



Florida Black History Month 2020

Governor Ron DeSantis' and First Lady Casey DeSantis' Black History Month Essay Contest

"Celebrating Untold Stories and Contributions of African Americans in Florida"

Official Rules and Guidelines

Grades 4-5, 6-8, 9-12

Governor Ron DeSantis' and First Lady Casey DeSantis' Black History Month Essay Contest is open to all students attending any Florida school in grades 4-12. Three winners will be selected: one elementary school student (grades 4-5), one middle school student (grades 6-8), and one high school student (grades 9-12).

Eligibility: Contestants must be Florida residents, attend school in Florida, and be able to provide a Social Security Number. Each student may enter only one essay, written in English, no longer than 500 words. Each essay must include one credible source. (e.g. book reference, website, research article, etc.)

Entry Dates: Entries can be mailed to Volunteer Florida, Black History Month Committee, 1545 Raymond Diehl Road, Suite 250, Tallahassee, FL 32308 or submitted electronically at www.floridablackhistory.com. **All entries must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, January 21, 2020** (Contestants are responsible for all shipping costs.) Entries submitted electronically will receive email confirmation.

Entry Form: Student must provide all required information requested on the entry form and entry form must be legible. The student and parent/legal guardian are required to read and understand these rules in order to complete the entry form in its entirety. The entry form includes a release and certification that must be signed by a parent or guardian.

Labeling Requirements: Essays must include student's name, home address, telephone number, school the student attends, grade level, title of the essay, a word count, and one credible source. Essays must be no longer than 500 words in length, written in English, and should be typed.

Public Disclosure: The Florida Public Records Act, located in Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, generally requires that all activities, including this contest, are open to the public. Therefore, all aspects of your involvement in this contest, including your essay, will be subject to public disclosure.

Awards: Winners will receive a 4-Year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by Florida Prepaid College Foundation. Winners will receive awards at the Governor's Black History Month celebration to be held in Tallahassee. Reasonable travel and lodging expenses will be paid for the winners and one immediate family member.

In addition to the 500-word essay, each student must also submit each of the following:

- A letter of recommendation (no more than 250 words) from an educator (teacher/principal/coach) or professional (employer/community or business leader) describing why the student is worthy to receive a scholarship and how he/she stands out from his/her peers. **Letters of recommendation sent separately, via mail or electronically, will not be accepted.**
- A 200-250 word personal essay of why the student believes he/she is deserving of the scholarship, what his/her plans are for the future, and what he or she has done recently – during the past six months – to give back to his/her community.



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Essays should address the following topic:

“Celebrating Untold Stories and Contributions of African Americans in Florida”

There are many examples throughout Florida history of African Americans whose stories have yet to be told. Write about an African American who has had an impactful and inspiring effect on their community whose story should be shared. The subject of the essay should be a great Floridian who impacted their community.

Some examples are:

- **John Milledge**, one of the Miami Police Department's first five African American officers who was tragically killed in the line of duty while serving his community valiantly.
- **James Franklin Sistrunk**, a medical school graduate and World War I veteran who is credited with delivering 5,000 babies during his 44 years of service to his community. A boulevard is named after him in the heart of Broward County's oldest African American Community, now known as Sistrunk district.
- **Mary Ann Carroll**, a mother of seven children and the only female member of The Highwaymen, a group of self-taught African American artists who earned a living painting colorful Florida landscapes.

Grades 4-5

Using one or more credible sources with varying points of view, write about an African American who has an untold story who has made a positive impact on their community.

Be sure to properly cite your sources on a separate page.

[\(https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/\)](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/)

Grades 6-8

Using several credible sources with varying points of view, write about an African American who has an untold story who has made a positive impact on their community. **Write your essay in a way that encourages the reader to continue to explore the topic further.**

Be sure to properly cite your sources on a separate page.

[\(https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/\)](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/)

Grades 9-12

Using several credible sources with varying points of view, write about an African American who has an untold story who has made a positive impact on their community. **Write your essay in a way that**



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demonstrates a deep understanding of the topic and historical context.

Be sure to properly cite your sources on a separate page.

(<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>)

Essay Contest Checklist

- Responds to prompt for appropriate grade level
- No longer than 500 words
- Written in English
- Typed
- Use of previously published works properly referenced on a separate page
(<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>)

Information included on essay:

- Title of essay
- Word count
- Student's name
- Telephone number
- School student attends
- Grade level
- One credible source

Additional items to be included and submitted together in the entry packet:

- Completed, legible entry form
- Signed Parent/Legal Guardian Waiver
- Letter of recommendation (no more than 250 words) from educator or professional **Letters of recommendation sent separately, via mail or electronically, will not be accepted.**
- Personal essay including community service statement (200-250 words)
- Submitted in time to be received by Volunteer Florida by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, January 21, 2020.**



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Entry Form and Parent/Legal Guardian Waiver Form Grades 4-5, 6-8, 9-12

Student Name:		Grade:	
Title of Essay:		Word Count:	
Home Mailing Address:		Age:	
City:	State: Florida	Zip Code:	
Home Phone Number: <i>(including area code)</i>			
Parent/Legal Guardian Name:			
Parent/Legal Guardian Cell Phone Number: <i>(including area code)</i>		Parent/Legal Guardian E-Mail Address:	
School Name:			County:
School Mailing Address:			
City:	State: Florida	Zip Code:	
School Phone Number: <i>(including area code)</i>			

Release Statement:

As parent or guardian, I acknowledge that my child has written the attached essay. Should he or she win the essay contest, I agree to allow the essay to be distributed publicly. I also understand that if it is discovered my child plagiarized or that the thoughts expressed are not his or her own, the essay will be subject to disqualification.

I, _____,
(Print Name of Parent/Legal Guardian), hereby certify the following:

1. I am the parent/legal guardian of _____
2. My child is currently a legal resident of Florida and attends a Florida school.

Parent/ Legal Guardian Signature

Date