



2009 Human Rights Essay Contest For Eighth Grade Students of Montgomery County, Maryland

Dear Student,

You are cordially invited to participate in an essay contest sponsored by the Montgomery County Human Rights Commission and the Office of Human Rights. The purpose of this contest is to raise awareness of human rights issues and to celebrate 2009 Human Rights Day.

Your human rights are protected under Montgomery County law. Chapter 27 of the Montgomery County Code provides for equal opportunity in employment, public accommodations, housing, and commercial real estate. The law makes it illegal to discriminate based on race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, age, national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, genetic status, family responsibilities, gender identity, and (in housing only) source of income and presence of children.

Participants, families, friends, and members of the public are invited to the 2009 Human Rights Day celebration on December 6, 2009 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Magruder High School Auditorium, 5939 Muncaster Mill Road, Rockville, MD 20855. Winners will be announced at this event.

Essay Topic

Choose a news event that occurred within the last year (October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009) in which you believe there has been a human rights violation. Use the Bill of Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and/or the Montgomery County Code Chapter 27 to prove your point. What do you think should be done about it? Who do you think should be responsible for doing it?

Eligible participants

Students matriculating at the 8th grade level in any Montgomery County school – public, private, parochial as well as home schooled students.

Awards

<i>1st place</i>	\$500 savings bond
<i>2nd place</i>	\$250 savings bond
<i>3rd place</i>	\$125 savings bond
<i>Honorable mention</i>	\$50 savings bond up to 10 (ten) honorable mention essays will be selected

Essay Rules

- Each essay must be written in English.
- Each essay must be at least one and no more than three pages, double-spaced, with one inch margins. The essay should be clearly hand-written or typed on white 8-1/2 by 11 inch paper. If typewritten, use 12 point, Times New Roman font.
- Each essay must be the independent, original work of one student, created for the purpose of this essay contest. Group work is not permitted.
- Students may use historical or other references if they are properly cited and should list those sources on a separate sheet. The reference list will not count against the page limitation.
- A student may submit no more than one essay.
- Entries must be post-marked, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights on or before November 5, 2009. Hand delivered entries must be received in the office by 4:30 pm on November 5, 2009.
- Essays must be accompanied by a completed Essay Contest Entry Form that is signed by the student and the student's parent or legal guardian. Entry forms must be completed in full. Essays without entry forms or with incomplete entry forms will not be considered.
- Students participating in the contest should keep a copy of their essay for their personal files. Submitted essays will not be returned to students.

Resources

Montgomery County Code http://www.amlegal.com/montgomery_county_md/
(browse or search for Chapter 27)

Bill of Rights <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/6-8/citizenship/billofrights.html>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

Essay Submission and Due Date

All entries must be postmarked or e-mailed no later than **November 5, 2009**. Mail your essay along with the Essay Contest Entry Form to:

Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
Essay Contest Coordinator
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Or e-mail to: human-rights.commission@montgomerycountymd.gov

Questions?

Call 240 777-8450 or e-mail: human-rights.commission@montgomerycountymd.gov

2009 Human Rights Essay Contest Entry Form

Student's Name: _____
Home Address: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____
Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____
School: _____ Grade: _____
Title of Essay: _____

I hereby certify that this essay was written entirely by me (the student named above). It is my (the student's) original work, created for the purpose of this essay contest, with proper attribution of sources used. I agree that my (the student's) essay may be offered for public display or publication at some time during or after the contest. I understand that this essay becomes the property of the Human Rights Commission for the duration of the contest and may be reproduced for promotional purposes during and after the contest. I understand and agree that my (the student's) essay will not be returned to me. I (the student and parent/guardian) agree to allow my photograph to be used for display or publications associated with this event.

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Print Name

Print Name

Date

Date

This form must be completely filled out, signed, and attached to your essay at the time of submission.