites, publications, and productions. Existing copyright is retained on all Essays submitted, and full acknowledgment is given in the body of the Essay.

Contest Participant's Signature:
